

Draft:	15-Dec-2016
Approved for circulation:	19-Dec-2016
Confirmed by Committee with / without amendments	Date

## Senate

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### Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Wednesday, 14 December 2016**

Duration of meeting: **2:00 PM to 4:00 PM**

Location: **G5.05, Gateway Building, High Wycombe Campus**

### Attendance

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Rebecca Bunting	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio (Chair)
Miriam Moir	Academic Quality	Secretary
Sean Mackney	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
Tim Middleton	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
Sue West	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Ellie Smith	Academic Quality	Ex-officio
Ruth Gunstone	Student Services	Ex-officio
Julie Irwin	Learning & Teaching	Ex-officio
Frazer Mackenzie	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Paul Morgan	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Carol Pook	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Jake Kaner	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Colin Martin	Society & Health	Ex-officio
Tim Coole	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Nic Fryer	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Lois Drawmer	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Allen Stroud	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Karen Harrison-White	Society & Health	Elected
Nasreen Akhtar	Society & Health	Elected
Steven Pearce	Society & Health	Elected
Jo Rixon	Society & Health	Elected
Joe Collins	Students' Union	Student Member
Jenny Wade	Students' Union	Student Member

## Apologies

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Christine Brooks	Society & Health	Elected
Carlo Lusuardi	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Ciaran O'Keefe	Society & Health	Elected
Ian Plover	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio
Roland Radaelli	Design, Media & Management	Elected
Lorraine Watkins-Mathys	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Phil Wood	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio

### Welcome / Apologies for absence

16.185 The Chair welcomed members to the Senate meeting.

16.186 Apologies for absence were received. It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

### Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2016

16.187 The minutes of the meeting were approved as an accurate record.

### Status of actions from the 28 September 2016 meeting

16.188 The Action Sheet with status updates was noted.

### Chair's Actions taken since the previous meeting

16.189 Senate endorsed the Chair's Actions taken since the meeting as noted on the summary sheet provided.

### Minutes of the Joint Senate – Council meeting (21 November 2016)

16.190 The minutes of the meeting were approved as an accurate record.

### Feedback from Senate on the joint Senate–Council meeting

16.191 Senate was reminded that the format of the joint meeting in 2016 had been adapted in order to enable Council to confirm the additional assurances for the HEFCE Accountability Return concerning academic quality and standards through the presentation of relevant information and discussions with Senate members. The opportunity for Council members to challenge the University was provided through a Question and Answer session.

16.192 Senate members were invited to comment on the format of the joint Senate-Council meeting held on 21 November 2016. Senate commented that:

- The meeting was well-constructed and purposeful.
- The opportunity to discuss issues with a mix of Council and Senate members had been interesting and useful.
- The Question and Answer session had worked well, though in future more time needed to be allowed so that a greater number and range of questions could be raised.
- By enabling Council to question the University representatives, the University could demonstrate that it had met the requirement for the governing body to challenge the University in its assurance of academic quality and standards.

## **Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate**

- 16.193 The Vice-Chancellor updated Senate on the following areas affecting the Higher Education sector and the University
- 16.194 The sector was engaged in a consultation around the Government's industrial strategy which constitutes an intervention to create economic growth. While it relates to wider aspects affecting the economy such as infrastructure, it also includes the development of skills, enterprise, research and innovation, areas in which universities have a key role to play. Local Enterprise Partnerships also have an important role, because key characteristics emerging from the strategy link to local profiles. The University is involved in the consultation and Senate would be informed of future developments.
- 16.195 The consultation around REF 2021 is open until March 2017. The University is gathering feedback which will be considered by the Research & Enterprise Committee and an institutional response to the consultation will be made. It was noted that the concept of institutional impact will influence how research and enterprise is grouped at Bucks.
- 16.196 A report published by HEFCE details the current and future financial health of the sector, including projections both with and without international students. Sector growth has largely been predicated on overseas recruitment, but there is uncertainty over the issues of net migration and the impact of Brexit.
- 16.197 A further consultation is taking place over the Government's Green Paper on Schools which proposes that universities should be involved in supporting failing schools and with the academisation process. While intervention in the running of schools is not considered to be the core business of universities, support might be provided in other ways, for example through engagement with schools' governing bodies. Senate members commented that Bucks already engages widely with local schools through the provision of information and masterclasses. New opportunities for collaboration were being identified in terms of schools' bids for funding to support student health issues, and to assist with the dissemination of research being undertaken in many schools. Senate noted the need for such interventions with schools to be tracked, and it was agreed that the schools liaison team should be kept informed of activities.
- 16.198 HEFCE had recently published a new table based on academic teaching qualifications of academic staff, in which Bucks was placed in 29<sup>th</sup> position out of 129 institutions. It was pleasing to note that 60% of Bucks' academic staff have worked towards recognition of their teaching, and that new staff undertake the PG Certificate in Learning & Teaching in Higher Education. It was noted that there is a need to ensure that long-standing staff are also given the opportunity to achieve recognition for their teaching in order to raise the overall percentage.
- 16.199 The University has its first "home-grown" National Teaching Fellowship, and congratulations were extended to Dr Sharon Edwards for this achievement.

## **Teaching Excellence Framework 2 Update**

- 16.200 A presentation was given by the PVC Education updating Senate members on the implementation of TEF 2. While TEF1 enabled the University to have the full inflationary fee uplift, TEF 2 will make a judgement as to whether that can be maintained.
- 16.201 Under TEF2 the University will be assessed against three aspects of quality:
- Teaching
  - Learning environment
  - Student outcomes and learning gain

Evidence will comprise data from specific NSS areas, DLHE data on employment and further study, and non-continuation results. While the assessment is driven by the metrics, universities can provide additional context information to explain performance against the metrics. The University is currently preparing this submission which has a deadline of 26 January 2017. The possible outcomes of TEF 2 are Gold, Silver or Bronze ratings.

16.202 A number of projects are underway to address the longer term implication of TEF, particularly around engagement with the subject level benchmarks to be introduced from TEF 3. These projects will focus on improvements to the NSS results, retention levels, graduate destinations and international student recruitment.

16.203 Senate was informed that workshops will be held to share the data.

16.204 Senate raised the question around accessibility, and was informed that TEF data would be published and that it is anticipated that it will be used to inform future league tables.

### **Degree Apprenticeships Update**

16.205 Senate was updated on progress made with degree apprenticeships and noted the following:

- The University will validate 10 degree apprenticeships to start in September 2017.
- Funding from HEFCE for capacity building to enable rapid development of the new programmes has been secured.
- Workshops will be held for staff.
- The current focus is on the work streams required, the engagement strategy and financial modelling.
- The University has applied to be on the Register of Degree Apprenticeship Providers.
- In January 2017 the University will apply to be on the Register of End Point Assessors.

16.206 It was further noted that discussions had been held over the validation of the apprenticeships and that two event dates in March and April 2017 would be identified where several apprenticeships would be considered at each event. There will be a need to appoint the Panel well in advance in order to ensure that training and development in the area of provision can be given.

### **Foundation Year Programmes – Reports from the Faculties (SEN 16.49)**

16.207 Senate noted that the DMM Foundation Year programmes in Business and Computing had been confirmed and were being advertised for a February 2017 start.

16.208 The Dean of Society & Health reported that the disciplinary modules in criminology, health and social science and sports science were currently being developed, and would be presented to CAP with a proposed start date of September 2017.

### **Transforming our National Student Survey Performance – Update on actions undertaken**

16.209 The PVC Education informed Senate that enhanced support had been put in place for four Departments prioritised for assistance, including support from Learning & Teaching and Academic Quality. Plans were in place for all Departments and these would be monitored through the Quality & Standards Committee.

16.210 It was noted that not all Programme Committees had the NSS Action Plans on their agenda, and it was agreed this would be put in place for the next round of Programme Committees and Chairs would be briefed.

**Action: Academic Registrar & Secretary**

### **Bucks Knowledge Archive Policy (SEN16.51)**

16.211 The PVC Research & Enterprise reported that use of an institutional repository was a requirement for REF 2021. The Bucks Knowledge Archive Policy had been written to provide clear guidance as to what should, and should not, be uploaded. The Policy had been scrutinised at the Research & Enterprise Committee which recommended its approval to Senate. It was noted that Unit of Assessment Leads were leading on streamlining the processes to enable academics to use the repository, and that while the Policy was compliant with current requirements, the process would be in need of continual development. The Policy was approved.

### **University Research & Innovation Centres and Groups Policy (SEN16.52)**

16.212 Further to Senate's request for a revision of the document presented on 28 September 2016 in order to rationalise the infrastructure into a leaner configuration, discussions had been held with the research community and the faculties. Bearing in mind that the next REF would consider institutional impact and the research environment, and the University's strategy to increase commercial activity, the revised proposal is for Research and Innovation Centres and Groups, both with clear criteria and targets. The second draft of the Policy was discussed at Research & Enterprise Committee, and its proposals were welcomed as outlining a clear direction for the University.

16.213 Senate noted that it would be useful to have a diagram showing how the current structure of Institutes, Centres and Groups would be transposed into the new structure and it was agreed that this could be produced.

**Action: PVC Research & Enterprise**

16.214 The Policy was approved.

### **Academic Assessment Regulations – additions (SEN16.53)**

16.215 It was noted that the Academic Assessment Regulations had been amended to include reference to Foundation Year programmes in order to provide regulations to govern student outcomes at Assessment Boards in the summer of 2017. The amendments were approved.

### **Amendment: External Examiners' Handbook (SEN16.54)**

16.216 The PVC Education informed Senate that, as outlined in the summary paper, changes were being proposed as follows:

- a) To include a "desirable" criterion for external examiner appointments for nominees to be drawn from HEIs in the top third of institutions by NSS ranking and/or to hold Fellowship of the HEA.
- b) The inclusion of standards for mentoring of external examiners new to the role.

16.217 Concerns were raised over the proposed role of the mentor, particularly the suggestion that a mentor could be from the external examiner's home institution. It was felt that there would be practical difficulties in ensuring the suitability and knowledge of such mentors. After discussion, it was agreed that point 28c concerning such mentors would be removed and point 32 amended as required. Subject to the amendments being undertaken, the document was approved.

### **Education Programmes Extension to Term (SEN16.55)**

16.218 A paper requesting the extension of five NMC Accredited programmes had been received. Senate referred the paper back to the Faculty to enable evidence to support the programmes' good standing in terms of academic standards and quality and HEA accreditation to be provided. It was agreed that a resubmitted request would be taken by Chair's Action.

**Action: Head of School, Health & Social Sciences**

### **External Examiner Approval Panel Report (Paper SEN16.56)**

16.219 Senate received the update from the Approval Panel and endorsed the decisions made in each instance.

### **Validation: Recommendation of Awards for Approval (SEN16.57)**

16.220 Senate reviewed the outcomes of validation events held since the previous meeting and endorsed the decisions in each case.

16.221 It was confirmed that conditions for the Graduate Certificate in General Practice Nursing had now been met.

16.222 Senate approved programmes for delivery where Conditions had been satisfactorily completed or no Conditions had been required.

### **Committee Reports**

16.223 Senate received Executive Summaries for the following meetings:

- Quality & Standards Committee, 23 November 2016 (SEN16.58)
- Education Committee, 25 October 2016 (SEN16.59): it was noted that a working party considering support for online learning had been set up.
- Research & Enterprise Committee, 18 November 2016 (SEN16.60): it was noted that the University received additional funding because of the scope of its work in innovation.
- Equality & Diversity Committee, 27 October 2016 (SEN16.61): it was noted that a working group was looking into BME differential attainment.
- Academic Planning Committee, 20 October 2016 (SEN16.62)
- Design, Media & Management Faculty Board, 26 October 2016 (SEN16.63): concern had been expressed over the time constraints this year for the production of Faculty SURE Reports for discussion at Faculty Boards. It was noted that the University's annual monitoring process was under review and this would be borne in mind.
- Society & Health Faculty Board, 10 March and 27 October 2016 (SEN16.64): it was noted that the HCPC and NMC Monitoring had been completed on time.

### **Date of the next meeting**

16.224 The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 22 March 2017.