



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

University
Secretary's
Office.

The Council, 27 November 2015

Report of the Senate

Date: 21 October 2015
Chair: The Vice-Chancellor
Secretary: Dr A West

1. Vice-Chancellor's report

The Vice-Chancellor presented a report covering the following main areas in addition to a number of matters raised in his report to Council at its meeting on 19 October, including the political environment; Sheffield City Region devolution and the Northern Powerhouse; relations with China; international student visas; and the Teaching Excellence Framework:

- (a) The role and powers of Senate: Senate was reminded of the role of Senate within the University's overall governance framework. Whilst Council was ultimately responsible for the entirety of the University's activities, Senate provided vital oversight of teaching, research and the admissions and regulation of students. It was reported that recent regulations and guidance, including the Higher Education Code of Governance published in December 2014 by the Committee of University Chairs, had placed greater emphasis on the role of Council in overseeing academic matters. The majority of detailed work for which Senate was responsible was delegated, including to sub-committees and members of UEB.
- (b) Responding to Challenge: The University was well-placed to meet the various challenges. It had achieved wide recognition for the significant amount of work taking place internally and in collaboration with external partners to contribute to debate on a range of issues. The launch of the new Strategic Plan was timely in setting out a vision for the future direction of the institution in the context of the current policy and HE landscape.

Professor Hounslow provided an update on the 2015 student recruitment position, in which attention was drawn to the following key points:

- (c) 2015/16 Recruitment: Senate noted an overview of the numbers of applications received in each student category, noting that the overall picture was positive, despite continued decline in applications from home PGT students. Senate would receive a further update on the final student numbers for 2015/16 after the 1 December census date.

The University had enjoyed unprecedented success during Confirmation, Adjustment and Clearing as a result of the considerable amount of work done by academic and professional services colleagues across the University who deserved thanks for their efforts. Particular attention was drawn to the joint Corporate Affairs-Admissions-led campaign to maximise performance in Adjustment and Clearing that had helped the University attract approximately 10% of the new

intake without having to compromise on previously agreed lower limits on entry tariff.

- (d) Looking ahead: It was noted that the global recruitment context was challenging. Sheffield International would be particularly focused on enhancing recruitment from the Asian sub-continent, where this challenge was particularly pronounced, as part of wider efforts to diversify the international student population. The contract with the University of Sheffield International College included incentives to strengthen efforts to increase the diversity of the overseas student population through increased recruitment from currently under-represented areas. With respect to home students, although the cap on student numbers had been removed the number of 18-year-olds in the UK population would decrease until 2020 whilst the percentage of students gaining top A level grades had fallen, as it had in 2014; it was expected that this trend would continue. There was greater uncertainty around recruitment of home PGT in future years with the introduction of PGT loans and the end of matched-funding from HEFCE to support PGT scholarships. However, the University was in a strong competitive position overall and could approach the current recruitment cycle with confidence.

2. Proposed establishment of a Joint Institute with Nanjing Tech University

Senate noted a further update on progress since its previous meeting, which had involved extensive consultation with academic departments and advice from professional services. A cooperation agreement had been signed with Nanjing tech University and an application for the establishment of the Joint Institute had been submitted to the Chinese Embassy.

3. Strategic Plan

Senate received and noted the draft University Strategic Plan. The importance of 'people' had been highlighted in the plan and the implementation phase would seek to ensure that individual as well as team contributions were appropriately valued and recognised.

4. International Strategy

Senate and received and noted the draft Internationalisation Strategy

5. Report of the Council

Senate received a report on the meeting of Council held on 6 July 2015.

6. Reports of committees

6.1 Committees of Senate

Senate approved the reports of the following committees:

- (a) Learning and Teaching Committee
(Meeting held on 6 July 2015 and action taken on behalf of the Committee)
- (i) New, significantly amended and discontinued programmes: Proposals for new, amended and discontinued programmes of study were approved.
- (ii) Development of the Learning and Teaching Strategy: It was reported that work had commenced on drafting the new Learning and Teaching Strategy and wide-ranging initial consultation and discussion was planned to take place during Semester 1 to inform further development over the course of the year, aligned to the overall Strategic Plan.

- (iii) Department for Lifelong Learning: The appointment of the Head of Lifelong Learning was reported. Under the recently established executive structure, academic leadership for DLL, along with Student Services, fell within the remit of the PVC Learning and Teaching as it currently lay outside the faculty structure. Measures were being taken to support DLL and its executive team, in particular line management through Student Services.

Council is asked to formally **approve** the move of the Department for Lifelong Learning into Student Services with immediate effect.

- (b) Senate Budget Committee
(Meetings held on 9 July and 8 October 2015)

Senate approved amendments to the categories of membership and one additional membership category.

- (c) Research Ethics Committee
(Meeting held on 16 September 2015)

6.2 Other committees

Senate received for information the reports of the Finance Committee (meetings held on 18 May & 18 June), Estates Committee (meeting held on 12 May 2015), Health and Safety Committee (meeting held on 13 May 2015) and Human Resources Committee (meeting held on 11 June 2015), which were approved by Council at its meeting on 6 July 2015. Senate also received the annual report of the Student Services Department 2014-15.

7. Changes of Departmental Name – Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health

Senate agreed to recommend to Council the naming of two new departments in the School of Medicine resulting from the mergers of four departments that were approved by Senate in June and Council in July.

Council is asked to **approve** the new names as follows:

- Department of Oncology and Metabolism; and
- Department of Infection, Immunity and Cardiovascular Disease

8. University Regulations – Amendments to the ex-officio membership of Senate

Senate agreed to recommend to Council for approval amendments to Regulations governing the composition of Senate, to reflect recently established new posts of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellors for Learning and Teaching & Research and Innovation and Directors for Digital Learning, as set out at Appendix 1.

Council is asked to **approve** these amendments.