



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

University
Secretary's
Office.

Minutes Meeting of the Senate

Date: 20 March 2019

Present: The President & Vice-Chancellor in the Chair
Mr M Ashman, Professor K Ayscough, Professor W Baird, Mr C Baker, Professor P Bath, Ms R Bechu, Dr A Best, Mr G Bowley, Professor C Buck, Professor T Burke, Miss A Campbell, Mrs L Carlile, Professor P Cowell, Professor P Crowther, Ms A Crump Raiswell, Professor J Derrick, Dr J Dickinson, Professor H Dobson, Professor S Fitzmaurice, Professor J Flint, Professor A Gartland, Mr J Glicklich, Dr P Gould, Professor J Harrison, Professor J Haycock, Professor A Hindmoor, Dr E Hock, Mrs A Horn, Professor M J Hounslow, Mr J Huddleston, Dr A Ipekci, Professor R F W Jackson, Ms L Jones, Ms N Jones, Dr J Kirby, Dr W Kitchen, Dr D Lee, Mrs A Little, Professor L Maltby, Mrs J Marriott, Professor J Marsh, Mrs F Mason, Professor N Monk, Professor R K Moore, Professor T Moore, Professor K Morris, Ms M Nolan, Dr S D North, Professor D Oglethorpe, Mrs Z Ollerenshaw, Professor A Pacey, Miss E Packham, Professor D Petley, Dr S Pollington, Dr C Priede, Dr S Pukallus, Mr R Simpson, Professor N Sims, Professor M Siva-Jothy, Dr C Stokes, Professor B Stone, Ms K Swindells, Mr R Sykes, Ms A Tayyab, Mrs L Thorp, Mrs J Upson, Professor G Valentine, Professor M Vincent, Professor R von Fay-Siebenburgen, Professor G Waller, Professor S Walters, Mr C Wang, Dr S Want, Professor C Watkins, Professor M Williamson, Professor E A Wood, Professor P Wright.

Secretary: Dr T Strike

In attendance: Mrs R Arnold, Mr M Borland, Dr M Butler, Mrs K Clements, Professor H Davis, Mrs H Dingle, Mrs M Nuttall, Mr D Swinn, Mr L Wild, Ms T Wray.

Apologies: The Senate received apologies from 15 members.

WELCOME

The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) welcomed members to the meeting.

DEATHS

The Senate noted with regret the following deaths, which had occurred since the last meeting:

Professor Graham Battersby, a member of staff within the School of Law from 1960 to 2002. Aged 81.

Marcello Cadeddu, current postgraduate student in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Aged 32.

Anne Clifton, a member of staff within the Department of Psychology and the Department of Human Communications from 1987 to 1998. Aged 77.

Remi Gosal, recently withdrawn undergraduate student in the School of Law. Aged 21.

Andrew Holroyd, a member of staff within Estates & Facilities Management from 2014. Aged 50.

Dr Bernard Colin Jarvis, a senior lecturer within the Department of Animal & Plant Sciences, and a member of staff from 1969. Aged 76.

Qi Lee, current undergraduate student in the Department of Civil & Structural Engineering. Aged 22.

Dr Jarema Jan Malicki, a reader within the Department of Biomedical Science, and a member of staff since 2013. Aged 53.

John Penton, a member of staff within Estates & Facilities Management from 1980 to 2009. Aged 74.

Susan Sharman, a long serving member of staff within the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health up until 2004.

Professor Colin Smith, a member of staff within the Department of Clinical Dentistry from 1978 to 1984 and also from 1988 to 2000. Aged 80.

Professor John Andrew Thornton, Professor of Anaesthesia and a member of staff from 1963 to 1983. Aged 91.

Dr Jack Wearing, a member of staff within the Department of Mechanical Engineering from 1962 to 1998. Aged 85.

Members stood in memory.

1. President & Vice-Chancellor's Report

The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) presented the report and provided updates:

- (a) Brexit: Events were moving rapidly and the University was continuing to make contingency preparations.
- (b) Review of Post-18 Education and Funding: There was considerable speculation regarding the outcome of the Augar Review, the independent panel supporting the Review. The Universities Minister, Chris Skidmore MP, had suggested a consultation process including a Green Paper and a White Paper, but it was not known how the Government was likely to respond. The University had made preparations for the potential impact of some of the proposals that had been reported in the media.
- (c) Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF): The University had submitted a response to the independent review of TEF led by Dame Shirley Pearce. Council approved the response, which included some criticisms of the current approach to TEF. The Independent Review was expected to report in the summer.

- (d) New Universities Minister: The P&VC had met Chris Skidmore MP, the new Minister, several times and had a further meeting planned. The Minister's approach to working with the sector was welcomed.
- (e) Annual Planning Round: This was underway and it was viewed to be progressing smoothly.
- (f) Student Recruitment: Attention was drawn to the registration numbers for new, full-time students as at 1 December.
- (g) Research awards: Against the background of flat cash for Research Councils the value of new research grant and contract awards for the previous 12 months was encouraging.
- (h) Visits: The P&VC led a University delegation to China. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the University with Tsinghua University. Meetings also took place with Tongji University, Nanjing University and Beijing Language and Culture University.
- (i) Pensions: The University was working under the outcomes of the 2017 Valuation, which resulted in future employer and employee contribution rates rising. A new valuation exercise was underway and the University had submitted a response.

During discussion, the P&VC endorsed sharing the University's response to the Independent Review of TEF with departmental Directors of Learning and Teaching.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 December 2018

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2018, having been circulated, were approved as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising on the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Matters Requiring Approval

Senate received and noted a summary of the matters within the Reports from Committees of the Senate and Other Matters sections of the Agenda for which Senate's formal approval was sought.

5. Expectations for Postgraduate Research Students

Senate received a Report and approved recommendations:

- (a) Setting out in principle, the criteria, competencies and output required for the award of a PhD.
- (b) To receive a revised version of Regulation XVI: General Regulations for Higher Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates which extended the current PhD by publication available to staff candidates to student candidates.
- (c) That the Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes be updated.

Attention was drawn to the proportion of students that submitted within the funded period was only 15% and one of the factors affecting mental health and wellbeing for PGR students was the realism of the expectations they faced. During discussion, it was clarified that there was not an expectation for students to publish, rather that the proposals extended the option currently available to staff candidates to student candidates. The ability to demonstrate that findings can be

communicated to the wider research community would be assessed by external examiners for a PhD that was not published. The social context of a PhD had been considered as part of developing the proposals and work was taking place with the Students' Union on this.

Senate input into the appropriate duration of a standard PhD was sought. It was highlighted that information from the Russell Group suggested similar patterns at other institutions and some funders were looking at whether the three-year time period was fit for purpose. Senate recognised that three years was not sufficient, but there were potential implications of a longer study period and further discussions would be needed. For example, the impact on the number of students funded, and the impact on student recruitment if the University changed its approach before other Russell Group universities did so. International students faced additional challenges in completing a PhD within the timescale. There would be discussions with national and international partners.

An Implementation Group would be formed and consider the comments made in order to develop the proposals further, subject to the concerns expressed. Proposals would be brought to Senate in due course.

6. Proposed Health Sciences School

Senate received a Report and recommended to Council the creation of a Health Sciences School in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health from 2019/20 and the amendment of Regulation X (2.1.7) relating to the composition of Senate, to reflect the establishment of a new Health Sciences School.

It was highlighted that the proposal would reconfigure the Department of Nursing and Midwifery, Department of Human Communication Sciences and the Academic Unit of Orthoptics (which was within the Department of Oncology and Metabolism), into a single Departmental structure. The change would enable three smaller departments to be more sustainable and better suited to the competitive external environment. It was anticipated the change would bring benefits for research, and for teaching and learning. During discussion, it was clarified that greater efficiency in relation to staffing was referring to the opportunity to scrutinise the need for posts when they became vacant. The School of Health and Related Research had provided input in to the discussions on the name for the new school.

7. Composition of the Senate

Senate received a Report and recommended to Council changes to Regulation IX: The Senate, Section 2: Composition of the Senate, as set out in Annex 1, to be implemented from 1 August 2019, subject to inclusion in 2.7 that Senate could co-opt members to ensure that Chairs of Senate committees not otherwise in the membership of the Senate are ex-officio members.

Responses to questions raised in advance was provided. It was clarified that the proposal did not include cross-cutting thematic Directors as ex-officio members of Senate. The proposed quorum of 20 for a Senate of 80 members was the same as the current quorum for a Senate of 163 members. Where Senate representatives were required on Committees, it was envisaged, in liaison with Chairs of Committees, taking a pragmatic approach in 2019/20 if continuity of members was an issue. It would be necessary to recreate staggered terms of office so that one third of the elected membership would fall each year. To do this the initial terms would be allocated, in thirds, based on the number of votes received, so that those

with the least votes have shorter terms, and come up for re-election first. Members of Senate were not representatives of their Faculty.

During discussion, it was clarified that a 'clean start' was proposed where existing members of Senate would be demitted from membership from 31 July 2019. Where a member of Senate was also a Chair of a Committee and their membership of Senate fell, the principle would suggest that their membership of the Committee would fall at the same time, although it was acknowledged that in practice this might require discussions on the most appropriate way forward. The proposal was not suggesting all members of Senate committees would need to be members of Senate.

REPORTS FROM STATUTORY BODIES

8. Report on the Proceedings of the Council (Meeting held on 26 November 2018)

Senate received and noted the Report on the Proceedings of the Council.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

9. Report of the Learning and Teaching Committee (Meeting held on 12 February 2019)

Senate received the Report and approved the following:

- (a) A revised Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for Students.
- (b) Revisions to the policy on recognition of prior learning (RPL) to clarify that the use of credits previously awarded on the same University programme was not considered RPL and that exceptions may be made to the stated credit limits in relation to apprenticeship programmes, in line with the requirements of Apprenticeship Standards.
- (c) Revised IELTS band requirements to provide 5 bands for Departments to select from when deciding the desired level of English ability for incoming students.
- (d) new, significantly amended, and discontinued programmes, and title changes and new exit routes approved by Faculties between 17 October 2018 – 29 January 2019.

The University was aware that the Royal Statistical Society had recently submitted a critical response to the Independent Review of TEF. The University's own response highlighted serious concerns with the current process and the metrics used, stating that 'we believe that as a vehicle for informing students choice the TEF is fundamentally flawed in its current form.'

During discussion, it was clarified that the 'tightening' of IELTS band referred to in the Report was to ensure a consistent approach across the University and not to a tightening of the requirements of students. An improved English language support offer to students with enhanced targeted resources was being rolled out. It was also clarified that some of the metrics in relation to access were determined by OfS guidance.

10. Report of the Research Ethics Committee

(Meeting held on 13 February 2019)

Senate received and approved the Report, including a position statement clarifying the status of University ethics approval when research is transferred elsewhere; minor changes to four sections of the Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants or Personal Data; minor changes to the Committee's Terms of Reference. It was highlighted that the position statement only applied to staff research.

It was clarified that incoming members of staff could use ethics approval from their previous institution where that institution had collaborated with the University of Sheffield and its ethics approval process had been deemed sufficient.

11. Report of the Research and Innovation Committee

(Meeting held on 7 February 2019)

Senate received and approved the Report. Attention was drawn to the Draft University of Sheffield REF 2021 Code of Practice, which must be submitted to the funding bodies by 7 June 2019. It included a definition of what constituted an independent researcher, guidelines regarding staff outputs and the approach to equality. The draft Code of Practice would be used for the University's REF stocktake exercise.

12. Report of the Senate Academic Assurance Committee

(Meeting held on 19 February 2019)

Senate received and approved the Report. Attention was drawn to the Committee's initial discussion on grade inflation, one of its three in depth topics for the 2018/19 year. It had also received information on the Annual Reflection process and requested feedback from members of Senate on how many people were involved in the Annual Reflection process within departments, the benefits of the process and how its effectiveness could be enhanced.

13. Report of the Senate Budget Committee

(Meeting held on 7 March 2019)

Senate received and approved the Report. Attention was drawn to the Minute of the Committee's discussion with the Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor. In relation to the Quarterly Financial Results (QFR) to 31 January 2019, the University was currently generating a larger surplus than budgeted, which was viewed as positive in the context of future high levels of uncertainty. SBC had met the President and Vice-Chancellor on 18 March and would report to Senate in June. The Committee was about to embark on a series of meetings with the five Faculty Vice-Presidents and would report to Senate in due course. The webpage on University finances (<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/staff/university-finances-2017-18/summary>) was recommended to members of Senate as a useful resource.

In relation to information in the QFR report showing a deficit for residences, catering and conferences, and given the number of private accommodation providers in the city, it was clarified that the demographic dip in the number of 18

year olds in the UK was proving challenging. Work was underway to make the University accommodation offer a more attractive proposition for students.

OTHER MATTERS

14. Quarterly Financial Results Summary

Senate received and noted the financial results for the quarter ending 31 January 2019.

15. Annual Report of the Library

Senate received and noted the Annual Report.

16. Report on Action Taken

A Report on action taken since the last meeting of the Senate was received and noted. It was noted that section 1.2 regarding the Faculty of Engineering applied to four students.

17. Major Research Grants and Contracts

A Report listing major research grants and contracts awarded since the last meeting of the Senate was received and noted.

These Minutes were confirmed at a meeting

held on 19 June 2019

..... Chairman

