



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

University  
Secretary's  
Office

## Minutes

## Meeting of the Senate

**Date:**

21 June 2017

**Present:**

The President & Vice-Chancellor, in the Chair

Ms Allen, Professor Ayscough, Professor Bateman, Professor Bath, Professor Biggins, Dr Blank, Professor Brazier, Professor Campbell, Mrs Campbell-Pilling, Ms Cavasin, Professor Coca, Professor Cowell, Dr Crockford, Ms Day, Professor Fitzmaurice, Dr Foster, Professor Grasby, Dr Harris, Professor Harrison, Professor Hitchmough, Dr Hock, Mr Hopwood, Professor Jackson, Dr Johnston, Dr Kitchen, Professor Koh, Dr MacIntosh, Mrs Marriott, Professor Marsh, Ms McKeown, Dr McMillan, Dr Moore, Mr Morgan, Professor Morgan, Professor Morris, Professor Mowbray, Ms Mullaney, Dr Nicholson, Ms Nolan, Dr O'Reilly, Professor Petley, Professor Pitts, Miss Popa, Dr Priede, Dr Simpson, Professor Siva-Jothy, Dr Stokes, Mr Sykes, Professor Tait, Mrs Talbot, Mr Trendall, Professor Valentine, Dr Vismans, Professor von Fay-Siebenburgen, Professor Waller, Dr Want, Professor Warren, Professor West, Dr Williams, Professor Winder, Professor Wright

**Secretary:**

Dr A West

**In attendance:**

Miss Akhtar Staves, Mrs Arnold, Mrs Barker, Mr Borland, Mrs Clements, Miss Gopalakrishnan, Miss Jones, Mr Maxwell, Mrs McClean, Mr McMillan, Ms Stephens, Dr Strike, Mr Swinn, Mr Wild, Ms Wray

**Apologies:**

The Senate received apologies from 24 members.

### WELCOME

The President & Vice-Chancellor welcomed members of the Senate. The new Student Union officers were welcomed to their first meeting and the outgoing SU officers were thanked for their work. This would be Dr Andrew West's final Senate meeting and he was thanked, particularly for his role as Secretary of Senate. It was also Professor Shearer West's final Senate meeting and she was thanked for her work as Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

### DEATHS

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

**Terry Durrant**, Senior Chief MLSO in the Department of Pathology, and a member of staff until 1990. Aged 85.

**Dr Nick Fieller**, Senior Lecturer in the School of Mathematics & Statistics, and a member of staff from 1974 to 2013. Aged 70

**Dr Margaret Lyons**, Lecturer in the Department of French, and a member of staff from 1963 to 1990. Aged 80.

**Dr Terry Pratt**, Senior Lecturer in French in the School of Languages & Cultures, and a member of staff from 1970 to 1998. Aged 74.

**Jack Wakeman**, undergraduate student in the School of English. Aged 22.

**Thomas Wheeler Rhodes**, undergraduate student in the Department of Geography. Aged 19.

Members stood in memory.

## 1. **PRESIDENT & VICE-CHANCELLOR'S PRESENTATION AND REPORT**

The Senate received a presentation from the President & Vice-Chancellor, in which attention was drawn to the following points:

- (a) Higher Education and Research Act: The Act will result in the most major changes to the higher education landscape since 1992. It will create a new regulatory body, the Office for Students (OfS), operational from April 2018 with a focus on encouraging competition. The first Chair of the OfS would be Sir Michael Barber. The Act will also create a single research and innovation funding body, United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI), upholding the Haldane principle and protecting the dual support system of research funding. John Kingman will be appointed as Chair of UKRI, which was anticipated to take a longer term view as a strategic body.
- (b) The Queen's Speech: The Queen's Speech did not make any reference to universities or to reducing immigration to the tens of thousands as referred to in the Conservative Party election manifesto. It did include: a major review of technical education, which should be seen in the context of T-levels and increased uptake of BTECs at secondary schools; reference to the Industrial Strategy; maintaining and enhancing a leading role on the world stage for the UK; and an Immigration Bill that would end freedom movement in the UK for nationals of EU countries and would bring EU nationals within the UK's immigration system.
- (c) The Office for Students (OfS): The OfS will incorporate the functions of HEFCE (except its research funding functions) and the Office for Fair Access. It will operate the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and have explicit duties focused on choice, quality and value for money, and the need to protect the institutional autonomy of English higher education providers. The OfS will have powers to vary or withdraw an institution's degree awarding powers or university title.
- (d) Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF): The TEF awards will be announced on Thursday 22 June, and the outcomes have been reported to Council separately. The TEF measured performance against expected benchmark values based on student profiles, rather than absolute outcomes. Concerns had been expressed about the TEF metrics and how these may be read by applicants, particularly overseas applicants.  
The University of Sheffield did not meet the required institutional response threshold for the National Student Survey (NSS), in common with a small number of other institutions, and it was clarified during discussion that a decision regarding publication of the data, or not, would be a decision for HEFCE to take.
- (e) International staff and students: There was still no clarity regarding UK residency rights for EU staff after Brexit or regarding staff and student mobility in the light

of migration targets and this was causing great concern to individual staff, students and the sector as a whole. The Conservative Party general election Manifesto made specific mention of including international students in migration figures which are subject to reduction targets and also made reference to tighter visa regulations for international students. The University is working with business on these matters, including holding events in parliament with the CBI and IOD and working with the Engineering Employers Federation and others.

- (f) Challenges and opportunities: There was a need to address areas of potential risk, including an ongoing reduction of public funds; lost opportunities for recruitment, funding and collaboration post-Brexit; and a potential reduction in non-EU international students. The University's response involved calm planning, working closely with Faculties and Departments, as well as considering opportunities for more coordinated and efficient support from professional services.
- (g) Update on Faculty Reflection: The staff consultation has demonstrated the value placed by staff on the faculty and departmental model. It was felt important for the institution to have a clear brand and that more could be done to broadcast some of the University's strengths, without having to undertake significant structural change. The benefits of departments and faculties to students and staff were recognised. However, some greater central direction of certain activities was likely to be necessary to maximise opportunities whilst controlling costs.

## **2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2017**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2017, having been circulated, were approved as an accurate record.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING ON THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising on the Minutes.

## **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.

## **REPORTS FROM STATUTORY BODIES**

### **5. REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL**

(Meeting held on 24 April 2017)

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

## **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE**

### **6. REPORT OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE**

(Meetings held on 29 March and 19 May 2017)

Senate received and approved the Report, including:

- (a) Learning and Teaching Awards: Senate noted the 2017 winners of the Senate Awards for Excellence in learning and teaching and the Students' Union

Academic Awards.

- (b) Programme Level View: Senate noted progress on work in this area and linked to this the wider discussion related to MOLE (My Online Learning Environment) changes taking place.
- (c) Academic Quality Framework: Senate noted that LTC approved an institutional approach and underlying principles to guide further development and implementation of the institutional Academic Quality Framework.
- (d) Programmes of study: Senate approved the new, significantly amended, suspended and discontinued programmes approved by Faculties since 2 February 2017.
- (e) Amendments to the General Regulations: Senate approved changes to the General Regulations to first degrees for apprenticeship-related programmes and approved changes relating to examinations in response to a student complaint relating to the supply of additional examinations paper.

## **7. REPORT OF THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE**

(Meeting held on 18 May 2017)

Senate received and approved the report including an update on the proposed new research support structure; enhancing institutional submission rates; and that a review of the institutional structure for doctoral education would be undertaken.

Attention was drawn to an expected announcement shortly from HEFCE on the structure of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021. It was anticipated that the REF would be a fully comprehensive REF involving all researchers not defined as independent.

During discussion regarding postgraduate submission rates it was noted that an institutional policy on leave of absence could be beneficial.

## **8. REPORT OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

(Meeting held on 03 May 2017)

Senate received and approved the Report, noting:

- (a) Recent breaches of the Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants, Personal Data and Human Tissue: A recent case was considered of research going ahead without ethics approval, in which the department concerned advised the researcher to delete their data without consulting the UREC first. The UREC has advised them, in future, to report back to UREC, who will make a decision about the outcome bearing in mind other similar cases that have occurred, in order that consistent decisions are being made across the University.
- (b) Evaluating the impact of the revised Ethics Policy: A survey would be developed for circulation to all staff and students in the Autumn, particularly with reference to the two new Policy Notes (on the re-use of existing data in research, and research involving social media data).
- (c) Ethics decisions made by departments: The Committee would receive later in the year a full report, with a summary of departments' completed Annual Update forms. In future the aim would be to harmonise the report with the academic year so that annual reports cover the period from 1st September to 31st August.

The total number of ethics applications dealt with each year by academic departments continued to grow, and for 2016/17 was 2994.

- (d) Membership: Ms Sue Rose, an External Member of the Committee and Dr Malcolm Patterson, the representative for the Faculty of Social Sciences had both come to the end of their period serving on the Committee and they were thanked for their contributions.

## **9. REPORT OF THE SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

(Meetings held on 13 April, 21 April, 27 April and 8 June 2017)

Senate received and approved the Report, noting that SBC has had individual meetings with each of the five Vice-Presidents & Heads of Faculty to discuss financial and budgetary processes within their respective Faculties and would report back on the outcome of these meetings to Senate in October 2017.

Attention was drawn to the minutes of the Committee's meeting with Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor on 29 March which would be added to the Committee's website in due course. The Chair of SBC had recently had an annual meeting with the University Executive Board on behalf of the Committee and this would be reported back to Senate in October.

## **10. REPORT OF THE SENATE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

(Meeting held on 01 June 2017)

Senate received and approved the report including the appointment and reappointment of Senate representatives on University Committees.

## **REPORTS FROM JOINT COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND COUNCIL**

### **11. REPORTS OF THE HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE**

**11.1 Meeting held on 16 March 2017**

**11.2 Business Conducted by Correspondence**

Senate received and noted the Reports of the Honorary Degrees Committee.

## **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL**

### **12. REPORT OF THE ESTATES COMMITTEE**

(Meeting held on 31 March 2017)

Senate received and noted the Report of the Estates Committee.

### **13. REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

(Meetings held on 20 January, 23 February and 14 March 2017)

Senate received and noted the Report of the Finance Committee.

### **14. REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

(Meeting held on 13 February 2017)

Senate received and noted the Report of the Healthy and Safety Committee.

### **15. REPORT OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

(Meetings held on 25 January and 22 March 2017)

Senate received and noted the Report of the Human Resources Committee.

**OTHER MATTERS**

**16. AMENDMENTS TO UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS**

Senate noted changes to the University Regulations to reflect recent changes to the University’s executive structure and the titles of members of the University Executive Board, which were approved by Council at its meeting in April.

**17. ETHICAL GOVERNANCE**

Senate received and noted a paper outlining a revised approach to ethical governance.

**18. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Senate received and approved the Annual Report of the Military Education Committee.

**19. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL RESULTS SUMMARY**

A Report on the quarterly financial results to 30 April 2016 was received and noted.

**20. REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN**

A Report on action taken since the last meeting of the Senate was received and noted.

**21. 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.

**21. DATES OF MEETINGS OF SENATE IN 2017-18**

Senate received and noted the dates of meetings of Senate in 2017-18.

These Minutes were confirmed at a meeting

held on 11 October 2017

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