



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

University
Secretary's
Office.

The Council, 25 November 2019

Report of the Senate

Date: 23 October 2019
Chair: The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC)
Secretary: Dr T Strike

For information

1. President & Vice-Chancellor's report

- 1.1 The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) presented the report, including:
- (a) P&VC's Report: Senate currently received the Report to the preceding Council meeting. In future, a Report would be specifically produced for Senate, which would enable more timely content to be included, relevant to the work of Senate.
 - (b) Augar Report: Government was understood to be considering the recommendations, but it was unclear which elements would be supported.
 - (c) Post-study work visas for international students: The return of the two year post-study work visa was welcome and it was anticipated to have an immediate effect on the International Strategy, for example, work had been undertaken in India following the announcement.
 - (d) Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Report: An EHRC report presented the findings of its inquiry into racial harassment in publicly funded universities in England, Scotland and Wales. The University had adopted a Race Equality Strategy and Action Plan in the spring of 2019.
 - (e) Contextual admissions: The Office for Students (OfS) had suggested that universities should take much greater account of the context in which exam results were achieved. The University of Sheffield used contextual admissions where it was appropriate to do so.
 - (f) Cyber security: There has recently been some high profile cases within the sector. The University was undertaking work, led by the Director of IT, to assess preparedness.
 - (g) Student recruitment: Home undergraduate numbers had fallen marginally below target, associated widening participation targets were met, whilst overseas undergraduate numbers exceeded the target. Overall, a positive outcome was achieved.
 - (h) Programme Level Approach (PLA): Student engagement continued and agreed priorities for 2019-20 included: strengthen programme content and assessment in relation to employability; to work on developing an inclusive curriculum; and embedding sustainable development.
 - (i) Research: Overall, there had been a slight increase in the research order book compared with the same time last year, although there had been a reduction in some significant areas. The first four research flagships (Sustainable Food; Neuroscience; Energy; and Healthy Lifespan) had successfully 'soft launched' at the end of April.

- 1.2 Discussion focussed on the Mentally Healthy Universities Pilot Programme in relation to staff, and on the University's relationships with other international universities.

2. Annual Academic Assurance Report

- 2.1 Senate considered a draft of the Annual Academic Assurance Report for submission to Council. The Report is provided to Council under agenda item 11.4. This was the first year that the Report had been produced by the new Senate Academic Assurance Committee, supporting the work of the Senate.

3. Knowledge Exchange Framework

- 3.1 Senate received a presentation on Knowledge Exchange. Discussion focussed on the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) including the metrics, data requirements, how it could influence future funding, and how the recent pilots would shape the final version of the KEF.

4. Semester Dates Consultation Proposal

Senate received and considered a proposal, following its request at its June 2019 meeting for a consultation on semester dates from 2024/25, for report back to Senate prior to making a recommendation to Council. Senate agreed to establish a Senate Task and Finish Group to lead a review on the academic year, taking into account a broad range of perspectives, and linking in to the Programme Level Approach.

5. Report of the Council

- 5.1 Senate received a report on the meeting of Council held on 8 July 2019.

6. Reports of committees

6.1 Committees of Senate

- 6.1.1 Senate approved the reports of the following committees:

- (a) Research Ethics Committee

(Meeting held on 4 September 2019)

Senate received and approved the Report, including recent complaints and breaches of the Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants, Personal Data and Human Tissue, feedback on events held in 2018/19; and projects funded by the Committee in 2018-19.

- (b) Senate Academic Assurance Committee

(Meeting held on 24 September 2019)

Senate received and approved the Report. Discussion concentrated on the themes the Committee planned to explore in 2019/20.

- (c) Senate Budget Committee

(Meetings held on 11 July and 3 October 2019)

Senate received and approved the Report. Attention was drawn to the summary of the key points from the Committee's meetings with individual Faculty Vice-Presidents during March and April 2019. Discussion included how to best make information on the 2018/19 Financial Results available to members of Senate.

- (d) Supplementary Report of the Senate Nominations Committee

(Meeting held on 29 May 2019)

Senate received and approved the supplementary report, including that the Terms of Reference of the Committee be amended to introduce a quorum of at least three members.

6.2 Other committees

6.2.1 Following the Senate Effectiveness Review, the following reports were circulated to members of Senate by email and not included on the Senate agenda: Estates Committee (meeting held on 16 May 2019); Finance Committee (meetings held on 9 May and 17 June 2019)

7. Returning Officers Report

7.1 Senate received for information the outcome of elections to Senate and of the elections of Senate members to serve on Council, Senate Academic Assurance Committee, and Senate Budget Committee.