



Minutes Meeting of the Senate

Date: 15 March 2023

Present: The President & Vice-Chancellor in the Chair

Professor S Beck, Dr R Bellaby, Professor S Bhaumik, Dr B Birdi, Professor R Blakeley, Professor A Blom, Professor G Brown, Professor C Buck, Dr J Burr, A Clements, Revd Dr J Clines, Professor S Cussen, Professor C Deery, Professor R Finn, Professor S Fitzmaurice, Professor J Flint, S Foxley, Professor G Gee, Dr S Hale, Dr V Halliday, Professor S Hartley, Professor P Hatton, Professor J Hodson, M Jones, Dr W Kitchen, Professor R Lawthom, Professor J Litster, Dr C Majewski, Professor Matthew Marshall, Professor Michelle Marshall, Professor M Mayfield, Professor C Miller, Professor E Milne, Professor T Moore, Professor D Mowbray, Dr S D North, Professor G Panoutsos, A Patterson, Dr E Poku, Dr R Simpson, Professor C Stokes, Professor M Strong, Professor C H Tan, Professor K Taylor-Jones, Professor A Tiwari, Dr D Vessey, Professor M T Vincent, Dr N Walkinshaw.

Secretary: J Strachan (Interim)

In attendance: M Borland, B Cook, A Davison, Dr N Harris, Dr A Isaac, A Morgan, Professor C Newman, D Swinn, A Winter.

Apologies: The Senate received apologies from 29 members.

Welcome

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

Members of Senate were reminded of the purpose of Senate. The statutes are clear that Senate subject to the control and approval of Council, oversees the teaching and research of the University and admission and regulation of students. The remit of Senate is teaching, research, admissions and regulations.

1. Declaration of Conflict of Interests

In relation to item 7, Development of the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Professor Chris Newman, Professor Arshad Majid, Dr Neil Harris and Alix Morgan are not members of Senate and were attending to present a proposal to Senate and respond to questions.

Also in relation to item 7, the Faculty Vice President Medicine, Dentistry and Health is a member of Senate and 13 other members of Senate are also in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health. The Senate members are all members of the Faculty under discussion and consequently may hold or be perceived to hold a conflict of interest. Senate noted

these conflicts and it was not proposed that any member be excluded from discussions today, acting only in their capacity as members of Senate acting in the University's best interests.

2. President & Vice-Chancellor's Report

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

- (a) Government's Spring Budget: The Chancellor announced that there would be 8 Investment Zone areas, including a South Yorkshire Investment Zone, with research organisations at their heart. There was also a recommitment to Great British Nuclear.
- (b) International students: A number of reports had suggested that the government may look to restrict international student numbers coming to the UK. This could be by changing rules on bringing family members, increasing income thresholds that have to be met before coming, preventing students from switching to a work visa until they have finished their course and/or making changes to the Graduate Visa Route. It was believed there were different opinions within government and the University had continued to make the case for international students.
- (c) International research collaboration: The UK and EU had reached an agreement on trading arrangements for Northern Ireland – the Windsor Framework – which removed the biggest obstacle to the UK being able to associate to Horizon Europe. However, recent Parliamentary answers and the Treasury's recent clawback of £1.6 billion reserved for association raises further doubts about the government's priorities in this area. The University was working with the Russell Group on this.
- (d) Teaching Excellence Framework: The University had made its TEF submission. Although the University had some concerns regarding the evaluation process and methodology in the exercise, it was confident that it had done all it could to achieve the best possible outcome.

In response to a submitted question it was explained that the Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate intentionally did not include an update on industrial action. The report of the Senate Education Committee covered matters in relation to industrial action relevant to Senate. The Vice-Chancellor's Report to the 27 February meeting of Council contained a detailed update on the latest industrial action.

During discussion, it was clarified that the University was examining scenarios regarding the potential financial impact of any national decisions on international students. Some of the information could be provided to Senate, but some would not be appropriate for Senate, for example commercially sensitive information. A set of priorities had been agreed to help the University inform the manifesto development of government and opposition parties, including mitigation for the rising cost of living for students.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

A request to amend the second paragraph of the “Welcome” section had been received. It was proposed to, and approved by Senate to amend the text to read:

‘A motion was submitted relating to the effects on academic matters of the industrial action over pay, pensions and working conditions. The University Secretary explained that pay, pensions and conditions were not within the remit of Senate however, the impact of the industrial action on the student experience was a matter for Senate and its committees. This matter was scheduled to be considered by the Senate Education Committee on 9 February 2023, with a report coming to the next meeting of Senate’

A request to amend the Minutes to include the full, original wording of a question submitted had been received in advance of the meeting. It was not proposed to amend the Minutes.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2022, having been circulated, and with the “Welcome” section amended as above, were approved as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising on the Minutes

There was one other matter arising on the Minutes that were not covered elsewhere on the Agenda:

- (a) **Item 4 (a), Senate Questionnaire:** The Senate Questionnaire Small Group had met in December and March and the questionnaire would be circulated to members of Senate. It was confirmed that the Questionnaire would not be circulated to members of Senate on a day that industrial action was taking place.

5. Matters Requiring Approval

Senate received and noted a summary of the matters for which Senate’s formal approval was sought.

6. Mental Health Strategy

Senate received and noted a presentation on the Mental Health Strategy, including the Student Minds University Mental Health Charter; University activity to date; the Charter accreditation process; and plans for a Mental Health Strategy Action Plan.

During discussion, it was acknowledged that enhancing communication of relevant services was an ongoing process, and as an immediate step mental health support and resources available to staff would be included in an upcoming edition of “This Week In Focus”. It was intended to improve the quality of internal monthly reporting data by the end of the academic year and to then consider publishing the data. The physical location of the occupational health services was under active consideration. There could be a better connection between the policies in relation to student death and staff death.

7. Development of the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health

Senate considered proposals for the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health and approved the following:

- (i) In accordance with Regulation II (6.2.2) and (6.2.3), whereby Council reserves to itself the power to approve the establishment or abolition of faculties or departments and their titles and other major changes in the University's organisational structure, and in accordance with Regulation IX (1.1.9), Senate recommend to Council the approval of:
 - (a) a proposed new structure for the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health, comprising of: School of Medicine and Population Health, including the Divisions of Clinical Medicine, Neuroscience, and Population Health; School of Clinical Dentistry; School of Allied Health Professions, Nursing and Midwifery; and
 - (b) a change of the Faculty's name from the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health to the Faculty of Health; with effect from 1 August 2023.
- (ii) Senate also recommend to Council the amendment of Regulation IX (2.1.6) relating to the composition of Senate, to reflect the new Faculty structure, with effect from 1 August 2023.

During discussion, one of the benefits of the proposals was highlighted, namely that it would enable greater work across current departmental boundaries. It was believed that most prospective students identified with a course, rather than a structure and the proposals would enable the student offer to be enhanced over the longer term. It was clarified that the Faculty of Science had been consulted regarding any implications of name changes. Whilst it was acknowledge that there could potentially be some operational barriers to the implementation of the proposals, the learning from other recent changes, e.g. Biosciences, was being drawn on. It was confirmed that the proposals had not been driven from a perspective of reducing staff numbers.

8. Trusted Research:

Senate received and noted a presentation on trusted research, including the risks related to collaboration; the responsibilities of the University; the University's risk-based approach; and the responsibilities of researchers.

Senate discussed the pros and cons of a mandatory training course for trusted research and the Vice-President for Research and Innovation would explore approaches to raising awareness and compliance, without necessarily introducing a mandatory training course. The potential negative impacts of researchers working in low/middle income countries would be considered in the next review of the University's Good Research & Innovation Practices (GRIP) Policy. Collaborations that involved a contract would require due diligence to take place in advance of a contract being signed and informal conversations with Research Services could take place as necessary for unfunded collaborations.

Senate agreed that it would have an annual update on trusted research.

REPORTS FROM STATUTORY BODIES

9. Report on the Proceedings of the Council (Meetings held on 27 February 2023)

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

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

10. Report of the Senate Academic Assurance Committee (Meeting held on 7 February 2023)

Senate received and noted the report including the Committee's recent work in relation to access and participation and the Committee's consideration of feedback from Council on the 2021/22 Senate Annual Academic Assurance Report.

11. Report of the Senate Education Committee (Meeting held on 9 February 2023)

Senate received the Report and approved the following:

- (a) A Placements and Work-based Learning Policy, effective from 1 September 2023
- (b) The Degree Outcome statement, effective from 1 August 2023
- (c) New, Significantly Amended, Suspended and Discontinued Programmes recommended by Faculties between 9 November 2022 and 30 January 2023, effective from 16 March 2023
- (d) Updates to Regulation XV, General Regulations for First Degrees, to confirm the University's degree algorithm, effective from 1 August 2023, subject to amendment of paragraphs 55 & 56 to refer to '39.5 or above' and '49.5 or above' rather than 'above 39.5' and 'above 49.5' respectively
- (e) Updates to Regulation XIV, General University Regulations, on Students on Taught Programmes to clarify requirements for students on specific clinical programmes returning from a Leave of Absence on medical grounds, effective from 1 August 2023
- (f) Updates to the programme regulations for the MBChB to allow a classifiable exit award after three years of study, effective from 1 August 2023
- (g) Updates to Regulation XIV, General University Regulations, on Fees to make clear that the payment of University fees can only be made via the University Payment Pages, effective from 1 August 2023.

Senate also noted the Industrial action: Education delivery paper.

In response to a submitted question regarding a motion requested for consideration at the Committee's February meeting, the motion was read out at the meeting and the Committee was of the view that staffing and industrial relations were outwith the remit of Senate and its committees and so the discussion at the Committee focused on the impact on students. In response to a submitted question regarding Action Short Of a Strike, it was clarified that

not replacing teaching lost to strike action or providing educational materials relating to teaching lost to strike action is covered by ASOS until such point as that mandate expires.

During discussion, it was clarified that for student complaints regarding lost learning due to industrial action and Covid restrictions the data alone could not provide the reasons for the rejection of a complaint as cases would be assessed on an individual basis. Senate recorded its thanks to the Chair, Dr Siobhán North, and members of the Quality and Scrutiny Sub-Committee for the work on the degree algorithm.

12. Report of the Senate Research and Innovation Committee

(Meeting held on 1 February 2023)

Senate received and approved the following:

- (a) Amendments to Regulation XVI, General Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research, to bring the regulations into line with how PGR provision currently operates at the University

13. Report of the Senate University Research Ethics Committee

(Meeting held on 8 February 2023)

Senate received and noted the report including: ensuring that projects are academically reviewed prior to submission of a University ethics application; annual report of ethics breaches of ethics approval requirements, and other ethics concerns, demand for ethics reviewer training; and Data Protection Team oversight of ethics applications.

OTHER MATTERS

14. Student Formal Procedure Cases: Report to Senate 2021-22

Senate received and noted the report.

15. Annual Report of the Library

Senate received and noted the report.

16. Report on Action Taken

Senate received and noted the report.

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.

18. Any Other Business

There was no other business.