Minutes of the Meeting of the Senate

Date: 10 December 2014

Present: The Vice-Chancellor, in the Chair
Professor Anderson, Mr Ashman, Professor Ayscough, Professor Biggins, Dr Blake, Professor Brandist, Dr Brereton, Professor Buck, Ms Burns, Dr Butler, Professor Campbell, Mr Clayden, Dr Cotter, Mr Diaz De Aguilar Puiggari, Professor Dobson, Professor Fitzmaurice, Professor Flint, Dr Foster, Professor Freckleton, Professor Goldman, Ms Green, Mrs Hart, Mr Harrison, Dr Hernandez, Professor Hervey, Professor Hodson, Professor Hounslow, Mr Hudson, Professor Jackson, Professor Keefe, Dr Kim, Dr Kitchen, Professor Koh, Professor Labbe, Dr Lawford-Smith, Mr Lewis, Mr Maniyani, Mrs Marriott, Professor Marsh, Ms McClean, Dr McGourlay, Ms McKeown, Mrs Moore, Mr Morecroft, Professor Newman, Dr Nicholson, Dr North, Professor Nutbrown, Professor Oglethorpe, Dr O'Reilly, Professor Peat, Dr Perrault, Professor Phillips, Ms Prout, Mr Rapier, Professor Saul, Ms Shafritz, Ms Shwaikh, Professor Simons, Mr Simpson, Professor Sims, Professor Siva-Jothy, Dr Slatter, Dr Snook, Dr Soubes, Mr Stern, Professor Stevenson, Professor Stone, Dr Swift, Mr Sykes, Professor Valentine, Dr Vasilaki, Professor Vincent, Professor Walters, Mr Ward, Professor Warren, Mr Weight, Professor White, Professor Williams, Professor Williamson, Dr Winter

Secretary: Dr A West

In attendance: Mrs Barker, Mr Brown, Mr Dodman, Ms Green, Mr Rabone, Dr Strike, Mr Swinn

Apologies: The Senate received apologies from 19 members.

WELCOME

DEATHS

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

Emeritus Professor John Allan Barnard, Newton Drew Chair of Chemical Engineering and Fuel Technology and Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering, and a member of staff from 1 September 1977 to 30 September 1982, aged 86.

Emeritus Professor Frank Benson, Professor and Head of Department in the Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering from 1967 to 1987 and Pro-Vice Chancellor from 1972 to 1976, aged 93.

Melvyn Bilbey, Fire Equipment Technician in the Department of Estates & Facilities Management, and a member of staff since 2002, aged 63.
Dr Victoria Henshaw, Lecturer in the Department of Town & Regional Planning, and a member of staff from 2013 to 2014, aged 43.

Stephen Hughes, former undergraduate student in the Department of Geography, who passed away October 2014, aged 23.

Eric Edward Stanley, Principal Lecturer in Architecture in the School of Architecture, and a member of staff from 1965 to 1968, aged 85.

Glyn Woods, Technician in the Department of Animal & Plant Sciences, and a member of staff from 1 September 1966 to 10 February 2012, aged 67.

Members stood in memory.

1. VICE-CHANCELLOR’S PRESENTATION AND REPORT

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

(a) The External Environment: A combination of external influencing factors meant that the University should continue to monitor events and contribute to debate on key issues. The Chancellor of the Exchequer’s recent Autumn Statement was inextricably linked to the forthcoming UK General Election, in May 2015. A subsequent Spending Review was expected to result in further cuts to public spending, which would impact on many of the University’s activities. The UK’s continued membership of the EU was vital to national success generally but also to the University as a truly international scholarly community. The rhetoric around UK immigration policy and the increased profile of UKIP was source of real concern. The University had been, and would continue to be, at the forefront of efforts to promote the benefits of internationalisation by building on the success of the award winning #weareinternational campaign (see also Minute 1(i), below). Additional challenges were noted around overseas political change, particularly in countries from which the University traditionally recruited heavily; and the smaller population of 18 year old UK students.

(b) The Chancellor’s Autumn Statement (1), PGT Loans: The announcement of a new loan system to support PGT students from 2016/17 was cautiously welcomed, given the prohibitive costs and aversion to debt of graduates under the £9k UG tuition fee regime. However, there were reservations over the long term sustainability of another government-backed loan scheme. The purpose of the loans was laudable - to ensure fair access to PGT study and to the professions but the University had produced strong evidence of the benefits of a more targeted approach to PGT support through its leadership of the Postgraduate Student Support scheme, a consortium of six universities funded by HEFCE Catalyst monies that had benefited over 400 students nationally through the use of scholarships. A successful event had been held on 28 November to celebrate the 100 students who had been able to accept a PGT place at the University thanks to the award of a scholarship.

(c) The Chancellor’s Autumn Statement (2), Research and Innovation: The announcement of £5.9bn investment in research infrastructure from 2016-2021 was positive but had to be viewed in the context that the Government had set an extremely challenging target of £10bn efficiency savings in public spending by 2017-18. Dedicated funding for High Value Manufacturing and the new Sir Henry Royce Institute for Advanced Materials Research and Innovation Centre would specifically benefit the University. It was noted that spending commitments would not be confirmed until after the General
(d) **Science and Innovation Strategy:** The Government’s new Science and Innovation Strategy was still awaited, an announcement having been expected following the Autumn Statement. A number of matters were reported to be the subject of intense political debate, the outcome of which could have marked implications on the HE sector, for example a potential review of Research Councils. It was reported that Ministers appeared to prefer a targeted approach to research funding according to economic and policy drivers, rather than quality related (QR) funding by block grant. It was essential to the future sustainability of UK HE’s research excellence that QR funding was retained together with the inherent degree of institutional autonomy that this implied. The University and the sector as a whole needed to mount a robust defence of QR if the UK was to maintain and enhance its global strength in research outputs.

(e) **The University Strategic Plan:** The current phase of development involved a series of engagement events, each focused on one of five broad themes and including an external guest speaker: Our Research; Our Place Globally and Locally; Our Social Responsibility; Our Strategic Partners; Our Education and Student Experience. Senate noted the success of the three workshops that had taken place to date in generating ideas and stimulating debate. Further work would take place to summarise the key outcomes of the workshops to inform a Council workshop and further Senate discussion in due course. In due course additional larger-scale events would facilitate continued engagement with the wider University and provide opportunities for colleagues to comment on the ideas and themes that emerged from the workshops.

(f) **Executive Structure:** It was reported that the roles of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) were now being advertised and Members were invited to encourage applications from interested parties. Search partners had been appointed and the University hoped to be in a position to make offers during the Spring of 2015. Clarification was provided that the remuneration package included a 10% performance related bonus and that this was the case for all members of UEB. Ongoing work was reviewing aspects of the role of the Registrar and Secretary involving wide ranging discussions with colleagues across the University. Senate noted that recruitment to the role of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health) would commence early in 2015.

(g) **REF 2014 Results:** The results of the REF 2014 would be published on 18 December. Institutional results and quartile data would be received from HEFCE on 16 December, with the full results being made available to UEB and relevant senior colleagues under strict embargo on 17 December. Senate was reminded that the purpose of the REF was to inform the allocation of research funding across the sector and the key for the University was therefore to maximise its institutional position. The analysis of results would be unconnected with performance management; UEB would focus on the means by which to promote the University as a whole whilst remaining conscious of the need to respond to any specific matters.

(h) **Student Systems Project:** Good progress was being made with the initial phase of this project, which was of critical importance to the University’s overall mission. A review had taken place of the existing system and associated processes, with significant and welcome input from professional and academic colleagues from across the University that was informing the
next stage of development. This was a large and challenging undertaking and Members were urged to notify any process issues that they were made aware of to the Project Group and to encourage other colleagues to contribute.

(i) Awards: The University had enjoyed outstanding success at the Times Higher Education awards. The pioneering #weareinternational campaign had won Outstanding International Student Strategy; the fundamental importance of international students, staff and collaborations was not widely appreciated outside the sector and it was vital to maintain the momentum that the campaign had generated in celebrating the contribution of overseas staff and students to UK HE and society in general. The award for Widening Participation Initiative of the Year reflected the achievements of the first full annual cohort of 250 Advanced Apprenticeships employed by high value manufacturing companies at the Advanced Manufacturing Research Training Centre. The University had also won the award for Outstanding Support for Early Career Researchers for Think Ahead, a framework for the professional development of researchers that supported individual career ambitions in and beyond academia.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 01 OCTOBER 2014

The Minutes of the meeting held on 01 October, having been circulated, were approved.

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 13 October 2014)

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
(Meeting held on 26 November 2014)

Senate received and approved the Report, including:

(a) Achieve More: A series of recommendations for outstanding sub-elements of Achieve More and other underpinning elements, was approved as follows:

   (i) Final Year Modules: A set of principles for final year (levels 3 or 4) modules as part of Achieve More, building on learning at levels 1 and 2 and extending it to meet the overall vision. The initial phase of work would comprise a stocktake of existing modules against these principles. Clarification was provided that there was no requirement for Departments to develop new core modules and this would be
reflected in amended wording to the principles as follows (amendments in italics):

- Activities will form part of an existing or, if necessary, a new core module embedded within the programme structure.

(ii) Elective Modules: Further work should take place to create an enhanced package of existing elective modules that reflected both the University’s aspiration for its students and their needs, including the identification of areas for further development or for change. It was confirmed that this work would be timed to coincide with the production of a new Learning and Teaching Strategy and any changes would not be introduced until 2016.

(iii) Assessment: Senate endorsed a proposal that work on the Learning and Teaching Strategy should include a holistic evaluation of programme design to ensure that assessment methods were fit for purpose. Senate approved a set of updated principles of assessment for Departments to use when reviewing curricula during the interim period.

(iv) Guidance on non-credit bearing requirements: Senate approved a guideline of a maximum of one compulsory non-credit bearing activity with a maximum 100 notional study hours for students each year in addition to any Achieve More requirements and a series of related considerations to inform programme design.

(b) Post-16 Outreach Programmes: Principles for Alternative Offers: Senate approved the principles for making alternative offers to participants in a qualifying Post-16 outreach programme. Senate also endorsed a principle, which had been approved by UEB, that: alternative offers would not enable a student to have guaranteed entry with grades below those set by the University Executive Board as the minimum offer requirement for that year. That is, no offer would be made (standard or alternative) that was below the minimum agreed by UEB.

(c) Committee and Sub-Committee Terms of Reference of Membership: Senate approved a number of minor amendments to the terms of reference and membership of Learning and Teaching Committee and its Sub-Committees.

(d) Employability Strategy: Senate approved work to update the University’s Employability Strategy. This should be informed by the next iteration of the Learning and Teaching Strategy and include Achieve More, PGT students’ employability and any changes to the attributes associated with the Sheffield Graduate.

(e) Amendments to the General Regulations for Higher Degrees: Senate approved an amendment to Regulation 10 of the General Regulations for Higher Degrees relating to the right of students to transfer between programmes and faculties, to match the Regulations for First Degrees.

(f) Collaborative Arrangement Exit Award: Senate approved the new collaborative exit awards of Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate as part of the Centre for Doctoral Training in Integrated Tribology that was delivered jointly with the University of Leeds.
(g) Programmes approved by Faculties: Senate approved the new, discontinued and significantly amended programmes approved by Faculties between 17 September and 18 November 2014.

7. **RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**  
(Meetings held on 28 October 2014)

Senate received and approved the Report. In particular, the Committee’s recruitment of a Student Intern, under the ‘On Campus’ scheme, would aid the ongoing development of a suite of online and digital resources that promoted the importance and value of ethics to researchers at all levels across the University. It was reported that changes to the Declaration of Helsinki, which set out the requirements for registering research involving human participants, had suggested an extended application beyond clinical research. The Committee continued to monitor good practice across the sector, having previously noted that no significant changes had been implemented in response to these changes and that the University remained compliant.

The Chair of the Committee would be standing down in order to focus on his role as Faculty Director for Research and Innovation (Medicine). On behalf of Senate, the Vice-Chancellor thanked Professor Newman for his effort and leadership in directing the work of the Committee.

8. **REPORT OF THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE**  
(Meeting held on 19 November 2014)

Senate received and approved the Report. Attention was drawn to a series of ongoing projects that together formed a cohesive framework within which the University could enhance its support for doctoral students and researchers. The Library was engaged in ensuring that the University complied with the requirements of the EPSRC Research Data Management Roadmap and CICS were involved in work to enhance IT provision for this user group. Additional work was taking place to promote high standards of integrity in research and innovation activities throughout the University’s research community.

9. **REPORT OF THE SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
(Meeting held on 6 November 2014)

Senate received and approved the Report, noting that full minutes of the Committee’s meetings were published on its website. The Committee was keen to promote and share more widely the range of resources that were available on its dedicated web pages, having noted that there had been a low level of engagement with the content to date. However, where feedback had been received this had been overwhelmingly positive. The Committee aimed to help Senators and other colleagues understand the University’s financial processes so that they could ask relevant questions about financial matters. In particular, a new ‘Financial FAQs’ document had been added to the new ‘Resources’ section and was commended to Members as a valuable tool.

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

10. **REPORT OF THE HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE**  
(Action taken on behalf of the Committee)

Senate received and approved the Report of the Honorary Degrees Committee.
REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

11. REPORT OF THE ESTATES COMMITTEE
(Meeting held on 21 May and 12 September 2014)

Senate received and noted the Report of the Estates Committee.

12. REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
(Meetings held on 20 October 2014)

Senate received and noted the Reports of the Finance Committee.

13. REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
(Meeting held on 14 October 2014)

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

14. REPORT OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
(Meeting held on 8 October 2014)

Senate received and noted the Report of the Human Resource Management Committee.

OTHER MATTERS

15. LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

Senate received and noted the Annual Report of the Library.

16. ANNUAL REPORT OF CASES REVIEWED EXTERNALLY BY THE OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR 2013-14

Senate received and noted the Annual Report of cases reviewed externally by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

17. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE APPEALS COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE RELATING TO THE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS 2013-14

Senate received and noted the Annual report of the Appeals Committee of Senate relating to the progress of students 2013-14.


Senate received and noted the Annual report of the Discipline Committee and the Disciplinary Appeals Committee of Senate 2013-14.

19. REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN

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

20. 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. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL RESULTS SUMMARY

A report on the quarterly financial results to 31 October 2014 was received and noted.

These Minutes were confirmed at a meeting

held on 25 March 2015

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