Minutes of Meeting of the Senate

Date: 22 June 2016

Present: The Vice-Chancellor, in the Chair
Ms Allen, Professor Bateman, Professor Bath, Professor Biggins, Dr Blake, Professor Buck, Professor Campbell, Ms Cavasin, Professor Clarke, Dr Cooper, Professor Cowell, Professor Crowther, Dr Cruise, Professor Derrick, Professor Dobson, Dr Fairclough, Dr Foster, Professor Gillet, Professor Grasby, Professor Gray, Ms Green, Professor Grundy, Mrs Hague, Professor Harrison, Professor Hodson, Ms Horn, Professor Hounslow, Mr Hudson, Professor Jackson, Mr Jary, Dr Kim, Dr Kitchen, Professor Labbe, Ms Lim, Dr MacIntosh, Professor Maltby, Mrs Marriott, Professor Marsh, Professor McCallam, Ms McClean, Mr McMorrow, Ms McKeown, Dr Molyneaux-Hodgson, Professor Morgan, Ms Mullaney, Mrs Nolan, Professor Oglethorpe, Miss Paisley, Mr Parekh, Miss Pattacini, Dr Perrault, Professor Pitts, Ms Popa, Dr Pope, Mr Rapier, Dr Simpson, Mr Simpson, Professor Sims, Professor Siva-Jothy, Dr Snook, Dr Stokes, Dr Surtees, Dr Swift, Mr Sykes, Professor Valentine, Professor von Fay-Siebenburgen, Dr Wainwright, Professor Walters, Professor West, Professor Williamson, Professor Winder, Dr Winter, Professor Winter, Professor Wright

Secretary: Dr A West

In attendance: Mrs Arnold, Mr Barker, Mrs Barker, Mrs Birch, Mr Borland, Mr Rabone, Dr Strike, Mr Swinn, Ms Woodcock

Apologies: The Senate received apologies from 24 members.

WELCOME

Members of Senate were welcomed to the meeting.

DEATHS

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

Rachael Brough, undergraduate student in the Department of Psychology. Aged 24.

Professor Stanley Gregory, Professor in the Department of Geography, Head of Department, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Pro-Vice-Chancellor between 1984-8 and a member of staff from 1968 to 1988. Aged 90.

Yiannis Hadjigeorgiou, postgraduate student in the School of Law. Aged 25.

Cheryl Mahmoud, postgraduate student in the Department of English Language and Linguistics. Aged 48.
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) **Higher Education White Paper**: Senate received an overview of the HE White Paper. It was important to recognise that Government’s approach to improve the sector was based on increased marketisation of the sector. This perspective was refuted as it was felt that there is already a significant amount of competition within the sector and the UK HE sector was one of the most successful in the world.

(b) **Higher Education and Research Bill**: The Bill proposed the replacement of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992; creation of the Office for Students; creation of UK Research and Innovation; and introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) with new metrics and the potential to increase fees within a cap. The student perspective was that TEF had been devised simply as a means to facilitate increasing tuition fees for Home/EU students.

(c) **Teaching Excellence Framework**: The University’s approach to ‘excellence’ has been to focus on what was important to the institution in terms of its mission, values and identity. The TEF would be in addition to the existing Quality Assurance system and would be an extra cost for institutions. Participation was technically voluntary, although by default the University was in TEF Phase 1, with the later stages being voluntary. The use of metrics was viewed as a way to help students and other stakeholders differentiate between providers and linked to marketisation of the sector. However, there was widespread concern that the nature of the metrics meant that they were effectively ‘proxy’ measures that did not fully capture ‘excellence’. Linking the TEF to fees would enable institutions meeting the criteria to increase fees by inflation, so this would not result in a real terms increase in fees.

In year 1 of TEF, in 2016/17, all providers with a successful QA award would receive a ‘Meets Expectations’ rating and consequently be able to consider raising fees in line with inflation - 2.8% - for students entering 2017/18. Year 2 of TEF, 2017/18 was an optional, trial year with a technical consultation to inform implementation. A number of colleagues had expressed an interest in being on the national TEF Panel and the University was actively supportive in their wish to do so.

A Steering Group has been set up to provide direction and included key academic, professional services and students’ union representation. In terms of the timescales, BIS’ technical consultation on the TEF closes on 12 July with applications for inclusion opening in October 2016 and closing in
December 2016. These would be evaluated in February and March 2017 and the outcomes notified to institutions in April 2017. The University would then undertake an evaluation of the process to inform future iterations.

(d) **Office for Students:** The OfS has been based on the model of a regulator in other sectors, for example water and electricity supply, and would be funded by institutions. However, the regulation of these markets was not viewed as a suitable model for HE.

(e) **Degree apprentices:** There was cross party recognition of a need for new vocational or industrially sponsored routes. However, they should not be viewed as a cheap alternative to more traditional HE qualifications. Good quality teaching remained essential to all learners, ideally informed by high quality research activity, as evidenced by the success of the AMRC Training Centre.

(f) **Research:** It was reported that the Higher Education and Research Bill proposed changes to the structure of the Research Councils, with the existing Research Councils amalgamated into UK Research and Innovation. The Global Challenges Research Fund will not be within the remit of Research Councils and was intended to be a genuine inter-disciplinary funding pot. Sheffield was seen as a leader in industrial funding, particularly through the AMRC and NAMRC. The University had played a leading role in the successful Sheffield City Region bid to participate in the first round of Science and Innovation Audits to assess the assets of a region and understand what the commercial opportunities might be. The Stern Review of the Research Excellence Framework is likely to publish its report in July. Preparatory work for the next REF has been undertaken, including the 2016 annual stocktake. It was positive to note that HM Treasury were beginning to understand that funding research on a flat-cash basis was not sustainable if the UK was to maintain and grow its reputation for excellence.

(g) **EU Referendum and our international community:** An open letter from the heads of HE institutions, including the University’s Vice-Chancellor, had been published in the Independent. The Vice-Chancellor thanked those areas of the University that have held referendum debates, for example the Politics Department and the Students’ Union working with Student Services. Members of Senate were encouraged to keep progressing EU funded research applications. In the event of a ‘leave’ vote the negotiating period between the UK and the EU would be 2 years from the date that the UK activated the provisions of Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. A list of Frequently Asked Questions was being compiled and members of Senate were asked to send any questions arising from a ‘leave’ vote to eu@sheffield.ac.uk. Politics has had a wider impact on universities as a home for international talent. For example, the rhetoric and policy on immigration and visas was seen as damaging to trust and recruitment. The University had responded positively in a number of ways, including by making the case for international scholarship beyond borders; registering students to vote; working with others to make a strong case on post-work study and removing students from migration figures; leading on #weareinternational; setting up the All Party Parliamentary Group on International Students; pressing for policy to be devolved to the City Region; and hosting the UKCISA annual conference in Sheffield.

(g) **Financial approach:** The University’s approach was to be vigilant on costs and to ensure that it was making the best use of capital expenditure, whilst looking to maximise and diversify income streams. There has been positive action to encourage international students and a greater focus on campaigns and student support via philanthropy.
(h) **Thanks:** The Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Senate, thanked Professor Richard Jones who will step down as Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research & Innovation on 1 September 2016; Professor Tony Ryan who has stepped down as the Pro Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Science; and Professor Tony Weetman who stepped down as Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health earlier in the year. The Vice-Chancellor also thanked the outgoing Students’ Union officers for their work during the year.

2. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2015**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2016, 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.

5. **OUR STRATEGIC PLAN: LEARNING AND TEACHING PLAN (2016 - 2021)**

Senate approved a Learning and Teaching Plan 2016-2021 and noted that the Plan will be received by Council on 11 July, having previously been endorsed by Learning and Teaching Committee.

The plan sets out the strategic direction for learning and teaching by highlighting the key areas of focus for the coming five years. By establishing a number of major themes, it would allow all faculties, departments and professional services to plan their activities to support the overall vision. The Plan was produced following an extensive period of consultation with staff, students and alumni. Over 600 individuals took part in various consultation activities between November 2015 and April 2016.

Points noted in discussion included the following:

- It was important to look beyond metrics and look at how to enhance the student journey, including recognising the importance of effective student engagement as an aspect of ‘excellence’.
- The Students’ Union view was that the University should have a discussion regarding its participation in the voluntary aspects of the TEF.


Senate endorsed the draft implementation plan for the ‘Our Research and its Impact’ section of the University Strategic Plan, which will also be received by Council in due course.

The implementation plan set out the institutional direction of travel in the following four strategic areas:
1. Concentrate our focus on key research strengths, where we are acknowledged global leaders
2. Continuity and resources for major growth programmes
3. Increase high quality international research partnerships
4. Promote new initiatives for early career researchers

The draft plan was intended to be generic in nature, so that it provided the appropriate context to support both faculty and cross-cutting research strategies.

Points noted in discussion included the following:

- In relation to the involvement of Faculties other than the Faculty of Engineering in the Advanced Manufacturing Park (AMP), the Faculty of Science had been looking at whether there are opportunities at the AMP that would be suitable but there was no intention to transfer activities, particularly teaching and other student-facing activities, from the central campus.
- Whilst the Faculty of Engineering’s discovery centre was located on the central campus, a translational centre required a large space with a lower density of occupation, for which the AMP was ideally suited.
- Doctoral students were looking to strengthen their contribution to, and role within, the University and representation on the Research and Innovation Committee could be one way of achieving this.

REPORTS FROM STATUTORY BODIES

7. REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL
(Meeting held on 25 April 2015)

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

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

8. REPORT OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE
(Meeting held on 11 April and 18 May 2016)

Senate received and approved the Report, including:

(a) Languages for All – fee waiver eligibility relaxation: The principle of relaxing fee-waiver eligibility restrictions for all students for Languages for All. It was noted that a business case outlining the costs, benefits and implications would be brought back to Senate before implementation.

(b) Lecture Capture: A proposal to delay full implementation of opt-out lecture capture by one year with full implementation of the lecture capture policy for 2017/18 onwards. It was noted during discussion that implementation was a Learning and Teaching process, rather than a technical one and that delay of one year would enable for a more successful implementation.

(c) Governance Structures for Learning and Teaching: A revised governance structure for the sub-committees of the Learning and Teaching Committee including:
   - The disbandment of Enhancement and Strategy Sub-Committee and Admissions and Outreach Sub-Committee;
   - Increasing the number of meetings of the LTC and the Quality and Scrutiny Sub-Committee (QSC) per year to 6;
   - Changing the status of the Committee for Collaborative Provision to a Sub-Committee of LTC and broaden its remit to cover other types of
partnerships:
- Removing the need for the Board for Extra Faculty Provision to report to QSC and change the operation of the Board to function in an equivalent way to a Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee;
- Adding the Chairs of sub-committees and the Extra Faculty Provision Learning and Teaching Committee to the membership of LTC.

(d) General Regulations: A number of amendments to the General Regulations as detailed in the Report.

(e) Collaborative Partnerships: New collaborative arrangements including:
- The model of collaboration for a proposed MMet in Advanced Metallurgy (DL) to be delivered to employees of Turnium in Mexico;
- A variation to the collaborative agreement with Mahanakhorn University of Technology;
- A new MSc in Management Digital Innovation with SNSPA Bucharest;
- Renewal of the Collaborative Agreement with the College of the Resurrection and Yorkshire Ministry Course (Mirfield);
- Renewal of the collaborative agreement leading to a dual award of the University of Sheffield and Doshisha University.

(f) Programmes of study: The new, significantly amended and discontinued programmes approved by Faculties between 9 February and 3 May 2016.

9. REPORT OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
(Meeting held on 11 May 2016)

Senate received and approved the Report, including a procedure for dealing with Research Ethics Committee members and potential conflicts of interest. Attention was drawn to:

(a) The expression of thanks of the Committee to all those outside of the Committee who have been involved in reviewing Research Ethics Policy Notes, as part of the on-going review of the Ethics Policy.

(b) Workload allocation for members of academic staff on UREC and recommendations regarding the minimum estimated time commitment for various academic staff roles within the Committee, as a guide for departments to consider in relation to workload allocations.

(c) A significant increase in the number of applications received this year, although this is in line with the year on year increase in numbers of applications.

10. REPORT OF THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE
(Meeting held on 19 May 2016)

Senate received and approved the Report, including:

(a) The establishment of the Sheffield Institute for Nucleic Acids (SInFoNiA), which will unite the University’s research excellence in nucleic acids and provide an externally visible structure for nucleic acid based interdisciplinary/translational research.

(b) New principles and procedures, as set out in the Report, to govern the transfer of research data, which relates to human participants, between principal investigators within the university.

(c) A change to the University’s definition of health care research to “health care research is research that requires NHS ethics approval.” This would conform with NHS guidelines.
11. REPORT OF THE SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE  
(Meeting held on 9 June 2016)

Senate received and approved the Report. Attention was drawn to:
(a) The Committee had received a presentation about the AMRC Group from the Financial Controller. The Committee believed there would be a benefit in broadening the understanding of the AMRC within the university.
(b) The quarterly financial results to 30 April 2016 showed an underlying surplus of £9m which compared to a £7m underlying surplus at the same point in 2015. Other activities fluctuated by £50m over the same time period, however, this included money received which was already committed under the new accounting standard FRS102 and risked creating an inaccurate perception of the financial position.
(c) The Committee had arranged individual meetings with each of the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor to discuss the University’s financial processes and related matters. The Chair would shortly be having an annual meeting with the University Executive Board.

12. REPORT OF THE SENATE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE  
(Meeting held on 9 June 2016)

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

13. REPORT OF THE HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE  
(Meetings held on 10 March 2016)

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

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

14. REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
(Meeting held on 14 March 2016)

Senate received and noted the Report of the Finance Committee.

15. REPORT OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
(Meeting held on 10 March 2016)

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

16. REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE  
(Meeting held on 8 February 2016)

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

17. LEGACY GIFT

Senate received and approved a Report regarding a legacy gift allocating the funds to the University’s Senate. Senate approved the sending of a letter from the Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of Senate, to the District Probate Office to confirm that Mr David Meadows, the Development Officer for Legacies and Individual Giving at the University of Sheffield, is formally authorised to act on behalf of the University and the University Senate in relation to the estate of the late Mrs Patricia Mary Morris.

18. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL RESULTS SUMMARY

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

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. DATES OF MEETINGS OF SENATE IN 2016-17

Senate received and noted the dates of meetings of Senate in 2016-17.

These Minutes were confirmed at a meeting

held on 19 October 2016

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