

# THE SENATE



## Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June, 2010

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (Professor E.D.J.Acton) (in the Chair), the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor T.B. Ward), the Deans of Faculty (Professor J. Cook, Professor I. Harvey and Professor N. Ward), Head of School (Professor J.D.Charmley), Academic Representatives (Dr. N. Cooper, Dr. J. Cross, Professor M. Jancovich, Dr. A. Manning, Dr. A Mueller, Professor C. Osborne, Dr. M. Pfeil, Professor V. Rayward-Smith and Mr C. Wadlow), the Dean of Students (Dr. A. Grant), the Director of Information Services (Mr J. Colam-French), Mr D.Palmer (City College Norwich) and representatives of the Union of UEA Students (Mr D. Sheppard and Mr T. Sutton)

With: The Registrar and Secretary (Mr B. J. Summers), the Deputy Registrar and Secretary (Mr R. P. Evans), the Director of Taught Programmes (Professor G. R. Moore) (Minute 37 refers), the Director of Partnerships (Ms E.G. Towner) (Minute 37 refers), the Head of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office (Ms A. E. Rhodes), the Senior Assistant Registrar, Vice-Chancellor's Office (Ms L. A. Williams) and the Committee Clerk (Mrs R. Phillips)

Apologies: Professor T. D. Davies, Dr. B. A. Lankford, Professor N. R. Pandit, and Professor D. J. Richardson.

28. MINUTES

Confirmed  
the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February, 2010.

29. THE COUNCIL

Reported  
that the Council, at its meeting on 8 March, 2010, considered the reports of the Senate from its meeting on 24 February, 2010 (Minutes 44, 45 and \*\*46) and approved the recommendations they contained.

30. STATEMENTS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Reported that  
(1) this was officially the last meeting for the following members of the Senate, whose terms of office were coming to an end, had left or who were retiring from the University: Professor J. Cook, Professor J. Burgess, Dr B. A. Lankford, Dr N. Cooper, Professor G. Hagberg, Dr A. Mueller, Professor N. R. Pandit, Professor S. Reynolds, Mr D Sheppard and Mr T Sutton.

On behalf of all members, the Vice-Chancellor warmly thanked them for their service and wished them well for the future;

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- (2) two of three reports arising from investigations into the Climatic Research Unit (CRU) had now been received: from the House of Commons Select Committee and the Science Appraisal Panel (established in conjunction with the Royal Society). The third report, by Professor Muir Russell and his colleagues was imminent. The Select Committee report had concluded that there was no case to answer in respect of the allegations concerning manipulation of data; the Science Appraisal Panel had also reached a similar conclusion, finding no evidence of scientific misdemeanour. The episode had undoubtedly created a great deal of turbulence for the CRU and the rest of the University and the hard work of colleagues in CRU, the Press Office and the Vice-Chancellor's Office (in particular Professor Davies and Ms Williams) was acknowledged. The longer-term impact was difficult to detect but in the immediate aftermath, the negative publicity had also produced some positive outcomes in terms of the University's 'visibility'. There was good news to report in terms of the increase in the number of student applications to the University (up 35% following an increase in the two previous years), some excellent academic appointments and recent success in research awards and the opening of the Fudan Tyndall Centre in China;
- (3) the emergency budget to be announced by the Government on 22 June, 2010, was anticipated to be tough, with as yet unknown impacts on the higher education sector. The review of student tuition fees by Lord Browne had not yet reported. A possible scenario might be severe reductions in HE funding, an unpredictable Parliamentary situation in respect of increased tuition fees leading to little or no increase with even greater implications for Universities and Colleges. It was therefore reasonable to assume that public funding would be decreased and that there was no guarantee that the current fees cap would be removed. Nonetheless, the University's finances were such that it could still continue investing in and improving the academic experience.

31. BUDGET SETTING 2010-11 AND AN OUTLINE FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL CAPITAL PLAN

This minute is confidential and attached as a separate sheet.

32. SUSPENSION OF PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A FINANCE GROUP

Considered

a proposal about the above from the Registrar and Secretary. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref: SEN09D023).

Recommended to Council subject to a change to the terms of reference of the new Finance Group (Term 4 (a)) such that the budget for the coming financial year be submitted to *Senate and* Council

(Members:

- (i) were informed that the proposal was for a trial period of just over one year (to December, 2011), with a review in the autumn of 2011;
- (ii) heard that the proposal had arisen from a number of factors, including avoidance of repetition (following a reduction in the number of Council members, some members had considered the same items in different fora). Furthermore, a smaller Council membership meant that members could consider items in more detail. The effectiveness of the governance process would not be diminished by the proposal;
- (iii) expressed the view that Senate should continue to have an opportunity to comment on the budget prior to its submission to Council and that term of reference 4(a) should be accordingly amended;
- (iv) noting that the constitution of the Planning and Resources Committee contained two members appointed by Senate, perceived that there might be a diminution of Senate (ie academic) representation since the proposed new Finance Group did not include (a) Senate representative(s). It was acknowledged, however, that the constitution of the Council included two members appointed by Senate (and no change was proposed here), that Senate was well-represented on the Executive Team, that Deans attended meetings of Council as observers and that the proposed change was for a trial period, with a review.)

### 33. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (REF): ELIGIBILITY AND UPDATE

Considered:

An update report on the above. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref: SEN09D028).

ENDORSED

(In discussion, Senate:

- (i) noted that the report addressed issues concerning the definition of staff eligibility in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) – an issue which was of central importance for the University's reputation and position in league tables. The eligible pool would form the baseline of any 'research intensity' measures;
- (ii) were informed that the most recent definition of eligibility, made by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in March, 2008, referred to 'research or research and teaching'. No further communication had been forthcoming and so for the time being, it was proposed that the University's plans for the next REF (which was now likely to be deferred until at least autumn, 2013) should be to assume that the eligible pool will be ATR staff only, although formal and informal lobbying would continue on this point wherever possible. Definitive guidance was due in autumn, 2010, which should coincide with the first clear snapshot of research intensity at the University;

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- (iii) also noted key points arising from HEFCE's latest communication, including that: research-only staff (ie Research Assistants) would be eligible by exception; that a maximum four outputs per submitted member of staff would be allowed, with consideration of double weighting for large outputs and fewer outputs for early-stage careers; that Panels may be invited to decide whether citation data be used for their area (although this might be vetoed by HEFCE on grounds of cost); that HEFCE had a preference for using HESA data (which meant that the link between PgRs and income with submitted staff would be broken); and multiple submissions might be allowed in exceptional circumstances but only with HEFCE permission and possibly only for the output element;
- (iv) heard that the Research Executive had agreed a plan for 2010, with the intention of developing a full strategic plan up to submission once definitive guidance had been produced by HEFCE. The plan included 'mock reviews' for outputs (with external assessors), impact and indicators (data), with the first round being completed in 2010. There were also procedures in place (including the completion of an annual research plan approved by the Head of School) to maximise 3\*/4\* quality performances overseen by the PVC (Research) and the Deans of the Faculties. At the same time as maximising 3\*/4\* performances, the University also aimed to minimise the volume of 2\* outputs, to eliminate 2\* or lower, to submit all staff with predominantly 3\* outputs (with the fourth to be not lower than 2\*) and to identify those staff who might need to transfer from an ATR to an ATS contract. It was acknowledged that such judgements would not be easy particularly as it would not be known where the REF Panels themselves 'drew the lines'. It was also stressed that an ATS contract should be seen as valuable and valued and that it should not be regarded as a 'relegation'. It was noted too that the Government was interested in the student academic experience and the balance between ATR and ATS;
- (v) gave general support to the approach set out in (iv) above but expressed concern about research intensity which league tables continued to regard as an important indicator. If, by 'research intensity' was meant the priority given to teaching by ATR staff, then the Staff:Student ratio would be significant as well as the proportion of staff returned under REF rules. Whilst there might be some risk, there were other factors at play contributing to standing in league tables including National Student Survey outcomes, degree classifications and salaries on graduation. In addition, there were a number of interpretations of what was meant by 'research-led' in relation to teaching, as a recent project on this topic sponsored by the Learning and Teaching Committee had explored;
- (vi) speculated on the bar below which no funding would be given for research. This might be research categorised as 2\* or below;
- (vii) expressed concern that time and effort spent in getting right the four outputs might divert attention from other important and influential issues such as grants and research students;
- (viii) suggested that processes should be in place to assist staff whose research did not reach the critical threshold, either to 'raise their game' or to translate to ATS or even vice versa. (It was observed that

in other research assessment exercises, funding was available for research categorised as of national standing (formerly, grade 4); now the threshold for funding had been raised to that of research categorised as of international standing.) It was acknowledged that there was no teaching equivalent of research plans, (which resulted in an internal categorisation for REF), with proxies such as module evaluation by students having drawbacks and other mechanisms such as peer observation of teaching not universally implemented across the University (this would be reviewed.)

\*34. HONORARY DEGREES AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

This minute is confidential and attached as a separate sheet.

35. SENATE MEMBERSHIP

Reported that

the terms of office of the following Senate members would expire on July, 2010:

Head of School (one from each Faculty)

Professor J. Burgess (SCI)  
Professor J. Charmley (HUM)  
Dr B. A. Lankford (SSF)

Academic Representatives from each Faculty

Dr N. Cooper (SSF)  
Professor G. Hagberg (HUM) (left one year earlier)  
Dr A. Mueller (SCI)  
Professor N. R. Pandit (SSF)  
Professor S. Reynolds (FOH)

Considered

the recommendation that the following be approved as members to 31 July, 2013 except where indicated:

Head of School

SCI – Professor D. Edwards  
HUM – Professor J. Charmley  
SSF – Professor D. Zizzo

Academic Representatives

HUM – Mr I. Farr  
FOH – Professor J. Collier  
SCI – Dr. T. Blumenschein  
SSF – Dr Y. LeBeau  
Dr S. Russell (31 July, 2011)

ENDORSED

36. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE SENATE TO SERVE ON THE COUNCIL

Reported that

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- (1) Council included amongst its membership two members of the Senate
- (2) the term of office of Professor J. Burgess as a member of Council would end on 31 July, 2010
- (3) nomination had been sought for the vacancy
- (4) two nominations had been received:  
  
Professor John Charmley, nominated by Professor Jon Cook  
Professor Nigel Norris, nominated by Professor Neil Ward

Reported that

following a ballot of members present, Professor Nigel Norris was appointed by Senate as a member of Council for three sessions, ending 31 July, 2013.

### 37. LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Considered

- (1) a recommendation regarding institutional approval of UEA London (including INTO UEA London). (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref: SEN09D025.)

RATIFIED

- (2) revised Disciplinary Procedures for Students. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref: SEN09D026).

CONFERRED AUTHORITY ON  
THE CHAIR OF LTC TO GIVE  
FINAL APPROVAL

- (3) an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

(In discussion, members:

*With regard to the recommendation regarding UEA London, including INTO UEA London*

- (i) were informed that the Learning and Teaching Committee had commended to Senate ratification of institutional approval of UEA London and institutional approval of INTO UEA London for a period of up to five years, subject to the Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee in consultation with the Panel, agreeing that the requirements set had been met and that recommendations had been appropriately considered in the action plan which accompanied the Committee's report;
- (ii) heard that the institutional visit, which took place on 27 April, 2010, had been constructive and informative;
- (iii) noted that a small sub-group of the Panel would monitor progress against the action plan with a report requested by 1 September, 2010 evidencing how requirements with a deadline of September, 2010 (or earlier) had been met, indicating progress on requirements with a later deadline and detailing responses to recommendations;

*With regard to the review of Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures*

- (iv) noted that the Learning and Teaching Committee had commissioned the review approximately eighteen months ago and that the Review Group, chaired by the Director of Taught Programmes, had also included the Chair of the Senate Discipline Committee, students' representatives (including the Academic Officer of the Union of UEA Students and the Manager of the Student Advice Centre) and academic and administrative representatives from across UEA, including Heads of Schools, a Director of Faculty Administration, an Associate Dean (LTQ), the Dean of Students, the Deputy Registrar and Secretary and the Head of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office. Regular reports had been presented to the Learning and Teaching Committee;
- (v) were informed that the purpose of the review was in part a recognition that certain aspects of the regulations and procedures were not working as efficiently as they might, that student 'engagement' with their education had been an important principle that had been embedded within the revised regulations and procedures and that greater clarity and connection with associated General Regulations and other related policies was needed;
- (vi) heard that alongside the review of the disciplinary procedures and regulations, there had been an associated review of the General Regulations for Students leading, inter alia, to a revised attendance, engagement and progress regulation (and accompanying policy), a new regulation regarding fitness for study and amendments to other existing regulations;
- (vii) were advised that a draft of the revised regulations and procedures had been submitted to the University's lawyers and comments received. These had informed the draft before the Senate but that it was recognised that further drafting amendments were required, hence the request to seek Senate's permission to vest authority in the Chair to approve the final version for inclusion in the 2010-11 edition of the Calendar;
- (viii) welcomed the visits to Faculty Executives by the Chair of the Review Group to advise and update them about developments (three meetings had been held to date with FoH, HUM and SCI) and the intention to hold briefing/training meetings for members of the new Senate Student Discipline and Senate Student Appeals Panels and Heads of Schools;
- (ix) urged that the language and style of the revised regulations continue to be 'accessible' to students;
- (x) noted that further work needed to be done next session on matters such as the handling of confidential information and anonymous allegations and to complete the parallel review of the current procedures and regulations concerning allegations of professional misconduct and/or unsuitability;

With regard to the oral report of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

- (x) received an update regarding some of the likely key influences and trends affecting the work of the Senate and its Learning and Teaching Committee:

- **STEM-subject funding** (science, technology, engineering, medicine): there were stronger signals from the Government (and HEFCE) that the unit of resource for these subjects areas was more likely to be maintained than in other areas (arts, humanities and social sciences), should the fee cap be removed or raised. This might be regarded as intellectually short-sighted and at odds with the curiosity-driven approach and clearly there would be implications should this transpire. A careful watching brief would be maintained;
- the current emphasis on **provision of information** to prospective and current students was likely to continue and become even more pronounced should the fee cap be removed or raised. It was likely that Universities would be required to publish a standard set of information, covering aspects such as entry tariffs, contact time, employability rates and salaries on graduation. The University had just received notification from HEFCE that all Universities were now required to publish employability statements (up to three thousand words, with links to other information permitted) by 31 August via the UniStats website. (The Director of the Careers Centre, Dean of Students and Faculty colleagues were already working on it). It was acknowledged that some of the areas mentioned were ones that the University had agreed would be the focus for action and improvement (for example, feedback to students);
- it was likely that the implementation date of new **Common Course Structure Degree Regulations** (CCS) would now be 2013-14 rather than 2012-13 in view of the allied project with regard to assessment which required substantial cultural change in terms of why, how and what was assessed, including ways of promoting synoptic assessment. Draft regulations were anticipated during next semester for consideration prior to submission to the Learning and Teaching Committee and Senate by Easter, 2011;
- the **Office of the Independent Adjudicator** (OIA) had recently published its annual report. It reported that the number of complaints had again risen (an increase of 37%) and that a total of £160k had been awarded in fines and compensation, the largest single amount awarded to date being £45k. Nevertheless, the proportion of complaints being fully or partially justified remained relatively small in relation to the total student population. It was noted that the OIA had recently found a complaint against the University to be fully justified. Although the financial award was modest, the case had led the University to review and change its position with regard to scaling of marks. All Chairs and Secretaries of Boards of Examiners and External Examiners had been notified of the change which would be incorporated in the updated CCS Regulations and Instructions to Examiners. It was therefore prudent to minimise risks, including those relating to assessment – the risks being proportional to the number of summative assessments. It was clear that the student experience had become of central concern externally as well as internally;
- consideration had recently been given to the continuation or otherwise of **anonymised coursework marking**, reviewing its benefits and disadvantages. There was a substantial cost in process terms, some staff were concerned that it was a barrier to effective feedback to students whilst some students were keen to maintain the current approach. The review had not found strong evidence one way or the other in terms of advantage/disadvantage to students from anonymised or non-

anonymised work. This being so, it had concluded that the current policy should remain;

- the Executive Team had agreed that, as part of the drive to improve student engagement, all new entrants to the University should receive a copy of and be invited to read a book '**In the Country of Men**'. A new blackboard module would be available to students to facilitate discussions. (A request was made that staff should also have access to the module.)

38. SENATE COMMITTEES – MEMBERSHIP

Considered

The recommendation in the report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref: SEN09D029).

ENDORSED

39. LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE: EXTERNAL EXAMINERS' REPORTS

Considered

Reports on external examiners' reports for;

- (1) 2005-06 to 2007-08 (taught programmes) and 2008-09 (postgraduate research programmes). (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref: SEN09D030)
- (2) 2006-07 to 2008-09 (taught programmes). (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref: SEN09D031).

ENDORSED

40. LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE ROUND-UP

Received

a round-up report from the Learning and Teaching Committee's meetings on 18 March, 22 April and 27 May, 2010. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref: SEN09D032).

41. ITEMS FOR REPORT

Received

items for report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref: SEN09D033)

- (1) Heads of School appointments – LAW, LCS and PSI
- (2) Union of UEA Students - Election Results 2010/11

\*\* 42. PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE

This minute is confidential and reserved and attached as a separate sheet.

\*\* 43. SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS

This minute is confidential and reserved and attached as a separate sheet.