

THE SENATE



Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2010

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (Professor E.D.J. Acton) (in the Chair), the Pro-Vice-Chancellors (Professor T.D. Davies and Professor T.B. Ward), the Deans of Faculty (Professor D. Peters Corbett, Professor I. Harvey, Professor D.J. Richardson and Professor N. Ward), Heads of Schools (Professor J.D. Charmley, Dr S Connolly, Professor D. Edwards, Professor V. Lattimer and Professor D. Zizzo), Academic Representatives (Mr I. Farr, Professor C. Osborne, Mrs H. Bell, Dr T. Blumenschein, Professor J. Collier, Dr S. Stevens, Mr C. Wadlow and Dr R. Warren), Dean of Students (Dr A. Grant) and Mr D. Palmer (City College Norwich).

With: The Registrar and Secretary (Mr B. J. Summers), the Senior Assistant Registrar (Mrs L. Williams), the Head of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office (Ms A. Rhodes) and Ms A. Jolly (Minute 7 refers).

Apologies: Dr Y. Lebeau, Professor V. Rayward-Smith and the Academic Officer of the Union of UEA Students (Ms R. Handforth) and the Director of the Partnerships Office (Ms E. Towner) (in attendance).

1. MINUTES

Confirmed

the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June, 2010, subject to the following amendment: Minute 33 (iv) : replace the reference to 2* (in sentence beginning 'At the same time as ') by 1*

2. THE COUNCIL

Reported

that the Council, at its meeting on 28 June, 2010, considered the report of the Senate from its meeting on 16 June, 2010 (Minute **67) and approved the recommendations it contained.

3. STATEMENTS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Reported that

the report into the Climatic Research Unit (CRU) by Professor Muir Russell and his colleagues had been published. It had concluded that there was no evidence to weaken confidence in the research conducted by the CRU. There had also been a second meeting of the Select Committee to whose report there had been a pleasing response by the Government. Of more concern was the continued interest of the lower House of Congress in the United States of America but it was now time to move on from this difficult episode.

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4. THE BROWNE REVIEW OF STUDENT FEES AND THE COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW: ACADEMIC IMPLICATIONS

Received

a summary of the Browne Review. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN10D001)

Considered

the implications.

(In their discussion, Senate

- (i) noted that Parliamentary discussions were continuing with regard to the level of student fees. The fees cap would be raised to £6k per annum without further monitoring with the possibility that £9k could be levied although this would be subject to monitoring. If budget reductions were made prior to the introduction of the new fee levels in 2012, teaching, research and capital funding would be severely affected;
- (ii) heard that the University's response would need to be calmly and swiftly managed. The newly-launched administrative integration project was therefore timely. The University should prepare for reductions in / removal of public funds for subjects in HEFCE Bands C and D which would have an impact on the Faculties of Arts and Humanities and of Social Sciences;
- (iii) acknowledged that students' expectations would rise along with their fees and that the University was likely (along with the rest of the HE sector) to have to publish information on a range of indices such as contact time, employability rates and salaries. Members further noted that the Learning and Teaching Committee was developing a template to collect relevant data. It was observed that there was an apparent conflict between the emphasis on contact hours and the journey towards independent learning.
- (iv) recognised that the impact on applications was as yet uncertain but agreed that the University needed quickly to respond, such response might include the use of scholarships and a consideration of the possibility that some subjects might not attract any or sufficient applicants;
- (v) were informed that, whilst research funding would be cut in real terms, the reduction would not now be on the scale originally planned. Nevertheless, the Research Councils would be affected by cuts in capital funds and the Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences areas would be affected more than the Sciences and Health. It was clear that the link between research and teaching was being rejected as far as funding was concerned;
- (vi) were urged to develop a range of funding streams and to continue to build the reputation and intellectual vibrancy of the institution. It was likely that the role of the University in the regional economy would assume more prominence as cuts to other parts of the public sector occurred;
- (vii) suggested that a term other than 'tuition' fees be introduced as it was too narrow in focus. As fees rose, it was imperative that a term be identified that would encompass the wider aspects of the University experience that students' fees supported;

- (viii) agreed that employability was an increasingly important theme. For example, the School of Biological Sciences was reviewing all levels of the curriculum having regard to employability and was liaising with the Norwich Business School and International Development Studies. Other initiatives included the Evolve project for graduates which needed to be highlighted in all Schools. The School of History reported that its employability task force was targeting Year 2 students offering four sessions with Careers/Evolve after the Easter break;
- (ix) commented that the development of a new academic model (combining the reviews of the Common Course Structure degree regulations, of assessment and of examinations and course tests) presented an opportunity to embed employability. It was important – in the light of (iii) above – that a narrative should be built about a student's development not necessarily being linked to contact time;
- (x) considered whether the same fee should be charged across the University. It was acknowledged that a 'headline' fee was attractive as students experienced education in common but it was possible that a premium might be charged for some subjects, with an appropriate expansion in scholarships. A view was expressed that a premium fee might be charged for research-strong institutions; equally, a premium might be charged for teaching-focussed institutions, as was the situation in the United States. It was important that fees were used to support the University experience, although it was recognised that the Government's position on the research: teaching funding relationship was critical. Some members also re-iterated the view that there should be a wide, not narrow, view of University education which was not only about employability;
- (xi) welcomed the proposal to hold a special University policy half-day to focus further on the outcome of the Government's consideration of the Browne report.)

5. ACADEMIC STRATEGY: LEARNING AND TEACHING PRIORITIES 2010-11

Considered

a report from the Learning and Teaching Committee. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN10D002)

ENDORSED

(In their discussion, Senate:

- (i) was informed that the Learning and Teaching Committee was encouraging members to think in terms of a 'new academic model', combining the three reviews it had commissioned of the Common Course Structure degree regulations (and in parallel, the Integrated Master's and Common Master's Frameworks), of assessment and of examinations and course tests. The new model would be considered at the forthcoming University policy half day on 17 November, 2010 and would be the subject of a series of three 'Question and Answer' sessions for all academic staff hosted before Christmas by the Director of Taught Programmes. The earliest date for the implementation of the new model was 2013-14 in view of the complexities involved. The aim was to drive up student engagement, to seek efficiencies, to respond to internal and external quality assurance drivers and to mitigate risks (for example, student expectations, quality assurance and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator);

- (ii) noted other priorities which included: a) provision of management information that could be condensed into a single briefing note on each School of Study to be presented to Council. It might in due course be made externally available; b) supervision of postgraduate research students on which the Director of Postgraduate Research Programmes would keep a continuing focus; and c) timetabling. It was acknowledged that timetabling was a complex matter with business costs arising from ingrained cultural practices which would need to change in the light of the revised slotting system. At present, a significant proportion of the campus did not yet appear to have fully adapted despite the training/workshop sessions offered by IT and other colleagues. The adoption of the new academic module (especially the defined course profile) was likely to ease the situation;
- (iii) acknowledged that the recent timetabling problems had been very regrettable and that they might impact negatively on the next National Student Survey outcomes for the University. A suggestion was made that a dry-run of the timetable be undertaken to identify embedded practices that the new approach could not accommodate. It was noted that additional programming time had been allocated to the SITs team. Members were also interested to hear that City College Norwich had introduced a new timetabling system a couple of years ago. There had been teething problems which had taken some time to resolve but the new system was now delivering a more efficient and effective room usage.)

6. ORDINANCES

Considered

a report from the Registrar and Secretary (a copy is filed in the Minute book, ref, SEN10D003).

ENDORSED

subject to amendment of Ordinance 3, term of reference of the Senate, 3.13, as set out below and to confirmation that Senate meet at least 3 times per session.

(In their discussion, members:

- i) recalled that the revised Charter and Statutes of the University took effect from October, 2008. Both were less prescriptive in terms of University processes and detailed provisions, thereby giving more flexibility to Council to determine those processes and provisions in Ordinances which could be amended by Council without reference to the Privy Council;
- ii) noted that the proposed revised Ordinances pursuant to Clauses 16 and 7 of the Charter and Statute 3 covered:

ORDINANCE 1 – Appointment of Staff and Terms and Conditions of Service

The proposed changes reflected the reality of the current situation whereby authorities had been effectively delegated to the Vice-Chancellor and where appropriate to the established processes for consultation and negotiation with the Trades Unions;

ORDINANCE 2 – Governance and Organisation

This extended Ordinance more fully covered the details of the membership and operation of Court, Assembly, Congregation and the academic and administrative organisation of the University and also set out the established role of the Executive Team;

ORDINANCE 3 – The Senate

This revised Ordinance presented updated terms of reference to reflect the reality of the current situation and also introduced ways in which the Senate could support Council in promoting the University's academic performance;

- iii) acknowledged the rationale for additional meetings to be at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor, having considered any petition from at least 40 members (40 being the quorum for a meeting);
- iv) noted that the revised Senate terms of reference continued Senate's responsibilities to deliver academic awards and emphasised its ownership of academic standards. New terms of reference (3.13, 3.14) made more explicit Senate's role in relation to strategies approved by Council and provision of advice to the Executive Team;
- v) agreed that terms of reference 3.13 should be amended as follows:

deletion of the phrase "the aims and obligations of" so that the revised term reads: "review at least annually the academic performance of the University and the standing of the University both nationally and internationally judged against strategies approved by Council";
- vi) supported a proposal that Senate meet at least 3 times per session.)

7. EMPLOYABILITY

Considered

a presentation by Ms Adrienne Jolly, CCEN.

(The presentation may be viewed at:

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/sen/sen1011/sen101110/employabilitypresentation>

RESOLVED

to thank Ms Jolly for a helpful and interesting presentation on 'Graduate Identity and Employability – Applying VIPER'

(In the presentation, members noted that:

- (i) the project 'Employer Conceptions of Graduate Employability' by Dr G. Hinchliffe and Ms A. Jolly (2009) had attracted HEA funding which had enabled 100+ local national and international employers to be questioned;
- (ii) the attributes that were highly rated were: values; intellect; performance; engagement; and reflection (VIPER);

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- (iii) reflection and engagement were particularly important characteristics and needed to be made more obvious to students. In this respect, the 'VIPER' model was one of a number of models that could be utilised;
- (iv) the importance of embedding case studies within programmes;
- (v) enterprise was increasingly as important as employability;
- (vi) there were particular needs for international students. In this regard, Members welcomed the recent appointment of an International Students Careers Adviser and the provision of generic support for English language skills. An increased focus by the Learning and Teaching Committee on international students would be timely and welcome.)

8. LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Endorsed

recommendations from the Learning and Teaching Committee (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN10D004) concerning:

- (1) Semester dates for 2013-14; 2014-15 and 2015-16 (subject to the development of the new academic model)
- (2) the re-approval of Easton College as a partner institution of the University of East Anglia for a period of five years from 1 November, 2010.

9. THE SENATE 2010/11

Received

- (1) the Senate – Membership. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN10D005)
- (2) the Senate - Standing Orders (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN10D006)

10. RESERVED AREAS OF BUSINESS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Received

statements of the University's policies on reserved areas of business and confidentiality. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN10D007)

11. REGISTRATION COUNT 2010-11 - REPORT TO THE FINANCE GROUP

Received

a report from the Finance Group from its meeting on 25 October, 2010. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN10D008)

12. LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Received

a round-up report from the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee at its meeting on 27 October, 2010. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN10D009)

13. ITEMS FOR REPORT

Received

a report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN10D010)

- (1) Promotions to Chairs from 1 August, 2010.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Reported

that the next meeting of the Senate was scheduled for Wednesday 19 January, 2011. This is an 'if necessary' meeting.

Post meeting note – it was decided that the meeting on 19 January 2011 would go ahead and members were notified of this on 8 December 2010.

**15. APPOINTMENT OF PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH, ENTERPRISE AND ENGAGEMENT)

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

**16. CHANGE OF SCHOOL NAMES

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

**17. CHANGE OF FACULTY NAME

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