

THE SENATE



Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2014

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (Professor D.J. Richardson) (in the Chair), Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor D. Petley), the Executive Deans of Faculty (Professor J. Collier, Professor P. Gilmartin, Professor I Harvey, and Professor Y. Tasker), Heads of Schools (Professor V. Lattimer and Professor V Moulton), Academic Representatives (Dr H. Adcock, Professor D. Andrews, Dr L. Biggart, Dr R. Denison, Dr J. Drugan, Dr S.D. Laycock, Professor F. Lettice, Professor N. Norris, Ms C. Richards, Professor N. Spalding, Dr D Watson), Dean of Students (Dr A. Grant), Director of Information Services (Mr J. Colam-French), and the Student Representatives except for business marked ** Mr C. Rand , Mr L. McCafferty and Ms Holly Staynor.

With: The Registrar and Secretary (Mr B. J. Summers), the Academic Director of Taught Programmes (Dr A. Longcroft), Academic Director of Learning and Teaching Enhancement (Mrs H. Gillespie), Academic Director of Pg Research Degree Programmes (Dr N. Watmough), Academic Director of Admissions (Dr R Harvey), Head of Admissions (Mr David Giles), Director of Planning, (Mr I Callaghan), Director of Learning and Teaching Services (Dr A Blanchflower), and Senior Administrative Assistant (Mrs R. Phillips).

1. MINUTES

Confirmed
the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2014.

2. STATEMENTS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

(1) The Vice Chancellor welcomed new members to Senate and drew attention to a new Guide for Senate members which had been designed to explain the purpose of Senate and the role undertaken by Senate members. In welcoming new student members to Senate the Vice Chancellor reported a change in representation: in future rather than having two representatives from the Union of UEA Students and one from the UEA Graduate Students Association there would be three representatives from the Union representing all student groups.

(2) In early October the Norwich Research Park was given a £12.5M endorsement from the BBSRC with the announcement that it will fund 125 PhD students through the Norwich Research Park Doctoral Training Partnership over the next five years. This investment further cements Norwich Research Park's growing reputation as a leading, internationally recognised centre of excellence in bioscience. The new funding significantly builds on a £4M BBSRC investment made in 2012, which supported 39 studentships over three years.

The application was made by five partners across Norwich Research Park: The John Innes Centre (JIC) who led the bid, The Sainsbury Laboratory, The Genome Analysis Centre (TGAC), the Institute of Food Research and the University of East Anglia (UEA). Associate partners are Plant Bioscience Limited, the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital and The SAW Trust. In addition to the £12.5M announced, the partners have themselves contributed £3M to the five year programme, increasing the total number of PhD students being trained from 125 up to 156.

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- (3) UEA was the biggest climber in the recent Times Higher Education "Table of Tables" moving up by four places from 18th to 14th. UEA has now climbed an impressive 11 places in the past two years. The Table of Tables is based on the combined results of the UK's three main domestic university league tables: Good University Guide (published by The Times and The Sunday Times), The Guardian and The Complete University Guide.
- (4) The estate was continuing to be enhanced with the Centrum building opening over the summer, the Enterprise Centre and new medical research buildings both developing a significant presence as building work progresses. A bid has been submitted to HEFCE to invest £5m in a new STEM teaching building including state-of-the-art teaching science laboratories and enable more students to be recruited to SCI.
- (5) Senate members noted that the University and College Union (UCU) had announced plans for a comprehensive boycott of all assessment related activities with effect from 6 November. In this national dispute about proposed changes to pensions, UCU members are being asked to boycott all activities relating to assessment including the setting and marking of formative and summative coursework; course tests and examinations. The Vice Chancellor informed Senate that the University's Executive team have placed the highest priority on the protection of students and their student experience and have taken action to maximise the opportunity of minimising the impact of the strike upon students. The University will continue to engage fully in discussion with UUK/UCEA and local UCU about the proposals. Senate members were reminded that in February 2014 Senate noted and re-approved the business continuity plans developed for occasions when industrial action would have an impact on assessment activities, Boards of examiners, student progression and graduation. These measures were first approved in 2006, revised in 2008 and again in 2014 in relation to the pay dispute and would be looked at again in relation to the current situation.

3. NOTIFICATION OF CHAIRS ACTION

Reported

that the Vice Chancellor had taken the following actions on behalf of Senate:

- (1) The instruction of a Board of examiners to reclassify an undergraduate student's degree from 2ii to 2i on the recommendation of the relevant Faculty Appeals and Complaints Panel.
- (2) The revoking of a PhD conferred in 2008 following the recommendations of a Senate Student Discipline Committee.

4. CORPORATE PLAN TIMETABLE 2014/5

Reported

that a new Corporate plan was in preparation and will be prepared in accordance with the attached timetable (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D001)

Considered

the development of the learning and teaching section of the Corporate Plan.

(Senate noted that the Plan would have three chapters one of which would be focussed on student opportunity and success, one on research and enterprise, and the third on internationalisation and global reach. Whilst the new Corporate Plan would cover the period 2016-2020 it was to be developed with a vision for the University in 2030. Opportunity for student input had been designed into the development process with focussed student events and also via student contributions during School and Faculty level discussions. Each chapter would have a set of priorities for action and delivery and a series of key performance indicators with which progress could be determined.

In drafting the Learning & Teaching chapter, the University would need to determine answers to some key options and dilemmas such as:

- Quality versus quantity and the size and shape of the University
- The balance between campus based learning versus distance/on-line and mixed mode delivery styles
- Options for making the Staff Student Ratio investment work to improve and enhance performance
- Student transition into the University, between years and into employment
- Student opportunity

Key performance indicators and objectives were anticipated to be required in the following areas:

- Student number targets
- Academic staffing levels and the SSR
- Benchmarking student academic engagement: contact time, study time, coursework preparation
- Innovation in learning and teaching – extend and deepen innovation and blended learning content in all courses.
- Assessment and feedback scores in the NSS
- Student experience – overall NSS score
- Student attainment – Good Honours metrics
- Student outcomes - Employability metrics
- Student involvement – further development of student involvement in academic quality and the wider student experience
- Student opportunity – targets for proportion of student who have an international experience and a workplace-based experience as part of their studies.
- Staff development – CPD undertaken and the proportion of HEA fellows
- Capital investment in learning and teaching facilities.
- International reputation in learning and teaching

Senate noted that the development of a learning and teaching strategy helpfully informed the discussion. It was considered that looking ahead 15 years student expectations, requirements and the types of things that happen face-to-face would undoubtedly change and as a consequence the University had to build in flexibility into every aspect of delivery, including the development and refurbishment of teaching spaces, IT and audio visual technologies. It was noted that new teaching spaces in the Julian Study Centre and Enterprise Centre was replacing teaching room stock being taken out of service in Chancellors Drive Annex and the Thomas Paine Building. The temptation was simply to look at current delivery methods but it was critical to future proof University investment in the physical and technological environment and the engagement of end-users, staff and students, in any preparatory consultation phase was regarded as essential.

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Senate also noted that whilst a focus on transitions was timely, this should not distract from the provision of high quality professional support throughout the academic year.)

Recommended

the Learning & Teaching chapter of the Corporate Plan be developed as outlined above.

5. NEW LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

Considered

approving the University's Learning & Teaching Strategy for taught programmes. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D002)

(Senate noted the lengthy consultation and engagement process undertaken in the development of the Learning and Teaching Strategy for taught programmes. The strategy has two elements: Graduate and Postgraduate attributes and 10 strategic aims. The strategies 10 aims were highlighted and members attention was particularly drawn to four of these:

- Maximising the value of face-to-face contact time
- Student employability
- Student engagement in quality enhancement processes
- Staff development and developing a culture of CPD in learning and teaching across the University.

Senate welcomed and approved the strategy.)

RESOLVED

*6. UNIVERSITY PERFORMANCE

This minute is confidential and attached as a separate sheet.

7. SUBJECT APPROVAL – PHYSICS

Reported

that under Ordinance 2, clause 26 the number, titles and discipline coverage of schools of study and distribution of schools of study between faculties will be determined from time to time by the Vice-Chancellor, having consulted with Senate.

Considered

a recommendation contained within the report to re-launch physics as a subject discipline. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D006)

(Senate noted that physics courses could be delivered using existing University facilities and the ability to deliver a satisfactory curriculum was not dependent on the success of the HEFCE STEM building bid.)

RESOLVED

8 HONORARY DEGREES AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE – MEMBERSHIP

Considered

a recommendation to amend the membership of the Committee. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D007)

RESOLVED

9. SENATE STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE AND SENATE STUDENT DISCIPLINE APPEALS COMMITTEE – MEMBERSHIP

Reported

the appointment of the following new members to the above committees. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D008)

10. PUBLIC LECTURES

Approved

the changes to the rules associated with these two lectures (Arthur Bachelor fund and Thomas Paine Lecture) (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D009)

11. MUSIC AWARDS

Approved

the proposed changes contained within the report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D010)

12. THE SENATE 2014/15

Received

- (1) the Senate – Membership. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D011)
- (2) the Senate - Standing Orders (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D012)

13. 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. SEN14D013)

14. LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Received

a round up report from the Learning and Teaching Committee from its meetings on 25 June 2014 and 22 October 2014. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN14D014)

15. DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2014-2015

Reported

that the remaining dates for meetings in 2014-2015 are:

Wednesday 14 January 2015
Wednesday 18 February 2015
Wednesday 10 June 2015

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Reported

that the next meeting of the Senate was scheduled for Wednesday 14 January, 2015. This is an 'if necessary' meeting.