
Meeting: ACADEMIC ASSEMBLY

Date and time: Wednesday 31 October 2018 at 1.15 pm

Venue: 5 West 2.3

AGENDA

PAPER
AA18/19

1. WELCOME

To welcome

- new members
- senior Library staff

2. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Membership and Terms of Reference of Academic Assembly can be found on the web page: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/statutory-bodies-committees/academic/index.html>

The Chair can be contacted on: academic-assembly-chair@bath.ac.uk

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2018.

001

4. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 664, Halpin Review

5. ELECTIONS

To note Academic Assembly representatives on Committees in 2018/19.

002

6. RELEVANT DECISIONS OF SENATE

To remind members of Academic Assembly that the minutes of meetings of Senate may be viewed at:

<http://www.bath.ac.uk/statutory-bodies-committees/bodies-and-committees-senate/Senate/minutes/index.html>

The following is drawn to the attention of members of Academic Assembly:

(1) Curriculum Transformation

Senate approved the following (June 6 2018)

- the main principles and success criteria
- to establish a Curriculum Transformation Committee (CTC) which would *inter alia* consider/approve the outcome of Phase 2&3 for the vanguard courses;
- changes to the terms of reference and membership of PAPAC to be renamed Courses and Partnerships Approval Committee.
- to start work on changing to a 50% pass mark all master-level units for cohorts starting in 2020 on courses re-designed under curriculum transformation.

At its meeting on October 17 2018 Senate noted and/or approved the following:

- That courses designed under the principles of Curriculum Transformation would remain modular in nature i.e. there would be no disaggregation of study units and assessment blocks at least for now due to problems with HESA reporting;
- All Vanguard programmes received Phase 2 approval (although some subject to redesigning assessments within a modular structure);
- The majority of UG courses will now launch in 2021; PGT courses have an anticipated launch of 2020.

(2) Reserved Business

In the spirit of the recent Halpin Review, student members were invited to stay during reserved business at Senate. Further guidance was requested about student participation in reserved business at Faculty and Departmental level.

7. PROBATIONARY STAFF PROJECT

To receive an update on the Probationary Staff project.

8. RESEARCH STAFF WORKING GROUP

To receive an overview of the Research Staff Working Group.

9. PROPOSED MOTION ON EARLY-CAREER, POST-DOCTORAL STAFF ON SHORT-TERM AND CASUALISED CONTRACTS

To consider the proposed motion.

003

10. HALPIN REVIEW

To receive a presentation from the Acting Chair of Council (and Chair of the Council Effectiveness Review Steering Group) with an opportunity for discussion.

Halpin Review <https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/the-halpin-review/attachments/halpin-review.pdf>

Council Effectiveness Review Steering Group <https://www.bath.ac.uk/offices/council-effectiveness-review-steering-group/>

11. ACADEMIC ASSEMBLY WORKING GROUP PROPOSALS

To consider:

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------------|
| (1) | Proposal for Accountability and Transparency working group | 004(a) |
| (2) | Alternative Proposal for Culture and Communications working group | 004(b) |

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 7 May 2019 at 12.30pm, venue to be confirmed.

Vice-Chancellor's statutory address

If you require any further assistance regarding this meeting or access to this information in an alternative format, please contact Caroline Harris, Office of the University Secretary (tel: 01225 384141, email: C.Harris2@bath.ac.uk)



Minutes of Meeting

Meeting: **ACADEMIC ASSEMBLY- EXTRAORDINARY MEETING**

Date and time: **Monday 25 June 2018 at 12.30 pm**

Venue: **1WN 2.1**

Present: Dr A Salo (Chair)
and 61 members

Attending by invitation: Ms L Humphreys (Library)

In attendance: Ms A Pater, Head of Secretariat

ACTION

662 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2018 (Paper AA17/18-6) were approved and signed by the Chair.

663 ELECTIONS

The Chair reported that Dr Michael Carley had been elected to fill the casual vacancy on Council for the period 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019.

664 HALPIN REVIEW

1. The Chair explained that this was an extraordinary meeting to discuss the Halpin report on the Effectiveness Review of Council. He was aware that there was a desire for a motion to be put, but he first invited Prof Gareth Price to provide a brief introduction; Prof Price explained the background to the Effectiveness Review and gave a summary of the report and its recommendations (see the slides on the Review website). He noted that governance at the University was compliant but needed improvement.
2. There followed a discussion of the review, in which the following points were made:
 - A question about the membership of the new Steering Group (which was in the process of being set up by Council);
 - the need for transparency and a request for transcripts of its meetings;
 - a request for the views of staff to be heard;
 - discussion about a proposed review of Court and who would run this; (it was noted that this was likely to be led by Council according to governance processes);
 - discussion about the University being 'in crisis' and what this meant;

- why the Vice-Chancellor had not mentioned the review in her recent address to Academic Assembly;
 - how the recommendations would be implemented.
3. At 1.10pm there was a request to put the motion. The Chair decided that there would be five more minutes to complete the original discussion.
 4. Dr Jane White, the Chair Elect of Academic Assembly, said she would ask a member of Council to address Academic Assembly in October about the Council Effectiveness Review. She would invite members to contact her in August about how Council could work with Academic Assembly.
 5. A motion was then proposed from the floor (proposed by Prof Sarah White, seconded by Prof Hartmut Logemann). Prof White explained that the original points had been made by 'Professors 4 Change' with some further consultation with some members of Senate, Court, Council and the unions; the key concerns were about having a voice and engagement with the university community. She felt the brief of the Halpin report had been too limited and thought it should have considered wider issues of management, not just governance. She had issues about VC/DVC membership of Council, how the process of election to committees worked and senior management remuneration.
 6. Academic Assembly went through each point in the motion. After discussion, there was a suggested amendment to point 4 of the motion, (regarding a Head of Governance), final sentence, to read: **'If this post is established**, we look forward to engaging in the process of defining **its remit** more closely.' There was a vote by show of hands with a clear majority in favour of the amendment. There was a discussion about point 10 but it was not agreed to amend this point.
 7. The Chair recommended to note in the minutes in the name of openness and transparency that as campus unions were specifically mentioned in the motion, it was recognised that there were some members of trade unions present in the meeting. Many members present felt strongly this should not be an issue.
 8. There was then a vote on the amended motion (below) by show of hands, with 55 members supporting the motion, none against and four members abstaining.

JW/ Sec

Motion:

1. *Academic Assembly welcomes Halpin's report as a move towards a more inclusive, democratic and transparent University.*
2. *We support Halpin's call for greater diversity amongst lay members of Council, restrictions on terms of office, plus rigorous register of interests and connections amongst Council members. We are pleased to learn that the search for a new Chair of Council is underway.*

3. *We disagree with the suggestion that the number of elected academic representatives on council should be cut. We propose that the number of representatives on council from job families other than Education & Research should be increased to at least two. Diversity is an issue amongst staff as well as lay members. If the VC and DVC were no longer voting members of council (see below) this would still retain a lay majority on council.*
4. *A critical advance, we believe, is Halpin's recognition of the principle of separating executive and governance functions, expressed in the suggestion of a new post of Head of Governance, accountable to Council. If this post is established, we look forward to engaging in the process of defining its remit more closely.*
5. *We are disappointed, however, that the report does not apply this principle consistently. The separation of executive and governance functions requires that members of the executive should not serve on the main governance body. We therefore call for members of the senior management team to be removed as voting members of Council and its committees, to attend as observers only.*
6. *This principle of separation of powers has further implications. While we welcome Halpin's suggestion that a student member join the Nominations Committee, this again does not go far enough. As this committee nominates members of Council including its Chair, it is inappropriate for the Chair of Council to be a member of Nominations Committee.*
7. *We also call for greater transparency and inclusion in the nominations process, including the work and composition of the Nominations Committee. Vacancies should be publicised in good time with all stakeholder groups encouraged to make nominations. The process of selection should then be open, allowing for real discussion and debate. Nominations Committee would then take on more of an administrative, rather than the executive role it has now. We are also concerned by the current practice of Senate or Council members being nominated by Council/Chair of Council to sit on any governance bodies or committees. All such positions should be filled by open, transparent processes, whether these involve election or appointment.*
8. *We welcome the greater recognition given to Professional Services staff and Technical staff. We believe this should also be extended to Operations and Facilities Support staff. Halpin suggest a new Assembly for Professional Services and Technical staff, modelled on Academic Assembly. This may be appropriate, but given the diversity of members of other job families, both in kinds of work undertaken and in levels of pay and management responsibility, we feel that other options, including a University Assembly (collectively representing all job families) should also be explored in a consultative process.*

9. *We welcome the reforms Halpin recommends regarding senior remuneration. However, we call for these to be extended, both to make clear that more modest salaries will be instituted across senior management, and to commit that bonuses for outstanding performance will in future take the form of one-off payments, not be consolidated into annual salary.*
10. *We welcome the recommendation that a steering group be formed to implement the report. We call for immediate consultation across the University community as to the composition of this group, which must include elected representatives of staff and students, and the campus unions. It is vital that this group proceeds in a transparent and consultative way, with respect both to its own composition, and in its mode of operation.*
11. *We welcome the recognition that the challenges we face do not simply concern Council, but reflect a larger crisis of management, legitimacy and overall structures and functioning of the university. We believe it imperative not to wait for the appointment of a new VC but to begin immediately on a wider process of reform. This requires strong leadership and commitment to reform within senior management in addition to sustained momentum from below.*
12. *We register concern that Halpin places much faith in 'communications and culture' as ways to address these wider problems. We believe this underestimates the depth of discontent and the challenges we face. Culture is indeed an issue, but this will only be addressed if structures change, with democratic participation, transparency and inclusivity engineered into the DNA of our future University.*

The motion was therefore passed.

There was a request to publish the motion and minutes on the web as soon as possible.

[Chair's note: The Chair agreed the wording for the web-page with Prof Sarah White on late Monday afternoon 25 June 2018 and the University's communication team published the web-page on Wednesday morning 27 June.]

665 DATES OF MEETINGS 2018/19

Wednesday 31 October 2018 at 1.15 pm
Tuesday 7 May 2019 at 12.30 pm

The meeting concluded at 2.05pm

ACADEMIC ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

COURT

Dr M Carley, until 31 July 2020
Professor H Logemann, until 31 July 2020
Ms E Pawlowski, until 31 July 2020

The Chair of Academic Assembly is an ex officio member of Court

COUNCIL

Dr S Wharton, Department of Politics, Languages & International Studies, until 31 July 2019

The Chair of Academic Assembly is an ex officio member of Council

SENATE

Dr S Alegre, Department of Politics, Languages & International Studies, until 31 July 2019
Dr M Carley, Department of Mechanical Engineering until 31 July 2021
Professor J Davenport, Department of Computer Science, until 31 July 2019
Dr A Dinerstein, Department of Social and Policy Sciences, until 31 July 2020
Dr M Garcia, Department of Politics, Languages & International Studies, until 31 July 2020
Dr S Gheduzzi, Department of Mechanical Engineering, until 31 July 2020
Dr M Harney, Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering, until 31 July 2019
Dr F Laughton, Department of Physics, until 31 July 2020
Dr M McManus, Department of Mechanical Engineering, until 31 July 2019
Dr L Milligan, Department of Education, until 31 July 2020
Dr E Murphy, Department of Mathematical Sciences, until 31 July 2019
Dr A Salo, Department for Health, until 31 July 2021
Dr J Troyer, Department of Social and Policy Sciences, until 31 July 2019

The Chair of Academic Assembly is an ex officio member of Senate

AWARDS COMMITTEE

Dr N Johnston, Department of Mechanical Engineering, until 31 July 2019

Motion to academic assembly on early-career, post-doctoral staff on short-term and casualised contracts**This assembly notes:**

That casualised staff now make up a large proportion of staff in higher education.

That postdoctoral researchers, teaching fellows and hourly paid lecturers on fixed-term contracts are under considerable pressure not only to meet the requirements of their formal roles but also to publish their own research, apply for jobs, grants and take on conference organising and peer review roles in order to develop their CV.

That some departments provide conference funding for postdoctoral staff to attend conferences to further their own research beyond the project they are employed on.

That some departments have a convention of automatically transferring staff who are employed as research assistants (grade 6) to research associate status (grade 7) when the PhD is awarded.

That some postdoctoral researchers are put under undue pressure from their supervisors/PI's to undertake tasks outside of their normal working hours. This includes receiving and being expected to respond to whatsapp messages or emails late in the evening or over the weekend.

The university has a commitment to encouraging 'work-life balance'.

This assembly notes the publication of the review of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers in June 2018¹ and specifically notes recommendations 2, 4 and 6 which are reprinted in the attached appendix to this motion. It further notes the report's concern about a lack of awareness amongst early career and senior staff/grant-holders about the existence of the Concordat.

This assembly believes:

That PI's of large research grants are under considerable pressure to meet the requirements of funders and the university. However, this pressure should not be translated into expectations of excessive workloads by postdoctoral staff working on these projects.

That unethical behaviour of more senior staff exploiting the ideas of postdoctoral researchers, teaching fellows and PhD students is unacceptable and that a clear code of conduct on authorship and protecting junior staff is needed.

That many ECR staff on temporary or fixed-term contracts who are not on research contracts will still be undertaking research or other forms of career development.

That the University of Bath should implement the findings of the Review of the Concordat in full.

That the lack of awareness of early career and senior staff of the Concordat that is suggested by the Review is also present at the University of Bath and that there are insufficient checks to ensure the Concordat is actually applied in PI-RA working relationships which often take place with little oversight.

¹ See the full report online here: <https://www.ukri.org/files/skills/concordatreviewreport-jun2018-pdf/>

The University of Bath should do more at University, Faculty and Departmental level to ensure that the revised Concordat and the University's own Code of Conduct on Employing Research Staff² are actively enforced.

This assembly resolves:

That in line with the review of the Concordat, the University of Bath should protect a day of each working-week for full-time employed postdoctoral staff (and a pro-rata equivalent for those on part-time or hourly-paid contracts), for them to complete and write-up their own research. This should apply to those working in all four categories outlined in the review of the concordat.³

That informing early career staff about the existence of the Concordat should be made an obligatory part of induction training. A copy of the Concordat should be sent to all new starters beginning work at the university as a research assistant, research associate, teaching fellow, technician or other post-doctoral researcher as defined by the Concordat Review. Specific emphasis in communication to all new starters should be put on the 20% time allowance for researchers to for their own research within their roles.

That the university should provide an allocation of conference and training funding for all postdoctoral and teaching fellow staff on fixed-term contracts of at least £500 p.a.

That where staff are employed prior to the award of their PhD and are employed at grade 6 there should be automatic transition to grade 7 once the PhD is awarded.

To formally submit a copy of this motion to Senate for debate and approval there.

To send a copy of this motion to Jonathan Knight, Pro-VC for Research asking for a formal response from the University to both this motion and the review of the Concordat.

Proposer: Dr Sol Gamsu (Education)

Appendix

These quotations are taken from the Review of the Concordat published in June 2018 by the working group appointed by UKRI (see the link provided above for a full copy of the report).

“Recommendation 2: The focus and primary aim of the Concordat is for the support of research staff. **The definition of ‘researchers’ used in the Concordat should be explicitly broadened to include staff not primarily hired as researchers, but who are research active.** Any reporting relating to the implementation of the Concordat should be clear about the groups of researchers to which it refers.”

(My emphasis, p. 5)

“Recommendation 4: There should be increased support for researcher independence, including autonomy in their own career development, and the freedom to innovate.

² See here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PehsAcIF9dhf_lwjf0HY3Y8Dib2wt5EH/view

³ Postdoctoral researchers, research assistants and associates, research fellows and ‘hidden researchers’ which includes technicians and teaching fellows whose research often goes un-recognized and under-supported, see p. 10 of the Review of the Concordat.

- A revised Concordat should address the tension between PIs and postdoctoral independence, setting out clearly the obligations for both groups.
- **There should be increased emphasis and support, by both funders and employers, for uptake of researchers' 10 days training allowance.**
- Development of researcher independence should be supported through allocated time within grants.
- **20% of a researcher's time should be allowed for developing independent research and skills."**

(My emphasis, p. 5).

"Recommendation 8: A communications plan should be developed which ensures that the Concordat remains relevant to new and updated legislation / policy, and which ensures that all relevant stakeholder groups have appropriate access to the Concordat.

- The list of signatories should be reviewed and, if required, updated.
- **Funders should require all PIs to be aware of the Concordat and ask them to communicate it to their research staff.**
- **Employers should ensure that the communications plan is implemented throughout their organisation, and should monitor researcher engagement with the Concordat, for example through participation in annual surveys."**

(My emphasis. p. 6)

Proposal for Academic Assembly, 31.10.18

Following the motion passed in the June EGM, we propose that Academic Assembly form an Accountability and Transparency Working Group to take the reform agenda forward.

Indicative TOR are as follows – formulating the precise TOR should be the first task of the Working Group.

1. Engage with the Halpin Steering Group, representing Academic Assembly concerns and updating Academic Assembly with respect to progress on the implementation of the Halpin Review.
2. Generate proposals to advance accountability and transparency in the University and bring these proposals to Academic Assembly for consideration, discussion and recommendation to management, senate and/or council as appropriate.
3. Engage with management on how to advance accountability and transparency in the University and report back to Academic Assembly.
4. Monitor progress towards greater accountability and transparency in the University and provide regular reports on this to Academic Assembly.

Constitution

1. The working group should have 5 members including a chair.
2. The members should be elected through electronic ballot of all members of Academic Assembly.
3. A call for expressions of interest should be made, with those willing to stand providing a short statement of intent, to be circulated with the ballot papers.
4. The initial term of the working group should come to an end at the end of the academic year 2019/20, with a review taking place 6 months before this, to determine whether or not it should continue.

Proposed: Sarah White

Seconded: Hartmut Logemann

This proposal should be viewed as an alternative to that proposed by Sarah White and Hartmut Logemann for an Accountability and Transparency Working Group. We have been unable to consolidate our positions to provide a single proposal although there is much overlap.

It seems appropriate for me to provide this alternative in advance of the meeting so that members of Academic Assembly have time to compare and contrast the two proposals.

Alternative proposal for Culture and Communications working group

Remit

1. To discuss issues of Institutional Culture (including, but not restricted to, transparency and accountability) and Communications both in relation to Governance (as outlined in the Halpin Review) and those related to institutional management;
2. To engage with Senior Management and the Council Effectiveness Review Steering Group to build effective working relations for Academic Assembly to work with these groups;
3. To generate proposals around Culture and Communication for consideration at Academic Assembly and, as appropriate, for recommendation to Senior Management, Senate and/or Council.

Participation

1. All members of Academic Assembly will be invited to join the group and to participate in regular meetings;
2. The group should decide whether its composition is representative and of a suitable size to do its job effectively;
3. The group should attempt to redress any perceived shortfall in representation and any problems of size with the support of the Chair of Academic Assembly.

Chair of Academic Assembly