
Meeting: SENATE

Date and Time: Wednesday 18 November 2020 at 2.15 pm

Venue: Remote by MS Teams

Present Prof I White (Vice-Chancellor and President), (Chair)

Prof B Morley (Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost)	Prof R Kelsh (Elected by Professoriate)
Prof J Bradshaw (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Int&Doc))	Prof M McManus (Elected by Professoriate)
Prof J Knight (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research))	Prof G Sankaran (Elected by Professoriate)
Prof P Lambert (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching))	Prof A Zalewska (Elected by Professoriate)
Dr C Wilson (Vice-President (Student Experience))	Dr R Branston (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof S Brammer (Dean, School of Management)	Dr M Carley (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof N Brook (Dean, Faculty of Science)	Dr R Chawla-Duggan (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof D Galbreath (Dean, Humanities & Social Sciences)	Dr J Grant (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof G Hawley (Dean, Faculty of Engineering & Design)	Dr M Harney (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Dr J White (Chair of Academic Assembly)	Dr N Johnston (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Ms K Robinson (University Librarian)	Dr F Laughton (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof B Rayton (Chair of CPAC)	Dr D Moon (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof J Barnett (Elected by Professoriate)	Dr P Shepherd (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof D Bird (Elected by Professoriate)	Dr J Troyer (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof M Davidson (Elected by Professoriate)	Dr S Wharton (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof J Davenport (Elected by Professoriate)	Dr J Zang (Elected by Academic Assembly)
Prof C Frost (Elected by Professoriate)	Mr F Masala (SU President)
Prof M Hejmadi (Elected by Professoriate)	Ms A Willingham (SU Education Officer)
Prof T Ibell (Elected by Professoriate)	Dr F KH Ho (SU Postgraduate Officer)
	Mr P-R Hall (elected student member)

Observers:

Prof A Heath	- Academic Director, Centre for Learning & Teaching
Ms A Butler	- Chief Digital and Information Officer
Ms L Andrews	- Committee Officer

In Attendance:

Dr C Harris	- Governance Manager (back-up Secretary)
Dr N Kemp	- Director of Policy, Planning & Compliance
Mr M Nicholson	- Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions (minute 14847)
Ms A Pater	- Deputy Director (Academic Governance & Compliance) (Secretary)
Ms R Sheer	- Acting Director of Academic Registry
Ms C Slack	- SU Head of Student Voice & Engagement

Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Dr S Gheduzzi. Prof A Zalewska left at 3pm, minute 14849.

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially new student member Peter-Rory Hall. Members were reminded of the protocol for on-line meetings. **ACTION**

14843 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair asked for any declarations of interest concerning the business to be discussed; it was noted (re 14854) that all members had an interest in the recommendations regarding Senate composition; Prof Rayton declared a specific interest in this item. Prof McManus declared an interest in item 14877 as this was her report.

14844 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Senate APPROVED the minutes of the meeting on 7 October 2020 (S20/21-043) as a correct record of the proceedings. The minutes would later be signed by the Chair.

14845 MATTERS ARISING

Minute 14809 – Senate NOTED that a call for nominations for a casual vacancy for a Professor on Senate had been made on 10 November, closing on 25 November.

14846 FORMAL REPORT OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Vice-Chancellor introduced his report on key issues facing the University (paper S20/21-044). He paid tribute to everyone involved in all the work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that a substantial number of students were self-isolating, along with those who had tested positive. There was no evidence of student/staff transmission of the virus. He thanked all the staff involved in supporting them in accommodation, hospitality, security and student services, as well as staff in Estates and other professional services who were maintaining campus safety. Plans were in hand for flow-testing of students before the travel period for those returning home. He noted with sadness the death of student Domonic Holmes, whose family and friends were in his thoughts.

He reported that the outcomes of the staff and student surveys, which gave cause for encouragement but also issues to address. He hoped that most staff would have an opportunity to have a well-deserved rest during the Christmas break. The financial situation was being monitored and risks being mitigated, although risks of reduced income continued. He was pleased to announce that the University had now been confirmed as a University of Sanctuary and thanked all those who had been involved in achieving this.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that the work of the Effectiveness Review was progressing towards its conclusion and he hoped this would be in a collective manner. He planned that there would be wider engagement with emerging issues in future, which could involve holding additional meetings of Senate, such as an awayday or afternoon.

Senate NOTED the report.

14847 STUDENT ADMISSIONS

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost introduced the reports on student admissions (paper S20/21-045A/B). He thanked the recruitment and admissions teams for their hard work over the summer and autumn, especially dealing with the changes to A level results in August. Home student numbers recruited were slightly under target, and an

aim had been not to overload campus accommodation or teaching facilities, and this had been achieved, hence avoiding potential safety issues. The Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions added his thanks to all those staff involved, including those who advised applicants and their parent, security and Library staff.

Discussion points included:

- The target for widening participation and the Access and Participation Plan (APP);
- The effect of the change to A level results, which seemed to have favoured students from advantaged backgrounds, and the number of deferrals to 2021;
- The increased participation in on-line summer schools this summer (over 900 students);
- The fact that A levels would take place three weeks later in 2021.

Prof Morley noted that postgraduate taught targets had been missed, although applications and offers had been higher than the previous, and the target would have been exceeded without the pandemic. Prof Rayton also thanked all those involved.

Senate NOTED the reports.

14848 ACADEMIC STANDARDS IN UNDERGRADUATE OUTCOMES – 2019/20

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) introduced the report (paper S20/21-046). He explained that in 2019/20 the proportion of first-class degrees awarded had risen by ten percentage points and the proportion of upper degrees awarded had risen by two percentage points, since 2018/19. This rise was in the context of the COVID-19 affected semester 2 and the introduction of the No Detriment policy agreed by Senate; the policy was in line with guidance from the Office for Students (OfS) and no concerns were raised by external examiners. He added that the improvement in degree outcomes and any gaps in attainment would be explored by the Degree Outcomes Group of the Education, Equality & Standards Committee (EQSC). A request was made for the group to consider degree outcomes over the previous few years.

The Acting Director of Academic Registry also explained that the OfS were concerned with unexplained changes in degree outcomes and that Bath was not a priority for them at present, having excellent students and rigorous academic standards. The Students' Union thanked the University for the No Detriment policy, and for providing disaggregated data, for example for black students. There was a challenge to the example given in para 27c and it was agreed that the wording was poor and that it should be removed for the report to Council. It was also agreed that para 27b should be clarified or removed for the report to Council.

Senate considered the report and AGREED to recommend it to Council, with the two amendments mentioned above.

**PVC
(L&T)**

14849 DOCTORAL COLLEGE REPORT

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International & Doctoral) introduced the report (paper S20/21-047). Part A set out an update on actions taken to date. Part B was the first of an intended set of regular reports on the activity of the Doctoral College. He invited suggestions for other data which would be helpful to Senate.

Discussion points included:

- The Students' Union Postgraduate Officer appreciated all the efforts being made to support doctoral students. Current students had however expressed concerns over the effect of COVID-19 especially on their mental health;
- There was also a question as to whether a No Detriment policy would be possible for vivas;
- It was noted that some universities included a statement in theses to explain that they had been finished during the global pandemic, but it was important not to imply these were of lesser quality because of this;
- There was a request to share with doctoral students the guidance that was being given to their examiners;
- The evolving situation with UKRI guidance on funding was noted;
- There was a request for figures on admissions against targets;
- That a further review of the Doctoral College was due.

Prof Bradshaw said these points would be followed up.

PVC
(I&D)

Senate NOTED the report.

14850 RESILIENT CURRICULUM: OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2020

Prof Tim Ibell, Chair of the Resilient Curriculum Project Team (RCPT), introduced paper S20/21 – 048. This updated Senate on the work of the RCPT from October 2020 to the present. The results of a student survey in week 4 had been mostly positive, but highlighted issues of workload. He thanked all those doing In Person Teaching (IPT) which had been well received, and had approximately 40% attendance, higher for first years. He reminded Senate that IPT had to cease by Wednesday 9 December to comply with government guidelines. For the remainder of semester 1, and all semester 2, there would be two IPT sessions each week per student; these could be split into two, with safety arrangements for different groups of students. He recognised the workload issues for staff and students. He also reported that potential scenarios for teaching in 2021/22 were being explored. The Vice-Chancellor thanked Prof Ibell and the RCPT for all their work.

Senate NOTED the report.

14851 COVID-19 LEARNING AND TEACHING MEASURES FOR ASSESSMENT IN 2020/21

The Acting Director of Academic Registry introduced paper S20/21 – 049. She explained that the report reminded Senate of the mitigating approaches taken for COVID-19 academic disruption in 2019/20 that carried through into the current academic year, and to recommend an assessment mitigation focussed approach for 2020/21. The proposal was for on-line assessments and flexibility. The operational details were still under discussion with academic and professional services staff and SU officers.

Comments made in the discussion included:

- The SU welcomed the proposals.
- The implications of students self-certifying illness;

- The implications of students being able to defer an exam attempt without evidence or approval required after they had seen the paper.

Senate AGREED:

- 1) the approach to mitigating impact on student assessment described in the paper for 2020/21 as recommended by EQSC;
- 2) the specific proposals regarding IMCs and 2019/20 examination deferral durations as described in paras. 17 and 18 of the report;
- 3) the amendment to Regulation 15.3(d) with effect from 19 November 2020 to 30 September 2021 so it reads:

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'A student who wishes any individual mitigating circumstances to be taken into account by the Board of Examiners for Programmes should notify the appropriate Director of Studies within ~~three~~ **seven calendar** days of the completion of the assessment, **or assessment period in the case of multiple examinations**, for which representation is being made. ~~and should submit a medical certificate if the circumstances relate to illness or injury.~~ Where individual mitigating circumstances exist prior to the assessment period, students will normally be expected to have notified the Director of Studies of those circumstances before the start of the assessment period.

'Full guidance on the University's principles and procedures for dealing with IMCs and assessment are set out in the document entitled Individual Mitigating Circumstances & Assessment – Principles & Procedures within & outside the New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations, abbreviated as IMCA, **and associated webpages.**'

Senate would review the change at its final meeting of 2020/21 to determine any further change or applicability for the 2021/22 academic year.

- 4) A technical detail from 2019/20 was clarified in order to set a reasonable limit on the duration of examination deferrals remaining from 2019/20, as follows:
 - a. Where a unit is still required to be passed, a limit of the end of the supplementary assessment period 2020/21 should be put on any outstanding assessment from that unit that was deferred from 2019/20. In practice, this means that any remaining outstanding deferred assessments would then be given a grade of Non-Submission ("NS"), and normal NFAAR rules would apply.
 - b. Where a unit had already been passed and an attempt at the deferred assessment was optional to the student, a limit of the end of the supplementary assessment period 2020/21 should be put on any outstanding assessment from that unit that was deferred from 2019/20. A final unit grade of PA (Pass with outstanding deferred assessment) would be applied where the unit has a passing mark or PD (Condoned pass with outstanding deferred assessment) applied where the unit was condoned. The student would not have a further opportunity to undertake the assessment.

14852 CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION COMMITTEE: UPDATE AND COURSES FOR APPROVAL

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching) presented paper S20/21-050. He confirmed that both Curriculum Transformation and non- Curriculum Transformation courses could run alongside each other; flexibility was needed during the pandemic, but the principles remained.

Senate APPROVED:

- 1) on the recommendation of Curriculum Transformation Committee:
 - a. the new BEng (Hons) Structural & Architectural Engineering and
 - b. the new BEng (Hons) Structural & Architectural Engineering with year-long work placement;
- 2) the exit awards for the Curriculum Transformation MSc courses in the Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering as set out in Appendix 2;
- 3) a minor amendment to the attendees at Curriculum Transformation Committee, such that the SU attendee is the Education Manager in future.

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14853 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching) presented key performance information as set out in paper S20/21 – 051. There was a discussion about performance in relation to the University’s comparator group. It was also reported that a new set of KPIs was being developed for the University Executive Board / Council (Appendix 8); there was a request for the widening participation targets to be included in these. There was also a request to show Bath in its ranking order in each table, rather than at the top of each.

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Senate NOTED the report.

14854 SENATE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

The Vice-Chancellor introduced paper S20/21 - 052, setting out recommendations from the Senate Effectiveness Review.

It was noted that all members had a conflict of interest in this item; several members of long-standing also declared a particular interest in the discussion about terms of office.

The issues discussed were:

- a) Composition. There were questions about electing some members from defined faculties/school, in order to ensure a breadth of discipline backgrounds; it was emphasised that once elected, Senate members did not ‘represent’ their faculty/school, but had a duty to act in the best interests of the University;
- b) Length of term: It was noted that the recommendation to introduce a maximum term of nine years in total had not been made by the review group, but had been suggested afterwards, to stay in line with membership of Council. This would be considered at a future date.

Senate:

- 1) AGREED to recommend to Council the changes to Senate composition in Statutes and Ordinances as set out in Appendix 1, but to include the University Librarian as an *ex-officio* member of Senate as agreed at the previous meeting;
- 2) DEFERRED consideration of the proposal that Senate members have a maximum of three consecutive three-year terms;
- 3) AGREED to recommend to Council the changes to Senate functions in Statutes and Ordinances as set out in Appendix 1;
- 4) AGREED to run elections to Senate for vacancies in August 2021 under the current composition according to the usual timetable;
- 5) Considered proposed changes to Statutes and Ordinance as set out in section 3 so that the Senior Academic Appointments Committee may be abolished but deferred a decision on this and requested to see draft replacement processes;
- 6) NOTED the updated Action Plan as set out in Appendix 2.

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The Chair offered an opportunity for a short break but it was generally agreed to continue the meeting.

14855 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) presented papers S20/21- 53A/B. It was noted that Council had also set up an institutional Ethics Committee.

Senate APPROVED:

- 1) the proposed new Terms of Reference for Academic Ethics and Integrity Committee;
- 2) the proposed new Terms of Reference for Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee' with immediate effect.

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[Post-meeting secretary's note: clarification being sought on responsibility for research ethics.]

14856 LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT

The University Librarian introduced paper S20/21-054 and invited questions.

Senate NOTED the report.

14857 ANNUAL REPORT OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Prof Galbreath introduced paper S20/21-055. He reported that this had been his final meeting as Chair of the Committee and thanked the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team and all those across the University who had worked on these issues. The Vice-Chancellor thanked him for his leadership of this important area. It was noted that that Alex Butler was now the Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Senate NOTED the report.

14858 STUDENT CASE MONITORING DATA 2019/20

The Director of Policy, Planning and Compliance introduced papers S20/21 – 056A-D with annual data for Student Complaint, Student Discipline, Fitness to Practise and

Fitness to Study. She explained that processes and reporting had now improved greatly since the employment of a new Student Casework and Compliance Manager in August 2019, although data for the previous years was not now exactly comparable. Dignity and respect cases were now dealt with separately. Infringement of COVID-19 guidance was being taken seriously: at this point in 2019/20 there had been 60 student discipline cases, whereas this year there were 227, with another 100 about to be processed. Similarly, in the whole of 2019/20 there had been ten discipline appeals, and this year there were already seven.

She also reported that Dr Wilson was leading on a review of Fitness to Practise and Fitness to Study procedures. **VP(SE)**

Senate NOTED the reports.

14859 UNIVERSITY INDEPENDENT ADVISOR FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

Senate discussed the annual report for 2019/20 (paper S20/21 – 057) presented by Prof Marcelle McManus, the University Independent Advisor for Postgraduate Research Students. She thanked Dr Jannis Wenk, one of the deputy advisors, and all those who had assisted her in her role. The other advisor was leaving the University. During the year, 37 doctoral students and three staff had contacted her for advice. This was lower than the previous year but there were still areas for concern, including alleged bullying and sexual misconduct.

The student members thanked Prof McManus for all the work she had done but emphasised that there was still a need for a culture change in some areas; students often did not have faith in the Complaints procedure. Another member asked for feedback on what action had been taken since the previous annual report. The Vice-President (Student Experience) reported that this issue had been a standing item at University Executive Board (UEB) meetings and all departments had been required to address it in their department meetings. In cases reported anonymously it was difficult to address the issue. However, work was continuing. **VP(SE)**

Senate NOTED the report.

14860 DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY POLICY UPDATE

The Chief Digital and Information Officer introduced paper S20/21 – 058 and reported on progress on developing a Digital Accessibility Policy to ensure the University complied with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. An interim Digital Accessibility Policy for Education had been approved by Senate as urgent business on 18 September 2020 and further consultation was taking place. She explained that the report had been produced in a digitally accessible format. **CDIO**

Senate NOTED the report.

14861 ANTISEMITISM - INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DEFINITION

The Vice-Chancellor introduced paper S20/21 – 059. He reminded members that he had circulated a draft University statement to them the previous day for consideration,

in response to a letter from the Secretary of State for Education requesting universities to adopt the working definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). He noted that the definition had been accompanied by some examples which raised concerns amongst members of the community, but that these were not part of the working definition itself. The draft statement for consideration was as follows:

‘University Statement for consideration by Senate

‘The University of Bath is currently engaged in a two-year initiative to strengthen our policies regarding discrimination and prejudice. This endeavour addresses all protected characteristics noted in the 2010 Equalities Act and is driven by the fundamental values of the University in terms of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. As part of our work the team at Bath is closely reviewing guidelines and definitions prepared by various expert bodies.

‘In the specific effort to ensure the safety and protection of Jewish students and staff, we have looked at different definitions of antisemitism. This includes the working definition adopted by the IHRA in May 2016: “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

‘We shall be drawing upon this definition in the task of creating robust policies and processes to tackle antisemitism. Our goal is to provide reassurance to all Jewish members of our university community, while safeguarding the space for the free exchange of ideas in an atmosphere of mutual respect.’

Points made in discussion included:

- The SU President had concerns about how this definition had been used elsewhere to repress Palestinian views but he welcomed the draft statement for consideration; the SU would continue to work with the Jewish community and other marginalised groups;
- Support for the draft statement;
- A question about what the statement was aiming to achieve;
- A concern that the related examples raised issues of freedom of speech and these should clearly be seen as separate from the working definition.

The Vice-Chancellor emphasised that this discussion was part of a process and aimed to be as inclusive as possible. He asked if any members were against supporting the draft statement and no-one declared that they were. Senate therefore AGREED to support the draft University statement.

14862 DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY STRATEGY 2021-26

A member had requested in advance that this item (S20/21 – 064) from Part III be considered in Part I. There was a discussion that this was an issue that it was important for Senate to discuss as it developed.

Senate NOTED the report.

14863 ORDINANCE WAIVER

Senate considered paper S20/21 – 060 and AGREED to recommend to Council waiver of Ordinance 14.10 for 2020/21 regarding holding annual degree congregations.

14864 HIGH PERFORMANCE COMPUTING IN THE CLOUD

Prof James Davenport introduced paper S20/21 – 061. He invited members to send him any questions they might have.

Senate NOTED:

- 1) the UEB decision to accept the technical feasibility of High Performance Computing in the Cloud and that further feasibility work was being carried out before a final decision was taken;
- 2) that clearer costings would need to be established and an internal pricing model developed to support both research and teaching.

CDIO

14865 AWARDS

Senate considered papers S20/21 – 062A/B.

Senate APPROVED:

- 1) a new Civic category in the Vice-Chancellor's Engage awards;
- 2) the Excellence in Doctoral Supervision Prize for 2020/21 with new operational management provided by the Doctoral College.

**HoPE
PVC
(I&D)**

14866 URGENT BUSINESS

Senate NOTED paper S20/21 – 063, setting out urgent business approved since the previous meeting.

14867 ACADEMIC DRESS

Senate NOTED removal by the Acting Director of Academic Registry of the reference to the academic dress for the University Secretary in the publication at:

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/official-academic-dress/attachments/official-academic-dress-summary.pdf>

14868 COUNCIL

Senate NOTED the minutes of the meetings of Council on 23 September and 15 October 2020 (S20/21-065A/B).

14869 MINUTES OF BOARDS OF STUDIES

Senate RECEIVED the minutes of the following meetings of Boards of Studies (papers S20/21- 066-70):

Faculty of Engineering & Design	14 October 2020
Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences	14 October 2020
Faculty of Science	30 September 2020
School of Management	14 October 2020
Board of Studies (Doctoral)	22 July/16 September 2020

14870 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Senate RECEIVED a summary of meetings in October 2020 (paper S20/21 – 071).

14871 MINUTES OF SENATE AND JOINT SENATE/COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Senate RECEIVED minutes of the following meetings of Senate and Joint/Senate/Council Committees (papers S20/21-072-077):

Academic Ethics and Integrity Committee	6 October 2020
Curriculum Transformation Committee	12 October 2020
Equality and Diversity Committee	1 October 2020
Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee	30 September 2020
Research Committee	29 September 2020
University Doctoral Studies Committee	10 September 2020

14872 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

Senate NOTED the Calendar of Meetings of Senate for the remainder of the year:

Wednesday 3 February 2021

Wednesday 21 April 2021

Wednesday 9 June 2021

Note: All meetings starting at 2.15pm, currently on MS Teams.

14873 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

The meeting concluded at 5.40pm