

SENATE

Wednesday, 1st February 2023 2:15 pm

Council Chamber | Senate

Attendees

Present

Ian White (Chair)
Philip Allmendinger
Ian Blenkarn
Julian Chaudhuri
Adrian Evans
Britt Flanderijn
Maria Del Carmen Gil Ortega (remote)
Fiona Gillison
Sarah Hainsworth (for items 15245 – 15250)
Marion Harney
Alan Hayes
Andrew Heath (remote)
Momna Hejmadi
Timothy Ibell
Robert Kelsh
Julia Kildyushova
Frances Laughton
Jura Neverauskaite
Fei Qin
Kathryn Robinson (remote)
Alexander Robinson
Paul Shepherd (remote)
Brian Squire (remote)
Danae Stanton Fraser

Edmund Thompson (remote)
Lorraine Whitmarsh (remote)
Cassie Wilson
Steve Wharton
Jane White
Deborah Wilson
Jun Zang

In attendance

Miranda Blofield (item 15255 only)
Christopher Bonfield
Richard Brooks (for item 15259 only)
Ryan Lucas
Rajani Naidoo (item 15251 only)
Rachel Sheer

Secretariat

Emily Commander
Caroline Pringle

Apologies

Teslim Bukoye

15245.0 Welcome and Quorum

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that it was quorate.

15246.0 Declarations of Interest

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Dr Steve Wharton, Dr Fei Qin and Dr Paul Shepherd each declared an interest in relation to item 15261 (Senate Steering Group). It was agreed that they should not participate in any decision on their membership of the Senate Steering Group.

15247.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting - S22/23 - 41

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The open minutes of the previous meeting of Senate held on 16 November 2022 were approved, subject to two minor amendments to items 15216 and 15220.

15248.0 Actions and Matters Arising

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the action log. It was noted that the Assessment and Feedback Delivery Plan for AY22/23 had been circulated to Senate that morning, in response to an action from November's meeting.

15249.0 Institutional update - S22/23 - 42

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Vice-Chancellor presented the institutional update and expressed his thanks to the University staff who had worked so hard over the Christmas period and through January. He drew Senate's attention to the fact that it would no longer be possible to hold graduation ceremonies on Friday 21 July 2023, so it was proposed to hold an additional day of ceremonies on Friday 14 July.

The Director of Education and Student Services provided an update on the semester 1 teaching and assessment period. Of the units that had been taught in person prior to the pandemic,

approximately 95% had returned to in person teaching in semester 1 and there had been approximately 33000 individual exam sittings. There had been a range of options in the current year for students sitting examinations, including in person invigilated exams by Inspira, which had been piloted in the School of Management with success.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) congratulated those colleagues who had obtained significant grants in the current quarter.

In response to questions from Senate, it was confirmed that the University's TEF submission, and the submission from the Students' Union, would be made available to members of Senate; a meeting would be taking place the following week to discuss how to best disseminate it.

15250.0 Discussion item on Research

Purpose – For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) presented slides on the University's Research Strategy and ambitions for REF and led a discussion around achieving research income targets. Senate was asked to consider the following questions:

1. Given the support outlined in the introductory slides and measures including Institutes/Beacons/RIS support/Research Focus Weeks and Sabbaticals - what else would support colleagues to deliver on research grant income?
2. How do we encourage those that are currently not holding a research grant to develop a bid?
3. What support mechanisms can Centres and Departments provide?
4. What specific things can Senate do to support delivery of the research strategy?

The following points were raised in discussion:

- it would be helpful to re-issue the invitation to become involved in some of the big initiatives, such as the Beacons;
- it was recognised that calls for grants were becoming bigger with little time to prepare; the University needed to put itself in a position where it knew which funding calls were on the horizon, and could be prepared to respond at pace;
- Senate members had seen incentive schemes work in other institutions;
- it would help with horizon-scanning to network senior academics into the Research Councils and other advisory networks;
- at Bath there was not always a focus on obtaining grants; there was a need to set an expectation that applying for grants was part of an academic's role;
- external support could be used, for example government policy advisors and industry experts;
- some other institutions had a dedicated member of staff to support academics when meeting with funders and applying for grants;
- it was possible that departments could agree local level arrangements to cover an academic's teaching commitments for a semester, to allow them to focus on research.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) undertook to take these suggestions away and invited members of Senate to continue to share their ideas outside the meeting.

15251.0 Statement of Equality Objectives - S22/23 - 43

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Vice-President (Community and Inclusion) presented paper S22/23 - 43A which asked Senate to consider the Statement of Equality Objectives for 2023 - 26. The Statement of Equality Objectives was a public-facing document which, once approved by Council, would be published on the University website in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Also provided was a wider internal programme of work to support the objectives.

Senate members welcomed the Statement and the wider objectives. It was suggested that the progress indicators in the internal plan could be refined with a clearer definition of what success would look like. It was also noted that the internal plan would need to be revisited once the Access and Participation Plan had been finalised.

On this basis, Senate commended the Statement of Equality Objectives for 2023 - 26.

The Vice-President (Community and Inclusion) presented paper S22/23 - 43B to seek feedback from Senate on the draft Race Equality Taskforce Report, ahead of wider stakeholder engagement.

There was a high level of support for the draft report from members of Senate. In particular, Senate members welcomed the plans set out for specific roles across the University, and the use of personal stories to encourage participation. Senate members discussed the University's position in comparison with other institutions.

Senate noted the draft Race Quality Taskforce Report.

15253.0 Educational Delivery - S22/23 - 45

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Director of Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) presented paper S22/23 – 45, which asked Senate to consider and recommend the high level principles of blended teaching to the Education, Quality and Standards Committee (EQSC) and the Education Advisory Board. It was recognised that, for the majority of programmes, this would not be a divergence from current practice but would formalise provision.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- 'blended teaching' was a contested term but was loosely defined as in-person and online teaching delivery. Online teaching could be online resources and/or live online teaching;
- the Office for Students (OfS) did not require that advertised courses specified the percentage of teaching that would be delivered in person or online, but should clearly advertise if the delivery of teaching was mixed;
- decisions about the method of teaching delivery should be made at course level, rather than by individual unit conveyors;
- recent data suggested that most students wanted in-person teaching but the University did not

want to lose the learning gained from the pandemic;
- Curriculum Transformation could be used as a lever to explore these opportunities.

Senate considered and recommended to the Education Advisory Board and EQSC the proposed high-level blended teaching delivery principles and course expectations.

Senate noted the draft Types and Modes of Blended Delivery as set out in Appendix 1.

Senate noted that, if adopted, then the Education Advisory Board and EQSC would, in due course, consider further operational, resourcing and standards-related issues prior to them being brought back to Senate for noting or final approval (as appropriate).

15254.0 Curriculum Transformation - S22/23 - 46

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Chair of the Academic Standards Working Group introduced papers S22/23 - 46A and B, which sought Senate's approval of the adapted credit quanta proposed for use in the articulation of Undergraduate Assessment Regulations 23-24.1 and provided an update on the progress of the Curriculum Transformation project adaptation of the new Undergraduate Assessment Regulations. From AY23/24 all students would be subject to the same Assessment Regulations. The aim was to make the regulations more accessible and easier to understand; it was anticipated that they would be reduced from over 200 pages to approximately 25.

Senate approved the adapted credit quanta for use in the articulation of Undergraduate Assessment Regulations 23-24.1 (UGAR 23-24.1).

Senate welcomed the move to simplify the Assessment Regulations and supported the direction of travel for the articulation of the Undergraduate Assessment Regulations and the direction of travel for the draft combined illustrative UG/IMCA flowcharts that would form part of the Undergraduate Assessment Regulations.

Professor Harney presented paper S22/23 - 46C which provided an update on the progress of Curriculum Transformation (CT). Members of Senate noted that a risk to the delivery of CT, as noted in the paper, was space allocation. In response to questions from Senate, it was confirmed that some of the challenges were due to timetabling, rather than space, and that, going forwards, there would be an expectation that new space would all be GTA space rather than Department-specific.

Senate noted the update on Curriculum Transformation.

15255.0 Degree apprenticeships - S22/23 - 47

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) presented paper S22/23 – 47, which updated Senate on the actions taken in relation to degree apprenticeships following a monitoring visit by Ofsted in May 2022. The monitoring visit identified a lack of institutional oversight of degree apprenticeships. It was proposed to establish two new groups to address this:

- (i) a Degree Apprenticeships Quality and Standards Group, as a subgroup of EQSC, to inform and advise EQSC, and ultimately Senate and Council, of the quality of the University's apprenticeship provision and as part of the wider, institutional governance processes; and
- (ii) a Degree Apprenticeships Strategy Group, as a subgroup of the Education Advisory Board, to support the development of the University's degree apprenticeship strategy and inform and advise EAB on strategic, operational and financial matters.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Ofsted did not have any specific requirements around the membership of committees or boards, but wanted assurance that Council and Senate had oversight of degree apprenticeships;
- the membership of the two new groups was similar. There was also significant overlap with the current membership of EQSC, which potentially created a lack of separation and independence. It was agreed that the proposed membership of these two new groups could be reviewed alongside the review of EQSC membership that was currently underway.
- Discussions had taken place in relation to having an employer representative on one of the groups. It was felt that this would be of more value on the strategy board.

Senate noted the action being taken in relation to oversight of degree apprenticeships and agreed to provide onward assurance to Council.

15256.0 Charter - S22/23 - 48

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate gave formal consideration to the proposed amendments to the University Charter and agreed formally to recommend them to Council.

15257.0 Course Approvals - S22/23 - 49

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate approved the Zero Carbon Futures PG Diploma and PG Certificate as standalone courses.

15258.0 Partnership approvals - S22/23 - 50

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) presented paper S22/23 – 50, which proposed the University of Salamanca as a new strategic partner, on the recommendation of the Academic Programmes Committee. In response to questions from Senate members, it was confirmed that under these arrangements student fees would come to Bath and then be remitted to the institutions in question so there was no financial disadvantage to the University in operating this model.

Senate approved the University of Salamanca as a new strategic partner.

15259.0 Academic Titles - S22/23 - 51

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Director of HR attended for this item which was taken before item 15256.

Paper S22/23 – 51B proposed the introduction of the title of Distinguished Professor. In response to questions from Senate it was confirmed that only one of the criteria laid out in paragraph 3d of the paper would need to be met for the title of Distinguished Professor to be awarded, and that the list was not exhaustive. The Director of HR clarified that the title was an honorary title which could be awarded to recognise significant contribution.

On the recommendation of the Academic Staff Committee and the Honorary Degrees Committee, Senate approved a delegation of authority to the Head of Governance to make changes to the University's Governance Framework to allow for the posthumous award of academic titles, subject - where relevant - to the approval of Council.

Senate approved the introduction of the honorary title of "Distinguished Professor".

15260.0 Student casework - S22/23 - 52

Purpose – For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) presented papers S22/23 - 52A-C, which provided an update to Senate on the work of the Student Policy and Safeguarding Unit.

Senate noted the annual report on student policy and safeguarding and agreed to provide assurance to Council.

Senate noted the annual report on student appeals and recommended it to Council.

Senate noted the Annual Statement on cases referred to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

15261.0 Review of Senate business and operations - S22/23 - 53

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Head of Governance introduced paper S22/23 -53. Halpin had been commissioned for the benchmarking exercise which would be led by a Senate Steering Group. There were no comments or questions.

Senate approved the membership and Terms of Reference for the Senate Steering Group.

15262.0 Council Effectiveness - S22/23 - 54

Purpose – For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate formally noted the External Review of Council Effectiveness and associated action plan, both of which had been circulated before Christmas. Senate members were invited to think about how Senate could engage with Council. There was a request to consider alternative nomenclature for the “Council Charter” recommended by the Review, to avoid confusion with the University's founding document.

15263.0 Calendars and dates 23/24 and 24/25 - S22/23 - 55

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate approved the academic year dates for 2024/25 and agreed to recommend to Council the Calendar of Meetings for 2023/24. Senate noted the provisional meeting dates for 2024/25.

15264.0 Annual Report from the Library - S22/23 - 56

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the annual report from the Library. Thanks were expressed to the Library for its work.

15265.0 Student numbers - S22/23 - 57

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the student numbers as of 1 December 2022.

15266.0 Boards of Studies

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the minutes from the Boards of Studies.

15267.0 Urgent Business Powers and Delegated Authority - S22/23 - 58

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the report on the use of Urgent Business Powers and Delegated Authority since the last meeting.

15268.0 Council update - S22/23 - 59

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the update from Council.

15269.0 Any Other Business

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

There was no other business.