

SENATE

Wednesday, 16th November 2022 2:15 pm

Council Chamber | Senate

Attendees

Present

Professor Ian White, Chair
Dr Peter Allen
Professor Philip Allmendinger
Dr Frances Amery (remote)
Dr Teslim Bukoye
Professor Julian Chaudhuri (remote)
Professor Adrian Evans
Britt Flanderijn
Dr Sabina Gheduzzi
Dr Maria Del Carmen Gil Ortega
Professor Fiona Gillison
Professor Sarah Hainsworth
Dr Alan Hayes
Professor Andrew Heath
Professor Momna Hejmadi
Professor Timothy Ibell
Professor Robert Kelsh
Julia Kildyushova
Dr Frances Laughton
Ryan Lucas
Jura Neverauskaite
Dr Fei Qin
Dr Benjamin Ralph
Kate Robinson
Dr Paul Shepherd
Professor Brian Squire (remote)
Professor Danae Stanton Fraser (remote)
Professor Edmund Thompson
Dr Steve Wharton
Professor Lorraine Whitmarsh
Professor Cassie Wilson
Professor Deborah Wilson
Professor Jun Zang

In attendance

Ian Blenkharn
Dr Christopher Bonfield
Professor Marion Harney
Rachel Sheer

Secretariat

Emily Commander, Secretary
Katherine Anderton
Mollie Kay-Hough
Caroline Pringle

Apologies

Professor Stephen Brammer
Professor Matt Davidson
Professor Matthew Jones
Professor Guy McCusker
Dr Dai Moon
Alexander Robinson
Professor Jane White

15215.0 Welcome and Quorum

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Chair welcomed members and attendees and made a formal note of attendance to ensure that a quorum was maintained throughout the meeting.

Apologies were noted from Professor Guy McCusker, Dr Dai Moon, Alexander Robinson and Dr Jane White.

The Chair reminded all those present to use Decision Time to indicate attendance and send apologies in advance, to ensure an accurate record of attendance. Advice and guidance on how to do this was available from the Governance team.

15216.0 Declarations of Interest

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Danae Stanton-Fraser declared an interest in relation to item 15244.

Julian Chaudhuri declared an interest in relation to an item to be raised under the Institutional Update (agenda item 15219) relating to a potential collaboration with his former employer, the University of Plymouth.

Steve Wharton declared an interest in item 15227, as a member of the Governance Advisory Group.

Dr Fran Laughton and Kate Robinson declared an interest in item 15234 as members of the Student Discipline and Misconduct Panel.

15217.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting - S22/23 - 21

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The open minutes of the previous meeting of Senate held on 5 October were approved, subject to a correction to minute 15199 in relation to a discussion point that had been missed.

15218.0 Actions and Matters Arising

Purpose – For noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the action log. The only outstanding action was to upload the Curriculum Management Academic Working Group Terms of Reference to the website. All other actions were either complete or not yet due.

Senate members were reminded that actions were now logged and allocated via Decision Time. If Senate members were allocated an action which they believed belonged elsewhere, then they should contact the Governance team with the name of the appropriate action owner, so that it could be reassigned.

The Vice-Chancellor also advised that he had recently presented some slides on the structure of the operational executive committees and advisory boards. Copies of these slides would be made available to Senate.

15219.0 Institutional update - S22/23 - 22

Purpose – For noting

Minute by Emily Commander

Professor Julian Chaudhuri declared an interest in relation to the proposed partnership with the University of Plymouth in relation to his former employment.

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Vice-Chancellor introduced the institutional update and paid tribute to staff and students for their work so far this year. The Vice-Chancellor noted that it had been a vibrant start to the year with a wide range of activities taking place.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) informed Senate that the University had been approached by Health Education England to help to scope the delivery of the University's MPharm degree locally in the South West, in order to address the long-standing shortage of pharmacists in the region. Health Education England asked Bath to find a partner with whom to deliver the programme and identified Essex and Plymouth as potential candidates. After evaluating both providers against a set of critical factors, the University of Plymouth had been selected as the preferred partner. Bath had submitted an initial business case to Health Education England, which was approved on 15 November. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) advised that in due course there would be a number of papers coming to Senate in connection with this partnership. The first intake was planned for October 2024. The Director of Education and Student Services assured Senate that colleagues across Education had been considering the student experience implications of Bath students living and studying in other locations.

Members of Senate asked questions in relation to the institutional update and were answered as follows:

- While the use of deposits had been extended to the vast majority of PGT courses, the policy had been deliberately drafted to give the University the maximum amount of flexibility and discretion, so that it could take account of hardship at the point of payment, and any possible refund.
- The Assessment and Feedback Delivery Plan would be published soon.
- Bath wanted to be able to make offers to undergraduate applicants as early as possible and

would be looking at a tiered approach to applications.

- The number of student applications (as opposed to just the percentages) were available via the BI dashboard. The link to this would be circulated to Senators.

Senate noted the institutional update.

15220.0 Discussion item on Student Data Analytics

Purpose – For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) and the Director of Education and Student Services presented slides on the use of data analytics to monitor student attendance, engagement and well-being. Senate was asked to consider:

- whether it accepted the premise that data would play a more significant role in the delivery of education and student experience over the next five to ten years;
- whether monitoring attendance of educational activity fundamentally challenged the HE experience;
- what the academic community's appetite was for understanding how students chose to engage with their studies post-pandemic; and
- how far the University should aim to go on this journey.

Members of Senate discussed the use of data analytics to monitor student well-being, attendance and engagement. A range of views were expressed; some supportive and others urging caution or expressing reservations. The following points were raised in discussion:

- Some Senators had experience of attendance monitoring in other institutions and had found it a valuable tool for demonstrating the correlation between attendance and course pass marks, and for identifying students who were disengaging and making early interventions.
- Learning analytics could be useful for academic staff to understand which aspects of teaching students found most engaging.
- Some of the information was already collected by personal tutors but there was currently no simple way of collating this, or of collecting it more systematically.
- Clear communication about what data was collected, and why, would be crucial if trust was to be maintained between the University, staff and students.
- There would need to be assurances in place that students would not be punished for non-attendance.
- Overseas students were monitored for legal reasons relating to their student visas; it did not necessarily follow that the attendance of all students should be monitored.
- There were some reservations that attendance and engagement monitoring could be corrosive to the culture of higher education and ran the risk of infantilising students.
- Attendance and engagement should not be conflated; consideration would need to be given to ensure each was measured in a meaningful way.
- Student governors emphasized the need for student consultations on this matter before any decisions were taken.
- There were a number of new tools on the market which could be used to gather and analyse this type of data.

15221.0 Academic assurance in relation to industrial action

Purpose – For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) reminded Senate that UCU staff would begin industrial action on 23 November 2022, with strikes taking place on 24, 25 and 30 November. The two overarching principles of the University during this time were to ensure that students were supported in their studies and to ensure that educational standards were maintained.

Departments would be asked to let Registry know where lectures and seminars were not provided due to industrial action and, from 23 November, there would be an impact audit. There would also be an FAQ page for students.

The January exam timetable would be published on 21 November. The delivery of assessments and exams during this period would be kept under review and amended if necessary, once UCU announced further details of the industrial action planned for next year.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) asked Deans and Heads of Department to ensure that colleagues were fully briefed.

There were no comments or questions in relation to this item.

Senate noted the update.

15222.0 Independent Adviser - S22/23 - 23

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Independent Adviser introduced paper S22/23 - 24A. The Independent Advisers (IAs) had dealt with 31 cases in 2021/22, which ranged from brief meetings with students through to dignity and respect complaints and sexual harassment and assault cases. It was noted that many students came to the Independent Advisers because their complaint had not been effectively managed in the first instance. The IAs were recommending wider training across the University so that staff were better equipped to support students, or to signpost them to the appropriate services.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) presented UEB's response to the Independent Adviser's report and thanked the IAs for their work. It was noted that the overall number of issues raised was consistent with previous years but that there had been an increase in sexual assault and harassment cases, possibly due to the return to campus following the pandemic. In most cases, the University's response to the initial complaint had caused as much distress as the incident itself, so much of the University's work was focused on the University's response. The Dignity and Respect process had been reviewed and changes had been made to how issues were investigated.

Senate considered both the IA report and UEB's response. Senate commended the work of the IAs however it expressed concern about the increase in the number of cases of sexual assault and misconduct. It was also suggested that there was not enough formal information aimed at

students about recognising harassment. Senate received assurance that the University was rolling out campaigns to staff and students and that a workshop would be held next month to identify where additional training was needed and to signpost sources of support. The University recognised that it may not be possible to eliminate cases of sexual assault and misconduct, but there was more that the University could do to improve training and support for staff, so that when students raised concerns the initial response was appropriate and effective, and did not cause further distress.

Senate also expressed concern about the impact of this work on the IAs themselves, and noted that understaffing, a lack of workload allocation, a lack of support, and a lack of career progression had been raised in the report. Senate received assurance that the Deputy Head of HR, the Head of Student Policy and Safeguarding and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) met monthly with the IAs and that much of the conversations were about how the University could better support the IAs.

Senate:

- noted the report of the Postgraduate Independent Advisor for 2021/22 and agreed to provide onward assurance to Council;
- noted the response of the University Executive Board; and
- approved the appointment of an additional Deputy Independent Advisor to Postgraduate Research students.

15223.0 REF response - S22/23 - 24

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) presented paper S22/23 - 24 which updated Senate on REF preparations and target setting for REF 2028.

Analysis had been undertaken to compare Bath's performance with HEIs who were ranked in the top 20 by GPA in REF 2021. Modelling had been completed to look at how many more 4* outputs and impact case studies would have been required for Bath to have achieved a similar GPA in 2021. These levels were proposed as the targets for the next REF exercise.

Performance and progress against these target levels would be established through a REF Readiness Review exercise in the 2022/23 academic year.

Senators asked questions and were answered as follows:

- York had been very focused, had submitted in the same UoAs as previously and had used research institutes very successfully in its environment statement.
- The PVC(R) was happy to discuss potential areas for improvement with Departments; there needed to be a focus on increasing research income and increasing 4* outputs and impacts.

Senate noted the response to REF.

15224.0 Report from EQSC - S22/23 - 25

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) presented paper S22/23 - 25A which was a report from EQSC. At its last meeting the Committee had received an introduction to degree apprenticeships, which would become a standing item on the agenda. It also agreed that exam boards could continue to be online for this year, subject to a further review at a later date.

There were no comments or questions from Senate in relation to this paper.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) presented paper S22/23 - 25B which set out the Degree Outcome Statement. In July 2022 Universities UK had made a commitment on behalf of the sector that its members in England would publish revised degree outcome statements by the end of 2022 which tracked progress in addressing grade inflation. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) invited Senate to recommend the degree outcome statement to Council, subject to an amendment to paragraph 7(d) to clarify that the 2022 outcomes showed the start of a return to pre-pandemic attainment levels. Senate members also suggested an amendment to paragraph 2(c) to clarify that first-year assessments were not moderated by external examiners.

Finally the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) presented paper S22/23 - 35C which set out the undergraduate degree outcomes for 2022 and five year trends. There were no comments or questions in relation to this paper.

Senate:

- noted the report from EQSC;
- agreed to recommend the degree outcomes statement to Council, subject to minor amendments; and
- noted the undergraduate degree outcomes for 2022 and five year trends.

15225.0 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey - S22/23 - 27

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) presented the results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES). The PTES was not mandatory and only 91 HEIs had participated in the survey. The response rate was also low compared with the response rate for the NSS survey, but it was recognised that the University did not run the same level of engagement activity for PTES as it did for NSS. The University's scores were similar to last year but its overall ranking had dropped from 33rd to 59th. Plans were underway to appoint an Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) who would focus on engaging with the PGT student voice.

Senate discussed the PTES outcomes and the need for an institution wide approach to PGT standards and expectations as departments had, historically, been relatively autonomous in relation to PGT students. It was recognised that in the past the University had not focused on the PGT experience to the same extent as the undergraduate experience. Senate members, and the SU in particular, endorsed the University's commitment to re-focus on the PGT experience.

Senate noted the results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey.

15226.0 Report from CPAC - S22/23 - 29

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Chair of CPAC introduced paper S22/23 - 29 which provided an update on the committee's most recent meeting and sought Senate's approval of:

- (i) a new MSc Data Science & Statistics (Health) and MSc Data Science & Statistics (Health) with placement, commencing 2023/24, with PG Cert and PG Dip Data Science & Statistics (Health) exit awards
- (ii) a new placement variant of the following courses: MSc Molecular Biosciences (Microbiology), MSc Molecular Biosciences (Medical Biosciences), MSc Molecular Biosciences (Bioinformatics), MSc Biotechnology (Healthcare Technologies), and MSc Biotechnology (Sustainable Biotechnologies), commencing 2023/24
- (iii) the addition of a new MSC in Education exit award to the Doctor of Education (EdD), with associated updates to Regulation 16.4.

It was noted that some of the information the programme specification for (i) and (ii) above required clarification before it could be signed-off by the Chair of CPAC. Subject to this, Senate approved:

- (i) a new MSc Data Science & Statistics (Health) and MSc Data Science & Statistics (Health) with placement, commencing 2023/24, with PG Cert and PG Dip Data Science & Statistics (Health) exit awards
- (ii) a new placement variant of the following courses: MSc Molecular Biosciences (Microbiology), MSc Molecular Biosciences (Medical Biosciences), MSc Molecular Biosciences (Bioinformatics), MSc Biotechnology (Healthcare Technologies), and MSc Biotechnology (Sustainable Biotechnologies), commencing 2023/24
- (iii) the addition of a new MSC in Education exit award to the Doctor of Education (EdD) and the associated updates to Regulation 16.4 (as set out in Appendix 3a).

15227.0 Charter: informal consideration of proposed amendments - S22/23 - 30

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Head of Governance introduced paper S22/23 - 30. Senate was invited to give informal consideration to proposed amendments to the University Charter before submission of the amendments to Council.

There was one small correction noted in advance of the meeting. There were no other comments or questions in relation to this item.

Senate noted the report.

15228.0 Senate business and operations - S22/23 - 31

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Vice-Chancellor introduced paper S22/23 - 31 which sought Senate's input on proposals for a review of its business and operations during the 2022/23 academic year. This would comprise of a benchmarking exercise to learn from best practice within the sector and a series of workshops with members of Senate to gain insight into the current position and define a set of more granular objectives. Senate suggested that the workshops should also include former Senators.

Senate noted the report.

15229.0 Report from the Boards of Studies - S22/23 - 34

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the report from the School of Management Board of Studies. It noted the action taken to appointment an external examiner for more than four consecutive years and noted the resignation of an external examiner.

Senate noted the transfer of chairing responsibilities for the Board of Studies (Doctoral) following the replacement of the role of Academic Director of the Doctoral College with the roles of Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Doctoral) and Deputy Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Doctoral).

Senate approved amendment to the Terms of Reference of the Boards of Studies and agreed to recommend to Council that these be incorporated into ordinance 10. Senate approved the new set of standing orders for the Boards of Studies.

15230.0 Education Strategic Implementation Plan - S22/23 - 26

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) introduced paper S22/23 - 26 which presented the Education Strategic Implementation Plan (ESIP) and the ESIP priorities for initiation this academic year.

Senate considered the ESIP and asked for examples of how the consultation had influenced the plan. It was also suggested that the University should refer to itself as an 'academic institution' rather than a 'powerhouse'. This would be considered when the ESIP was updated at the end of the year.

Senate noted the Education Strategic Implementation Plan.

15231.0 Curriculum Transformation - S22/23 - 28

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Director of Academic Registry introduced paper S22/23 - 28 which sought Senate's approval to extend the use of previously-agreed PGT generic exit awards to the transformed full-time MArch Architecture course, effective from the 2022-23 academic year onwards. The substantive curriculum transformation regulations piece had been posted on Decision Time a few weeks ago for consultation.

Senate approved:

- that the transformed full-time MArch Architecture should be approved to use the generic, unclassified postgraduate exit awards from the academic year 2022/23; and
- minor amendments to already-approved PGT generic exit award specifications to allow use by Senate agreement outside of the Postgraduate Taught Assessment Regulations.

15232.0 Report from AEIC - S22/23 - 33

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) introduced the report from AEIC and informed Senate that, since the paper had been written, an appointment had been made to the Head of Research Governance role.

There were no comments or questions in relation to this item.

Senate noted the report and approved the Terms of Reference.

15233.0 Report from EDIC - S22/23 - 32

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Professor Harney introduced paper S22/23 - 32 and informed Senate that an additional meeting of EDIC would be convened in December or January to consider the Statement of Equality Objectives before these were submitted to Council.

Senate noted the report.

15234.0 Appointments to the SDMP - S22/23 - 36

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Dr Fran Laughton and Kate Robinson declared an interest in relation to this item, as Chairs of the Student Discipline and Misconduct Panel (SDMP).

Academic Assembly members expressed some concern in advance of the meeting that the delegation of the appointment of SDMP members represented a further erosion of Senate's powers. It was confirmed that the power remains a Senate power but named roles would be authorised to exercise that power on its behalf. Those individuals would remain accountable to Senate for their decision-making and the delegation could be rescinded at any time via an amendment to the Scheme of Delegation.

It was agreed that the use of this delegated authority would be included in the regular delegated authority report to Senate.

Senate approved an amendment to the Senate Scheme of Delegation to delegate authority to the Chairs of the Student Disciplinary and Misconduct Panel for the appointment of members of the panel.

15235.0 Urgent business procedure and delegated authority - S22/23 - 38

Purpose - For Decision

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the use of urgent business and delegated authority powers since the meeting of Senate on 5 October 2022 and confirmed the decision taken by the Vice-Chancellor to revise Regulation 12.1 to allow Voi e-scooters to operate on campus.

15236.0 Student contact policy - S22/23 - 40

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the new policy on student trusted contacts. In response to a question from Senate, it was confirmed that there was an implementation plan for the next academic year.

15237.0 Education Advisory Board Terms of Reference - S22/23 - 37

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the updated Terms of Reference for the Education Advisory Board.

15238.0 Council update - S22/23 - 35

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

Senate noted the update on the work of Council.

15239.0 Any Other Business

Purpose – For Noting

Minute by Caroline Pringle

There was no other business.