

Wednesday, 17th April 2024 2:15 pm

Council Chamber | Senate

Attendees

Attended

Teslim Bukoye - *Online*

Zoe Burke

Julian Chaudhuri

Duncan Craig

Adrian Evans

Fiona Gillison

Marion Harney

Sophia Hatzisavvidou

Andrew Heath

Jo Hyde

Tim Ibell

Peter Lambert

David Moon - *Online*

Lucy Noble - *Online*

Fei Qin - *Online*

Paul Shepherd

Hannah South

Danae Stanton Fraser

Ian White - **Chair**

Lorraine Whitmarsh - *Online*

Deborah Wilson

In Attendance

Katie Anderton

Laura Andrews

Helena Barrell

Christopher Bonfield

Ian Blenkarn

Andrew Browning – **Secretary to Meeting**

Ruth Robins

Rachel Sheer

Apologies

Jimena Alamo

Fran Amery

Steve Brammer

James Davenport

Sarah Hainsworth

Alan Hayes

Titus Hiller

Ryan Lucas

Guy McCusker

Jura Neverauskaite

Amber Snary

Nigel Johnston

Sarah Hainsworth

Ben Ralph

Edmund Thompson

Jennifer Thomson

Jun Zang

Cassie Wilson

15423.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting - S22/23 - 55

Purpose - For Approval

Minute

The minutes of the last meeting which took place on 31 January were considered by Senate. It was requested that item 15413.0 include that concerns were raised by Senators about the Institutes paper not containing sufficient information and there being no opportunity to ask questions. Subject to this amendment being made the minutes were approved.

15424.0 Actions and Matters Arising

Purpose - For Noting

Minute

Minute 15415.0 - At the previous meeting a question was raised around the use of the acronym BAME within Senate papers. As a result of this query this question would be raised at the next meeting of EDIC on 8 February 2024. At the meeting it was decided that the HR Deputy Director (C&I) would carry out consultation with relevant stakeholder groups and bring a proposal to the May meeting of EDIC.

15425.0 Institutional update - S23/24 - 56

Purpose - For Noting

Minute

The Vice-Chancellor reported that it had been a busy year for the University, particularly in relation to Curriculum Transformation and research.

It was emphasised that the Department of Planning, Performance & Strategic Change were considering any potential implications to the University that may come out of the uncertainties that had been seen recently elsewhere in the sector. Benchmarking universities had seen a drop in international student recruitment which had a profound impact on their financial situation. It was noted that it was difficult to predict any potential impact on the University would be, especially given the ongoing Government review into international student admissions, which, depending on the outcome, could have a further deleterious effect on the sector.

It was noted that the University had seen a fall in international PGT applications, but this was concurrent with an increase in international UG applications. Although it was necessary for the University to continue being careful financially, it was important to note that research intensive institutions were particularly badly impacted, and that the University was not expecting to be in a similar position in September.

It was also noted that, although difficult to be definitive, there was likely to be limited impact to the University as a result of the increase of the skilled worker visa minimum salary threshold from £26,200 to £38,700. This was due to the University employing relatively few post-doctoral students in teaching positions.

It was confirmed that Ofsted had delivered their final and full report into the University's degree apprenticeship provision, which would be published on the Ofsted website within a week. Congratulations were extended to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education & Global) and his colleagues.

The Vice-Chancellor reiterated his thanks to all members of the University community for the work done throughout the year so far.

15426.0 Faculty Spotlight - Faculty of Science - S2324 - 57

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute

Senate received a presentation from the Dean of Science. Discussion following the presentation included:

- Assessment and feedback scores and the need to understand the perspective of students and their expectations.
- Cross-faculty working, pulling research projects together and developing relationships across the University

15427.0 Digital Exams - S23/24 - 58

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Global) presented the paper. They noted their thanks to the Director of Academic Registry and the Director of CLT for their work in the area of digital exams. There was movement within the sector towards a reliance both nationally and internationally on digital assessment and it was therefore necessary for the University to consider how to best approach this. Discussion covered the following areas:

- The potential of creating more computer labs on campus would be welcomed more widely than solely for the facilitation of digital exams, while taking into account the potential space and financial requirements to develop such spaces.
- Consideration was given as to which exams could be given priority when implementing digital exams. Those suggested included exams which could be auto-marked to reduce workload, or those which involved accessing additional software tools to complete.
- It was questioned what other universities were currently doing in the area of administering online exams. The Director of CLT noted that they had surveyed 20 UK universities, with most moving towards holding exams on campus within a computer lab setting. There were some institutions trialling students bringing their own devices however this would require increased staff resource, including specialist invigilators.
- The possibility of investigating remote invigilation of digital exams and the potential impact for international students. It was noted that during the initial pilot in the School of Management there had been a significant amount of pushback from students in relation to digital monitoring. This however did not mean that it was not an appropriate area to look into in the long term for certain scenarios, particularly for international students, although there may be potential issues surrounding the potential cost of the proctoring if the exam was held outside of UK working hours or when considering the complex legislation surrounding student visas.
- It was noted that specialist invigilators would be required for in person digital exams particularly for those which used the students own devices to ensure there is no additional information downloaded and to resolve any complications with the programmes.
- It was queried if there was any information of the issues surrounding non-invigilated digital

exams. It was noted that this was a potential option, provided the department were assured of the integrity of the assessment in that there could be no collusion. The departments which did utilise this method of assessment used it for assessments designed to be open book, often to match what would be expected professionally within the discipline.

Senate noted the papers and agreed with the current direction of travel in the area, noting the importance of working with others in the sector to keep pace and maintain the integrity of the University's examinations.

15428.0 Quality Assurance in Undergraduate and Postgraduate Assessments - S23/24- 59

Purpose - For Approval

Minute

Senate noted the report. It was suggested that the data included in Section 5, demonstrating the number of units scaled in each faculty, could be updated to show what proportion the scaled units make up of the overall number of units.

Decision

Senate agreed to provide assurance to Council regarding the academic quality and standards employed in 2022/2023 for undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses. This decision was made subject to the number of units scaled in each faculty being updated to show what proportion the scaled units make up of the overall number of units.

15429.0 Calendars and dates 24/25 and 25/26 - S23/24 - 60A-B

Purpose - For Decision

Decision

Senate approved the alteration of the Easter holiday dates in the academic year 2024/2025 to better reflect BANES dates, bringing the Easter vacation forward by 2 weeks, from Monday 7 April to Monday 21 April 2025, inclusive (Monday 21 is a Bank Holiday).

Decision

Senate agreed to recommend to University Executive Board (UEB) that it considered the options for adjusting the Discretionary day (Easter) for 2025, subject to further consultation from an education perspective regarding the impact on teaching timetables.

Decision

Senate agreed to recommend to Council the Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 and noted provisional dates for 2025/26.

15430.0 In-year changes to Student Regulation 17 - S23/24 - 61

Purpose - For Decision

Minute

The Director of Academic Registry presented the paper. It was noted that in recent years Academic Appeals had continued to grow in volume and complexity and as such amendments were required to Regulation 17 to improve the accessibility for students, on recommendation of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. Discussion covered the following points:

- It was noted that there were a significant number of Academic Appeals which came through to the Faculties and School in the form of late circumstances linked with Individual Mitigating Circumstances (IMCs). While it had not been possible to consider a review of the IMC process within the proposed amendments there was a wider piece of work underway looking into IMCs and wellbeing where this could be considered.
- It was noted that there were not only inconsistencies between the Faculties and School in processing Academic Appeals but inconsistencies with the Faculties. There was work undergoing within Faculties to address this.
- The amendments to the Regulation had been written in collaboration with the Students Union and the Students Union Advice and Support Centre. However as the Students Union representatives were unable to attend the meeting of Senate, it was requested that confirmation be sought from the SU Education Officer that they were supportive of the proposal.

Senate approved the amendments to Regulation 17, subject to receiving final confirmation from the Students Union Education Officer.

Decision

Senate approved the in-year amendments to Regulation 17 subject to confirmation from the Students' Union Education Officer. *(Secretary Note: Confirmation was subsequently received from the Students' Union Education Officer)*

15431.0 Research Institutes: IPR Annual Report - S23/24 - 62

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute

Senate noted the annual report for the Institute for Policy Research (IPR). The Vice-Chancellor passed on his thanks to IPR for their work.

15432.0 Update on Actions from Senate Review of Business and Operations - S23/24 - 63A-B

Purpose - For Discussion

Minute

The Interim Head of Governance presented the update on the progress of the actions following the Benchmarking Exercise of Senate. This was noted by Senate.

The Interim Head of Governance then presented the paper setting out the proposed changes to Statutes and Ordinances. He explained that most of these changes related to reducing the size of Council to 15 meaning that the number of Senate members on Council would also be reduced. Other changes were made to reflect the changes that had been made to the Charter the previous year and reflecting the changes to student appeals. Senate had no comment on the proposed changes.

WITHDRAWN - Freedom of Speech - Draft Code of Principles - S23/24 - 64

Minute

The Interim Head of Governance told Senate that the Code of Practice for Freedom of Speech was still being drafted and therefore was not being brought for consideration at the meeting. He said that Council would be asked to approve the Vice-President (Community & Inclusion) to act on its behalf in applying the provisions of Student Regulation 18 relating to Freedom of Expression. Senate would then be asked to approve by circulation Regulation 18 being updated. The Draft Code of Practice would be going to UEB for its initial consideration and would then be considered by Senate before final approval by Council on 8 July.

15433.0 Approval of Appointment of University Marshall - S23/24 - 65

Purpose - For Approval

Minute

A question was raised about the appointment process, and if other people had the chance to apply for the role. Concern was also raised that the role placed a high workload on one person. Senate was assured that there were several deputies in post. It was suggested that finding another willing candidate could prove difficult, and that the experiential knowledge required was vital to the role. It was agreed that although there may be a clear rationale for reappointing the current University Marshall this was not reflected in the paper.

Decision

The reappointment of the University Marshall was not approved, and Senate agreed that this would return to their next meeting in June with clarifications to the paper.

Action

The Secretary to Senate to seek clarity.

Action Description - The Secretary to Senate to seek clarity about the reappointment.

Due by - 29 May 2024 | Assigned to - Andrew Browning

15434.0 Report from EQSC - S23/24 - 66

Purpose - For Approval

Minute

Senate noted the report.

Decision

Senate approved the proposed amendments to the membership of EQSC.

15435.0 Outcome of Students Union Elections - S2324 - 67

Minute by Katie Anderton

Senate noted their congratulations to the successful candidates. The sabbatical year arrangements for Benjamin Orford Thompson and Zubar Lakhani were approved.

Decision by Katie Anderton

Senate approved the granting of sabbatical year arrangements to Benjamin Orford Thompson and Zubar Lakhani.

15436.0 CT Project Evaluation - S2324 - 68

Minute

Senate noted the case for changing how the University evaluated its courses in light of the curriculum design principles adopted as part of Curriculum Transformation.

Senate also supported the APVC Student Voice and CT Project team to consult the wider Education community to establish a course level survey for all continuing undergraduate students.

The Vice-Chancellor passed on his thanks to everyone who had been involved with this project.

15437.0 Report from Council - S22/23 - 69

Minute

Senate noted the report from Council.

15438.0 Report from RKEC - S23/24 - 70

Purpose - For Noting

Minute

Senate noted the report from the RKEC meeting which took place on 5 March 2024.

15439.0 Report from CPAC - S23/24 - 71

Purpose - For Noting

Minute

The report from the meeting of CPAC which took place on 6 March 2024 was noted by Senate.

15440.0 Report from EDIC - S23/24 - 72

Purpose - For Noting

Minute

Senate noted the report of EDIC of its meeting on 8 February 2024.

15441.0 Report from APC - S23/24 - 73

Purpose - For Noting

Minute

The meeting report of APC which met on 21 February was noted by Senate.

15442.0 Report from AEIC - S23/24 - 74

Purpose - For Noting

Minute

Senate noted the meeting report of AEIC dated 15 February 2024.

15443.0 Elections - S23/24 - 75

Purpose - For Noting

Minute

Senate noted the report detailing the upcoming elections for Senate and its sub-committee to be run in 2023/2024.

15444.0 Urgent Business and Delegated Powers - S23/24 - 76

Minute

Senate noted the report of Urgent Business and Delegate powers.

15445.0 Boards of Studies

Purpose - For Noting

Minute

The minutes of the Boards of Studies were noted by Senate.