

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

SENATE

13th March 2013

MINUTES

Present: Professor D S Eastwood (Vice-Chancellor and Principal, in the Chair); Professor K Armour; Professor J S Bale (Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Dr M Calvert; Professor J Chipman; Ms I Chis; Professor S P Ellis; Professor I F Fairchild; Professor M Freer; Dr S Forcer; Professor B V Ford-Lloyd; Mr S Furse; Dr D Ghica; Dr J Green; Professor J K Heath (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Professor E Jenkinson (Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor P Kumar; Dr H Laville; Professor P Lumley; Professor A Lymer; Dr R May; Ms R Myatt; Professor K O'Brien (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Mr. S Parsons; Professor E W Peck (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Dr J Phillimore; Professor T Ponman; Professor M C Press (Pro-Vice Chancellor and Head of College); Dr C Ray; Ms M Rohani; Professor J E Rowe; Professor A Sanders; Dr D Shepherd; Professor M C Sheppard (Provost and Vice-Principal); Professor M D Stringer; Professor A Tickell (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Professor M Webber, Professor M Whitby (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor R A Williams (Pro-Vice Chancellor and Head of College)

Also present: Mr B Casey (Director of Academic Services); Ms L Ewers (Governance Support Officer); Mr L Sanders (Registrar & Secretary); Mr R Smith (Director of Admissions); Mr T Veit (Director of Recruitment)

Apologies: Professor P Byers; Dr T Dafforn; Professor P Fryer; Dr E Fulton; Dr K Nightingale; Dr C Ross; Dr A Siniver

Papers: The minute book contains copies of all written papers or reports to which reference is made below unless indicated otherwise.

13/01 Minutes of previous meeting

Agreed: to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2012 (SEN.13.03.01).

13/02 Matters arising not addressed elsewhere on the agenda

There were none.

13/03 Vice-Chancellor's Items

Received: a report from the Vice-Chancellor on a number of items for information (SEN.13.03.02).

(i) GPC Accreditation of Pharmacy Course

Reported: that the General Pharmaceutical Council had recommended the University move to the next step in the accreditation process for the Pharmacy programme. Colleagues in the College of Medical and Dental Sciences were thanked for their hard work in ensuring

this success.

(ii) NHS Leadership Academy

Reported: that the University had been announced as one of the academic institutions working together with high-performing companies to develop a major leadership programme for the NHS Leadership Academy. Colleagues in the Health Services Management Centre were congratulated on this success.

(iii) Open University Agreement to Deliver Massive Open Online Courses

Reported: that the University was planning to launch a small suite of initial Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) with FutureLearn from September. The development was overseen by a Steering Group chaired by Professor J Heath, with Professor G Perryer (Dentistry) as the Academic Project Lead and input from Professional Services.

(iv) Senior Appointments

Reported: that Professor A Tickell had been appointed by Council as Provost and Vice-Principal with effect from 1 August 2013. There was an overlap with the term of office of Professor M Sheppard to facilitate the handover process.

13/04 Admissions and Recruitment 2013 - Update

(COMMERCIAL – IN CONFIDENCE)

Considered: a paper from the Directors of External Relations, Admissions and Strategic Planning (SEN.13.03.03).

13/05 University Education Strategy 2013-2015

Considered: a paper from Professor Karen O'Brien (SEN.13.03.04).

Noted: that

- (a) the Education Strategy had been developed in consultation with College Education Committees and staff in key student-facing Professional Services;
- (b) the Strategy would be renewed in 2015 in conjunction with the renewal of the University's Strategic Framework;
- (c) the Strategy encompassed the recommendations of the Undergraduate Curriculum Review;
- (d) work into the perceptions of teaching and recognition of teaching had been carried out as part of the Valuing Teaching at Birmingham project led by Professor M Stringer. Suggestions were under consideration by which to make the recognition of excellent teaching visible across the University;
- (e) support for postgraduate students who teach was embedded in the strategy. As part of implementing the strategy, the University Graduate School would run a pilot scheme of opening up registration on the the Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Research Methods and Skills (PGCARMS) to postgraduate research students in three Colleges. Postgraduate Teaching Assistants (PGTAs) were also included in the Valuing Teaching

- at Birmingham project. The number of training courses attended by postgraduate research students and PGTAs had risen over the past 12 months;
- (f) a pilot scheme of Peer Observation was currently run in Biosciences and involved direct feedback from students. This project could be scaled up institutionally in the future;
 - (g) the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PCAP) remained under review with regards to the balance of training and demand on staff time, noting that current users reported high satisfaction levels.

Agreed: to adopt the Education Strategy as set out in the paper.

13/06 Curriculum Review – Progress Update

Considered: a report on progress from Professor Karen O'Brien (SEN.13.03.05).

Noted: that

- (a) a University-wide consultation process had been held from April to December 2012;
- (b) the Curriculum Review would be implemented as a series of projects in three phases with full implementation envisaged from 2014-15;
- (c) whilst the expectation was that the Curriculum Review would be implemented across the University, some elements had different aspects that Schools would be able to select, or adapt to their local context;
- (d) the Assessment and Feedback Review would review the undergraduate assessment portfolio, programme by programme. This would also free up capacity to incorporate the new elements of the Curriculum Review into the programmes;
- (e) the 'Birmingham Project' was intended to be an offering available to all first year students. It would provide an opportunity for cross-disciplinary and cross-national dialogue amongst students. It would be offered after the end of the examination period to provide students more opportunities for academic engagement in the period before the end of the summer term. It was noted that some Schools, e.g. Mechanical Engineering, already used this time for student project work, and that such existing projects could be brought together under the umbrella of the 'Birmingham Project';
- (f) care should be taken to ensure that all members of the UG student community would be able to benefit from the new offerings introduced through the Curriculum Review;
- (g) the University had valuable off-campus resources such the Ironbridge Institute and the Shakespeare Institute, which should be utilised fully;
- (h) the existing MOMDs provision would be reviewed to create new interdisciplinary offerings in areas of great interest to students, e.g. environmental sustainability;
- (i) academic champions had been identified for each element of the Curriculum Review;
- (j) the effectiveness of the Transition Review, which had been carried out for the first time in 2012-13, would be reviewed via a Spec Check.

Agreed: to approve the implementation of the Curriculum Review as set out in the report.

13/07 Report of the Nominations Committee

Considered: a report from the meeting of the Nominations Committee held on 20th February 2013 (SEN.13.03.06).

Agreed: to approve the recommendations as set out in the paper.

- 13/08 Report from the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
- Considered**: a report from the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (SEN.13.03.07).
- Approved**: the recommendations made in the report.
- 13/09 Reports from Heads of College
- Received**: reports from the Heads of College regarding recent developments (SEN.12.03.08).
- 13/10 Report from the University Education Committee
- Received**: report from the University Education Committee (SEN.13.03.09).
- 13/11 Report from the University Quality Assurance Committee
- Received**: a report from the Quality Assurance Committee held on 4th and 18th December 2012 (SEN.13.03.10).
- 13/12 Report from the Research Committee
- Received**: a report from the Research Committee held on 28th February 2013 (SEN.13.03.11).
- 13/13 Farewell and Thanks
- Noted**: that Professor K O'Brien was attending her last meeting before leaving the University to take up the role of Vice-Principal (Education) at King's College London. She was thanked for her leadership in education in the University and her work for Senate.
- 13/14 Any Other Business
- Date of next meeting
- Noted**: that the next meeting of Senate would be held at 2.00pm on 12th June 2013.