

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

SENATE

12th June 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 Fairchild; Professor M Freer; Professor J Frampton; Mr S Furse; Dr J Green; Mr G Hameed Khalil; Professor J K Heath (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Dr S Kita; Professor E Jenkinson (Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor P Lumley; Dr R May; Professor E W Peck (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor T Ponman; Professor M C Press (Pro-Vice Chancellor and Head of College); Ms M Rohani; Professor J E Rowe; Professor C Ryan; Professor M C Sheppard (Provost and Vice-Principal); Dr A Siniver; Professor M D Stringer; Professor A Tickell (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Professor M Whitby (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College)

Also present: Mr B Casey (Director of Academic Services); Ms L Ewers (Governance Support Officer); Ms C Gilbert (Director of External Relations); Ms C McDonough (Assistant Secretary); Mr L Sanders (Registrar & Secretary); Mr R Smith (Director of Admissions)

Apologies: Professor P Byers; Dr E Fulton; Dr D Ghica; Professor M Hilton; Professor P Kumar; Professor A Lymer; Ms R Myatt; Dr K Nightingale; Dr J Phillimore; Dr C Ray; Professor C Ross; Professor A Sanders; Dr D Shepherd; Professor R Williams; Professor S Wolff

Non-Attendees Dr D Bailey; Dr T Dafforn; Dr S Forcer; Professor P Fryer; Dr H Laville; Mr S Parsons; Professor P Stewart; Professor M Webber

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

13/15 Welcome

Senate welcomed Mrs Cathy Gilbert, Director of External Relations, to the University.

13/16 Minutes of previous meeting

Agreed: to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2013 (SEN.13.06.01).

13/17 Matters arising not addressed elsewhere on the agenda

(i) Admissions and Recruitment 2013 – Update (minute 13/04 refers)

Reported: that subsequent to the meeting of 13th March 2013, Dr Calvert (Director of Graduate Studies, School of Health and Population Sciences) and Mr Smith (Director of

Admissions) had reached an understanding of the discrepancies between central and School-held postgraduate research student recruitment figures in the School of Health and Population Sciences.

13/18 Vice-Chancellor's Items

Considered: a report from the Vice-Chancellor on a number of items for information (SEN.13.06.02).

(i) Triennial Review of Research Councils

Reported: that the University's response had been submitted to the Minister for Universities and Skills.

(ii) Guardian University League Table 2014

Reported: that the Guardian University Guide 2014 League Table had been published on 4th June 2013. Birmingham's overall position was 15th nationally out of 119 institutions, an increase of 15 places from 30th last year. This was partly due to an improvement in the University's staff-student ratio from 15.5 to 14.8. The ratio and other key indicators would continue to be monitored by the University.

13/19 Admissions and Recruitment 2013 - Update

(COMMERCIAL – IN CONFIDENCE)

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

13/20 Alternative Modes of Programme Delivery

(COMMERCIAL – IN CONFIDENCE)

Received: a presentation from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) on the University's current position in relation to Alternative Modes of Programme Delivery (AMD).

13/21 Research Degrees by Distance Learning

Considered: extension of the Distance Learning Mode of Study to include all research degrees (as appropriate) and all Colleges (SEN.13.06.04).

Reported:

- (a) that with the development of communications and technology, supervisory support equivalent to that set out in University legislation, the requirement for more flexible modes of study arrangements, and the introduction of a Distance Learning mode of study for the PhD in the College of Arts and Law as a pilot in 2012, there was now an opportunity to extend distance learning to other research degrees;
- (b) the success of the pilot in the College of Arts and Law. The College had received 112 applications and 23 registrations in 2012 and was expecting a similar return for 2013/14. Supervisory arrangements had been effective and student feedback had

been very positive with no progression issues encountered to date.

Agreed that the following be approved with immediate effect:

- (a) extension of the Distance Learning mode of study for the degree of PhD to all Colleges in the University;
- (b) introduction of the Distance Learning mode of study for the following research degrees in all Colleges: one year MA/MSc by Research, MMus, two year MPhil, MLitt, MD and DDS, in addition to those already available, i.e. full-time, part-time, and split location;
- (c) introduction of the Distance Learning mode of study in all Colleges for: MRes, professional Doctorates, EngD and DBA, where the taught elements are also delivered by distance learning.

13/22

Vice-Chancellor's Review: Education-related information

Received: the summary of process for ensuring that Vice-Chancellor's Reviews include appropriate consideration and scrutiny of education and learning and teaching matters (SEN.13.06.05).

Noted: that

- (a) until 2010, the University had two parallel processes that reviewed learning and teaching at School level: Comprehensive Programme Review (CPR) and School Quality Review (SQR). A decision had been taken to combine these two reviews to produce an integrated 'Periodic Review' of learning and teaching, in line with the process used in comparable institutions. However, before the new process could be implemented, the University introduced the Vice-Chancellor's Review, which was intended to incorporate all of the scrutiny previously implemented as part of the CPR and SQR;
- (b) analysis of the reports produced from Round 1 Vice-Chancellor's Reviews indicated that whilst careful consideration had been given to a range of issues in the area of learning and teaching, the process would benefit from a 'standard template' of information that would be evaluated in all reviews;
- (c) an approach had been approved by University Executive Board that was designed to help Vice-Chancellor's Review teams and Schools evaluate the learning and teaching information in a consistent and efficient way, and thus allow the review panels to focus on priority areas during the review visit to the School;
- (d) Schools and internal members of the review team would be provided with a pack of education-related data prior to the review visit. Most of the data was held centrally so that this would not pose an additional burden on Schools;
- (e) an 'Initial Appraisal' ('scoping meeting') would be held between the Chair and internal panel members allocated to the 'education remit' and the Head of School and Head of Education. The purpose of the meeting was to review the scope of the data and related documents in the data pack, agree those areas where the School was performing well, and set the 'education agenda' for the review visit;
- (f) areas of good practice would be noted in the SED prepared by the School following the 'Initial Appraisal';
- (g) a light-touch re-engineering of the Schools involved in the Round 1 and Round 2 reviews would be carried out to ensure consistency of analysis with the new system. Areas to be addressed would be identified and Heads of School required to produce the requested information;
- (h) the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) was currently reviewing the need for Enhanced Annual Reviews (EARs) for those Schools that were not currently in the Vice-Chancellor's Review schedule;

(i) that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) would review the educational aspects of all the Vice-Chancellor's Reviews, including Rounds 1 and 2.

13/23 The University of Birmingham Code of Ethics

Considered: the University Code of Ethics prior to its submission to Council on 26th June 2013 (SEN.13.06.06).

Noted: that

- (a) the University was committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct in all of its activities and had well-established policies, including in the four key areas of:
 - (i) Research, Knowledge Transfer and Consultancy;
 - (ii) Teaching and Teaching Collaborations;
 - (iii) Fundraising and Gifts;
 - (iv) Finance: Investment and Procurement;
- (b) an overarching Code of Ethics had been produced for the University to draw together the four key areas above and to provide links to relevant University policies, procedures and advice;
- (c) the Code would be available on the University website and would be widely communicated within the University. Staff training would also be available.

Agreed: that the Code of Ethics be endorsed for submission to Council.

13/24 Report of the Nominations Committee

Considered: a report from the meeting of the Nominations Committee held on 1st May 2013 (SEN.13.06.07).

Noted: that although there was a long-standing tradition to honour individuals from the city and the region for their contribution to public life, the Nominations Committee continued to welcome nominations for academically distinguished colleagues. Members of Senate were encouraged to submit such nominations to the Committee. In putting forward nominations it was important to establish the link between the nominee and the University.

Agreed: that the recommendations be approved as set out in paper SEN.13.06.07.

13/25 Report from the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Received: a report from the meeting of the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee held on 16th May 2013 (SEN.13.06.08).

Noted: the discussion of Wednesday Afternoon Timetabled Teaching and the amendment of the Student Charter for 2013/14.

13/26 Term of Office of Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Cultural Engagement)

Endorsed: the extension of the term of office of Professor Ian Grosvenor as Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Cultural Engagement) by one year from 1st August 2013 (SEN.13.06.09).

13/27 Reports from Heads of College
Received: reports from the Heads of College regarding recent developments (SEN.13.06.10).

13/28 Report from the University Education Committee
Received: a report from the University Education Committee held on 28th March and 9th May 2013 (SEN.13.06.11).

13/29 Report from the University Quality Assurance Committee
Received: a report from the meetings of the University Quality Assurance Committee held on 26th February, 5th March and 1st May 2013 (SEN.13.06.12).

13/30 Report to Senate on the Work of Council-approved Employment-related Panels during 2012
Received: a report on the work of Council-approved Employment-related Panels during 2012 (SEN.13.06.13).

13/31 Programme of Meetings 2013/14
Noted: the programme of meetings of Senate for 2013/14 as follows:
Wednesday 25th September 2013 (if required)
Wednesday 13th November 2013
Wednesday 19th March 2014
Wednesday 11th June 2014

13/32 Any Other Business
(i) Farewell and Thanks
On behalf of the University the Vice-Chancellor thanked all members who would be retiring from Senate at the end of the session.