

# UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

## SENATE

5th November 2014

## MINUTES

Present: Professor Sir David Eastwood (Vice-Chancellor and Principal, in the Chair); Mr J Armer; Dr D Bailey; Professor J S Bale (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Professor M Calvert; Professor H Draper; Professor M Fox; Dr D Ghica; Professor J Green (Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Mr A Hayden; Professor J K Heath (Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Mr G Hughes; Professor E Jenkinson (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor P Kumar; Professor H Mehanna; Professor C Miall; Professor M Nimmo (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Dr A Phillips; Professor Z Pikramenou; Professor S Quigley; Professor C Ross; Mr E Sainsbury; Dr I Sansom; Professor G Schaffer; Dr D Shepherd; Professor M Simmons; Professor M Stringer (Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor); Professor A Tickell (Provost and Vice-Principal); Dr K Voelz; Dr N Wilkin; Professor M Whitby (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor S Wolff.

Also present: Mr B Casey (Director of Academic Services); 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 D Adams; Professor K Armour; Professor T Arnall; Professor S Becker (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College); Professor J Bridgeman; Professor J Frampton; Dr D Fuller; Dr E Fulton; Professor A Guariglia; Professor D Hannah; Professor S Hunston; Mr G Kallika; Dr H Laville; Professor A Lymer; Professor J Martin; Dr D Moran; Professor M Press; Dr C Ray; Dr R Santos; Professor M Webber; Professor G Watson; Professor R Williams (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College).

Absent: None.

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

### 14/34 Membership and Terms of Reference of Senate

**Noted:** the membership of Senate for 2014/15 and its terms of reference (SEN.14.11.01).

**Resolved:** to co-opt four members on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor as set out in Paper SEN.14.11.01.

### 14/35 Minutes of previous meeting

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2014 be approved (SEN.14.11.02).

14/36 Matters Arising  
Minute 14/19, Vice-Chancellor's Items

**Reported** that:

- (a) it had been noted in June 2014 that the elections for vacancies on Senate for 2014/15 would present the next opportunity to strengthen the diversity of Senate;
- (b) Senate was delighted to note that the gender balance of Senate had been improved significantly following the 2014/15 elections. It had increased from 45 male and 10 female for 2013/14 to 36 male and 18 female for 2014/15 (there was currently one student vacancy on Senate).

14/37 Vice-Chancellor's Items

**Considered:** a report from the Vice-Chancellor (SEN.14.11.03).

(1) HEFCE Review of Assessment of Quality Assurance

**Reported** that:

- (a) the tender for the assessment of quality of higher education in the UK would be subject to European procurement rules;
- (b) the University would submit a response to the consultation by HEFCE on the current suitability of sector-wide quality assurance processes;
- (c) the University's next QAA Higher Education Review was scheduled for 2016 and would therefore be under the existing system;
- (d) Senate would be kept informed of further developments.

(2) SWETS

**Reported:** that the University had made contingency arrangements following the bankruptcy of SWETS and therefore expected that any disruption of access to journals would be minimal.

(3) Postgraduate Research Strategy

**Reported:** that the review of the scholarship system referred to in the Postgraduate Research Strategy consisted of a number of changes to the current funding model to facilitate better value and maximise opportunities. These included a fairer and more targeted approach to scholarships allocation which would respond to the local needs of each College and the evolving strategic priorities of the University.

14/38 2014 and 2015 Recruitment Cycle Updates

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14/39 Our Research Performance, Aspirations and the National Funding Landscape

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14/40 National Student Survey 2014

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14/41 Strategic Framework 2015-2020

**Received:** a presentation from the Provost and Vice-Principal on the process for development of the next phase of the Strategic Framework 2015-2020.

**Reported** that:

- (a) the themes and process for the next phase of the Strategic Framework 2015-2020 had been launched by Council in October 2014;
- (b) the process consisted of:
  - (i) November 2014: Engagement and consultation, including focus groups (by invitation and by self-nomination) and via web and social media;
  - (ii) Winter 2015: Further consultation taking into account REF outcomes and consolidation, testing ideas, drafting;
  - (iii) March 2015: Meeting of Senate to note progress and contribute to emerging development of the Framework;
  - (iv) June 2015: Meeting of Senate to consider an update on the Framework, including the latest draft;
  - (v) July 2015: Approval of Framework by Council;
  - (vi) Summer 2015: Launch of the Framework.
- (c) it was expected that the substance of the five strategic goals of the current Framework would be carried forward to the next phase as the core components of the University's strategic direction;
- (d) the Framework would inform future iterations of operational strategies such as the University's Estates and Human Resources Strategies;
- (e) it was important that the Strategic Framework provided sufficient flexibility for the University to take advantage of new opportunities and respond to changes in the external environment (i.e. it was a 'compass not a roadmap');
- (f) the significant achievements made by the University since the launch of the current Strategic Framework, including improvement of graduate employability, sector leading initiatives and a major capital investment programme (e.g. Institute of Translational Medicine, HTRC, University of Birmingham School, Sports Centre, Library and Student Hub);
- (g) the aim was to fully engage the stakeholders of the University, including students of the University, in development of the Framework using the mechanisms reported at (b)(i) above;
- (h) the Provost would give further consideration as to how potential future students might be engaged in development of the Framework, noting that the University already obtained feedback from this stakeholder group via an annual survey of acceptors and decliners;
- (i) development of the Framework would include analysis of the characteristics of success of other Russell Group and global institutions.

**Resolved**: that Senate would contribute further to the development of the Strategic Framework 2015-2020 at its meetings in March and June 2015 as set out at (b) above.

14/42 Key Information Sets (KIS) 2014

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14/43 Research Integrity Statement

**Considered**: the University's Annual Research Integrity Statement (SEN.14.11.08).

**Recommended**: the University's Annual Research Integrity Statement to Council for approval as at Appendix 1 to Paper SEN.14.11.08.

14/44 Structure of Academic Year and Proposed Academic Term Dates 2017/18 to 2019/20

**Considered**: an update on the structure of the academic year and proposed academic term dates 2017/18 to 2019/20 (SEN.14.11.09).

**Recommended**: the proposed academic term dates 2017/18 to 2019/20 to Council for approval as set out in Paper SEN.14.11.09.

14/45 Procedure for Revocation of Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Distinctions and Honours in accordance with Ordinance 4.8

**Considered**: a proposed procedure to revoke Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Distinctions and Honours in accordance with Ordinance 4.8 (SEN.14.11.10).

**Recommended**: the proposed procedure to revoke Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Distinctions and Honours in accordance with Ordinance 4.8 to Council for approval as set out in Paper SEN.14.11.10.

14/46 Report from Heads of Colleges

**Noted**: the report from the Heads of Colleges regarding recent developments (SEN.14.11.11).

14/47 Report from the Nominations Committee

**Considered**: a report from the meeting of the Nominations Committee held on 14th October 2014 (SEN.14.11.12).

**Resolved**: that the recommendations be approved as set out in Paper SEN.14.11.12.

14/48 Report from the Research Committee

**Noted**: a report from the meeting of the Research Committee held on 12th September 2014 (SEN.14.11.13).

14/49 Report from the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

**Noted**: a report from the meetings of the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee held on 25th June 2014 and 15th October 2014 (SEN.14.11.14).

14/50 Report from the University Education Committee

**Noted**: a report from the meetings of the University Education Committee held on 23rd July 2014 and 23rd October 2014 (SEN.14.11.15).

14/51 Report from the University Quality Assurance Committee

**Noted**: a report from the meetings of the University Quality Assurance Committee held on 21st October 2014 (SEN.14.11.16).

14/52 Programme of Meetings 2014/15

**Noted**: the programme of meetings of Senate for the remainder of 2014/15 as follows:

Wednesday 25th March 2015 at 2:00pm  
Wednesday 10th June 2015 at 2:00pm

14/53 Any Other Business

(1) Confidentiality of Agenda Items and Papers

**Reported:** that members of Senate were reminded of the confidentiality of some of the agenda items and papers for Senate and their obligation to maintain and respect that confidentiality. This particularly related to recommendations from the Nominations Committee as honorary degree recipients were unaware of their nomination until it had been approved by Senate.