

THE SENATE



Minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2021

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (Professor D.J. Richardson) (in the Chair), Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor F. Lettice and Professor N. Ward), the Faculty Pro-Vice-Executive (Professor S. Barrow, Professor F. Bowen, Professor D. Edwards, and Professor E. Sutton), Heads of Schools (Professor L. Camfield, Professor A. Donnell, Professor K. Hiscock and Professor W. Fraser), Academic Representatives (Dr A. Anka, Dr S. Broughton Micova, Mrs K. Emerson, Professor A. Ganesan, Dr N. James, Dr S. Jong, Dr K. Mistry, Dr H. Pallett, Professor G. Parr, Dr K. Russell, Dr C. Seger, Dr L. Stokes, Professor A. Welch and Dr L. Yulita), Director of Student Services (Dr C.J. Sharp) and the Student Representatives except for business marked ** (Mr C. Perry, Ms A. Hida and Ms E. Anderson).

With: Professor C. French-Constant (Incoming Pro-Vice-Chancellor for FMH, attending as an Observer), The Chief Resource Officer and University Secretary (Mr I. Callaghan), Academic Director of Learning and Teaching Enhancement (Professor K. Yeoman), Academic Director of UEA Doctoral College (Professor A. Grant), Academic Director of Admissions (Professor R. Harvey), Academic Director of Employability (Dr M. Aldrich), Director of Governance and Assurance (Dr A. Blanchflower), Assistant Registrar (Mrs L. Williams), Assistant Head of Corporate Communications (Mrs S. Lawson), Mrs B. Price (for Minute *41) and Mr E. Hancock and Ms R. Rose (for Minute 40) and Mr J. Clayton (Council member).

33. MINUTES

Confirmed

the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2021.

34. STATEMENTS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Vice Chancellor:

- (1) thanked those for whom this was their last meeting, paying tribute to the Student Union Officers whose entire period of office had been impacted by the pandemic:
 - Professor Neil Ward – PVC (Academic)
 - Professor Dylan Edwards – PVC-FMH
 - Professor William Fraser – Head of School Representative for FMH
 - Dr Sally Broughton Micova – Academic Representative (HUM)
 - Mrs Katrina Emerson and Professor Ailsa Welch (Academic Representatives (FMH))
 - Mr Callum Perry and Ms Emily Anderson – SU Representatives
- (2) welcomed Professor Charles French-Constant, the incoming PVC FMH, and Council member, Mr Jeremy Clayton, as observers
- (3) formally notified Senate of a decision to postpone the 2021 graduation ceremonies due to uncertainty over COVID safety restrictions.

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35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Reported

Members and others who are present were invited to make a declaration if they perceive they might have a conflict of interest with matters on this agenda. If a conflict was identified the member or individual who is conflicted would be asked to leave the meeting for that item and this will be minuted. No conflicts were identified.

36. BUSINESS CONTINUITY / COVID-19

Considered

a verbal update from the PVC Academic, Professor Neil Ward, and the PVC Education and Student Experience, Professor Emma Sutton, on the business continuity measures taken in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic since the last meeting.

(The University has been following the Government roadmap and so has been unable to bring students back to campus for teaching events as quickly as we had wanted: there has been an incremental return from 8th March with the final groups and courses only allowed to return on the 17th May. The assessment period for UG students was currently underway and was online, as last year, and Senate was reminded that teaching on some non-standard UG and PGT courses extends into the summer.)

*37. PLANNING FOR TEACHING 2021/22

This minute is confidential and attached as a separate sheet.

38. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PERFORMANCE

Reported

that Senate is required to review at least annually the academic performance in research of the University and the standing of the University both nationally and internationally, judged against strategies approved by Council;

Considered

a report and recommendations from Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) Professor Fiona Lettice and Head of Research Services, Julia Sheldrake (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D025)

(Senate acknowledged the work involved in developing and preparing the REF submission and thanked all involved from those undertaking the research to the team who pulled the whole submission together. The submission would be available publicly in due course.

Senate noted that there were fewer but larger grant proposals now being submitted and were reassured that the costing of proposals had improved. Research citations remained strong but this still wasn't reflected in our reputation scores. Showcasing our work externally was critical and two

forthcoming events would celebrate engagement and innovation impact and two website ClimateUEA and CreativeUEA have been launched. The University remained active in key networks such as Aurora and the Eastern ARC and was working closely with the LEP on some bids for funding.

Senate members were appreciative of the report and satisfied with the research performance over the last year.)

*39. POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT SUBMISSION

This minute is confidential and attached as a separate sheet.

40. EMPLOYABILITY

Considered

the 2020/21 annual report reviewing the University's performance in the area of employability (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D027)

(Senate noted the successes of the Graduate Outcomes Survey, with a degree of caution as we just had one year of data, but which showed that the performance gaps for students with protected characteristics had closed. The results of the second year of the Survey were due imminently. The pandemic had restricted opportunities for students to engage with extra-curricular activities and the Careers service would be addressing this in a targeted way in 2021/22.

The OfS have published some experimental data designed to combine completion and employability. This metric, called "Proceed" has UEA performing below benchmark but doesn't currently take regional factors into consideration which may explain this. Nevertheless, the report was a useful source of data which could inform the approach taken subject by subject.

Senate noted that we were signatories to the Civic University Charter and so engaged with providing a graduate workforce for the region whilst supporting students in their global, national, regional and or local ambitions).

*41. WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

This minute is confidential and attached as a separate sheet.

*42. ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

This minute is confidential and attached as a separate sheet.

43. STUDENT WELFARE REPORT

Reported

that one of Senate's responsibilities is to ensure appropriate provision is made to promote the welfare of students (Ordinance 3.10);

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Considered

a report from the Director of Student Services. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D030)

(Senate noted that there had been a large increase in the number of students declaring a disability with 17% now making such declarations. This reflects the inclusive approach being taken to recruitment and our drive to widen access.

There had been much work on-going arising from the VC taskforce on Mental health and Well-being and also the VC Taskforce on tackling racism with many sub-strands of work and projects now completed.

The Service was learning from the experiences of delivery during the pandemic to improve and enhance services. Many students were finding the ability to access support online to be preferable and so a mixed approach was planned for the future with some face-to-face delivery re-commencing in early September

Senate members expressed their support and gratitude for the work of the Embedded Well-being teams to support students during the pandemic. There was discussion about the support that was anticipated to be needed by new first year students in 2021/22 but also for those continuing who had not had a good experience during 2020/21 and the importance of having welcome and welcome back activities. The importance of our faith provision and in our making faith facilities available was also noted).

44. CHANGING THE CULTURE GROUP

Reported

an OfS call for providers to review sexual misconduct and harassment policies by this summer [OfS urges universities and colleges to review their harassment and sexual misconduct policies - Office for Students](#)

Considered

an update from the Head of Student Services, Jane Amos on the work of the University's Changing the Culture group, VC Taskforce on Tackling Racism at UEA, and other associated activities linked to the work of these groups. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D031)

(Senate noted the work on-going using community conversations to improve the experience of students using our "Report and Support" disclosure process which was the primary way in which students reported incidences of harassment and discrimination.

Senate was pleased to see the progress being made with these initiatives).

45. VICE CHANCELLOR'S NATIONAL WORK WITH UUK ON TACKLING RACISM

Considered

a verbal update from the Vice-Chancellor on his national work with UUK on tackling racism.

(Senate noted the Vice Chancellor's leadership role and the UUK work designed to encourage all HEIs to be actively anti-racist. Key to this was helping Universities create environments where staff and students can speak about their experiences of racism and for them and be believed and have confidence that the information, they provide is then acted upon

The Vice Chancellor reported that following recent events in the middle East he had reached out to reassure and offer support our Palestinian students and also to students in our Jewish Society who were concerned about a rise in anti- Semitism.

Senate also noted that June 2021 is Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month).

*46. UEA PLAN DEVELOPMENT

This minute is confidential and attached as a separate sheet.

47. REVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY'S POLICY ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Noted

- (1) that the focus of the work so far had been to consider the University Policy
- (2) that this review had been undertaken in advance and in anticipation of Government legislation in response to the call from the Secretary of State
- (3) that once Government legislation had been passed this policy would need a further review to ensure compliance

Considered

- (1) the conclusions reached by a Task and Finish group established to undertake this work
 - a) that the current policy is compliant with the current legal framework and the new Government proposals, and so would meet the expectations of the OfS but that its presentation could be updated to make it more user friendly and to make reference to on-line events
 - b) that the policy should be clear in supporting speech that is lawful
 - c) that the Government's proposals may undermine the independence of the UEA|SU in linking their compliance with the University's Conditions of registration with the OfS
 - d) that the University's social media policy has become very outdated and requires a major re-write
 - e) to take the principles established in the policy into consideration when undertaking the periodic review of academic staff terms and conditions, reward and recognition practices, and disciplinary and grievance processes
 - f) to embed these principles of freedom of speech in the review the Code of Conduct on Dignity and Respect in the Workplace
 - g) that more publicity needs to be given to promote a better understanding of the policy and the principles contained within it
 - h) that further work be undertaken
 - i. to produce a set of guidance notes for those seeking to engage an external speaker or host a debate on what might be considered a controversial topic.

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ii. to produce clear guidance for those empowered to authorise such events regarding the safety measures that might be required and or/how the events is promoted.
such that the University and SU in partnership can assure Council that minimum standards are met.

(2) recommended updates to the University policy (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D033)

(Senate noted that the latest Government's proposals identified the decolonisation of the curriculum as a "contested political ideology not associated with a particular political party or view" and disagreed. The work to decolonise the curriculum was critical in the implementation of our Inclusive education policy and work to tackle racism.)

RESOLVED

48. SENATE MEMBERSHIP

Reported

that the terms of office of the following Senate members would expire on 31 July 2021 or are otherwise stepping down:

FMH ACADEMIC REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs Katrina Emerson
Professor Ailsa Welch

HUM ACADEMIC REPRESENTATIVES

Dr Sally Broughton Micova

Considered

the recommendation that the following members be approved:

FMH HEAD OF SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

Professor Sally Hardy (2024) to replace Professor William Fraser who was an Interim appointment

FMH ACADEMIC REPRESENTATIVES

Mr Felix Naughton (2024)
Lecturer – To be confirmed

HUM ACADEMIC REPRESENTATIVES

Dr Oren Margolis (2024)

RESOLVED

*49. HONORARY DEGREES AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

This minute is confidential and attached as a separate sheet.

50. ELECTION OF A MEMBER OF COUNCIL

Reported

(1) that Senate can nominate two members of Council and the current members are Dr Louise Bohn and Professor Ratula Chakraborty.

- (2) that Dr Louise Bohn's term of office ends this summer and so there is a vacancy for a Senate nominated member of Council wef 1 August 2021.
- (3) that the vacancy has been advertised in the Lasdun weekly since 16th March with nominations sought by 17th May

Considered

five nominations via an e-ballot (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D035)

Resolved

to nominate Dr Usha Sundaram for appointment to Council for a three year term.

51. ELECTION OF A MEMBER OF THE SAINSBURY CENTRE BOARD

Reported

- (1) that Senate could nominate a member of the Sainsbury Centre Board and the current member was Professor Claire Jowitt
- (2) that Professor Claire Jowitt's term of office ends this summer and so there was a vacancy for a Senate nominated member of the Board wef 1 August 2021.
- (3) That the vacancy had been advertised in the Lasdun weekly since 11th May 16th March with nominations sought by 28th May.

Considered

three nominations via an e-ballot (A copy is filed in the Minute Book SEN20D036)

Resolved

to nominate Professor Claire Jowitt for a second term of three years.

52. UNIVERSITY PROCUREMENT

Reported

that concerns had been raised about a change in how transactions with a supplier are managed

Considered

what these concerns are and how they may be managed

(Senate were informed about a change in University procurement practice designed to gather information on the scale of purchases with one supplier by allowing purchases to be made solely via the University's finance system and not via expenses or purchase cards. The concerns raised by staff, in the Centre for Competition Policy (CCP) and some other Principle Investigators

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on research grants, related to competition law, the potential for data sharing to inadvertently lead to competitive advantage, and whether the purchasing process itself was inhibiting the use of other suppliers. The Chief Resource Officer agreed to investigate the processes, data sharing, communications and user training. Senate noted the offer from members of the CCP to advise and help the University's procurement team and encouraged the development of such a working relationship to make good use of our internal expertise in this area.)

53. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

Considered

recommendations from the University's Research Executive (17.5.21) and University Research Ethics Committee (5.5.21) that a number of revisions to the Research Ethics Policy be approved. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D037)

RESOLVED

54. UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINARY AND INVESTIGATORY PROCEDURES

Noted

Senate's responsibility to approve regulations for the conduct of students and disciplinary procedures and penalties relating to students (Ordinance 3.9)

Considered

recommendations from the Learning and Teaching Committee

- (1) to reword the provisions relating to appeals against a decision of the University Disciplinary Officer, Student Life Manager or Deputy Accommodation Manager in order to remedy a typographical error that changes the meaning;
- (2) to allow for the possibility of two presenters at SSDC in some cases;
- (3) to bring forward the deadline for students to file a response to SSDC in fitness to practise cases so as to increase preparedness before the hearing;
- (4) to amend the conflict of interest provisions relating to student discipline to cover student panel members, and to bring the wording in line with that used by courts

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D038 / LTC20D083)

RESOLVED

55. SENATE COMMITTEES

Considered

the membership and changes to membership of Senate Committees and Sub Committees for 2021/22.(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D039)

RESOLVED

56. STUDENT PROTECTON PLANS

Reported

that LTC undertook the annual review and update of the Student Protection Plan, which includes the Refund and Compensations Policy. (LTC20D081) following scrutiny by the Student Experience Committee. Information on fees liability and visa compliance had been updated. The Student Union had been fully consulted on proposed changes. The Committee approved the University's Student Protection Plan for 2021/22 subject to the inclusion of a section or sentences covering apprentices.

Considered

a recommendation from the Learning and Teaching Committee to approve the University's Student Protection Plan for 2021/22. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D040)

RESOLVED

57. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Considered

a recommendation from the Learning and Teaching Committee updating University Terms and Conditions for 2021/22. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D041 / LTC20D080 (SEC20D03))

RESOLVED

58. LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Received

a round-up report of the meetings of the Committee held on 20 January 2021 and 10 March 2021. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D042)

59. ITEMS FOR REPORT

Received

items for report.

- (1) Heads of Schools for 2021/22
- (2) Union of UEA Students – Election 2021/22 Results

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D043)

60. NEW REQUIREMENTS

Reported

- (1) an OfS call for providers to review sexual misconduct and harassment policies by this summer [OfS urges universities and colleges to review their harassment and sexual misconduct policies - Office for Students](#)
- (2) a new OfS [Condition of Regulation](#) - Condition C4: Student protection directions . This regulatory notice contains an ongoing condition of registration introduced to enable the Office for Students (OfS) to intervene more quickly and in a targeted way when we consider there to be a material risk that a registered provider may cease the provision of higher education. The condition applies from 1 April 2021.

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- (3) a new large group complaints process launched by the OIA
<https://www.oiahe.org.uk/about-us/our-scheme/our-rules/additional-rules-that-apply-to-large-group-complaints/>
- (4) a call from UUK for Universities to aim to develop specific and inclusive [domestic abuse policies](#) that are separate from broader safeguarding policies and that consider the diversity of their staff and students.

61. REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE WITH CONSUMER LAW

Received

a report on our compliance with consumer law with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D044)

62. ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Noted

that one of Senate's responsibilities was to identify and advise the Executive Team on such actions as may be necessary or desirable to ensure that the extent of regulation and the administrative services which support teaching, research, innovation promote efficiency and coherence of operation across the University, and avoid unnecessary complexity (Ordinance 3.14 (d)).

Reported

on work undertaken to enhance administrative efficiency and effectiveness during 2020/21.(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN20D045)

63. DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2021/22

Reported

that the dates of the Senate meetings had been confirmed as:

Wednesday 3 November 2021 – 2pm
Wednesday 23 February 2022 – 2pm
Wednesday 1 June 2022 – 2pm