

## THE SENATE



### Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2022

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (Professor D.J. Richardson) (in the Chair), , Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor F. Lettice), the Faculty Pro-Vice-Executive (Professor S. Barrow, Professor F. Bowen, Professor French-Constant, Professor M. Searcey and Professor E. Sutton-Pavli), Heads of Schools (Professor L. Camfield, Professor S. Hardy and Professor K. Hiscock), Academic Representatives (Dr A. Anka, Dr N. James, Dr S. Jong, Dr K. Mistry, Dr O. Margolis, Dr F. Naughton, Dr H. Pallett, Professor G. Parr, Dr K. Russell, Dr C. Seger, Professor A. Stephan, and Dr L. Stokes), the Librarian (Mr N Lewis), External - Principle of Norwich City College (Ms Corrienne Peasgood) and a Student Representative except for business marked \*\* (Ms A. Hida).

With: The Chief Resource Officer and University Secretary (Mr I. Callaghan), Associate PVC UEA Doctoral College (Professor A. Grant), Associate PVC Admissions (Professor R. Harvey), Associate PVC Employability and Opportunities (Dr M. Aldrich), Director of Governance and Assurance (Dr A Blanchflower), Director of Academic Services (Eve Dewsnap), Interim Deputy Director of IT (Mr S. Kirk), Dr Sally Howes (Chair of Council) and Kea Horvers (Halpin).

#### 23. MINUTES

Confirmed

the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2021.

#### 24. CONFIRMATION OF CHAIRS ACTION

There was nothing to report.

#### 25. STATEMENTS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Chair

- (1) welcomed Dr Sally Howes (Chair of Council) to her first meeting of Senate as an observer;
- (2) informed Senate about an external review of Council effectiveness that was currently ongoing and welcomed Kea Horvers, from Halpin, who was attending this meeting as an observer as part of this review;

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- (3) informed Senate members that they would be invited to participate in a self-assessment exercise as part of an activity designed to improve University governance;
- (4) summarised the key features of the anticipated Government response to the Augar Review ahead of its formal publication. This was considered likely to include:
  - a) a three year freeze on Home tuition fees;
  - b) changes to student loan repayments: reducing the threshold when repayments were due, lengthening the period of re-payment and capping interest rates;
  - c) a suggestion of a small capital fund;
  - d) a delay in introducing post qualification admissions;
  - e) consultations on a Lifelong Entitlement fund from 2025 and setting minimum entry requirements for UG courses.

(Senate noted that when combined these measures would reduce University income and yet require students to pay more for their courses and it was thought that, given the current economic situation, many more students would face financial hardship during the course of their studies. The UEA Plan has a Global Success pillar and Senate noted that in light of these Government proposals consideration of developing the campus to increase the percentage of international students was of increasing importance).

26. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

\*27 BUSINESS CONTINUITY/COVID 19 AND PLANS FOR THE REST OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Considered

a confidential verbal update from the PVC Student Experience and Education, Professor Emma Sutton-Pavli.

(Senate noted that since November delivery of courses has been on campus with some blended content. Contingencies were put in place for January with assessments to be mainly conducted online and remote study concessions being given for

courses starting w/c 4<sup>th</sup> January in case COVID restrictions were re-introduced. This stability enabled staff to take annual leave over the Christmas closed period.

In January, the overall situation was that we delivered 84% of teaching events face-to-face, supplemented by 12% remote synchronous and 3% online asynchronous events with some expected subject specific variations. The planning principles for 2022/23 delivery are currently being finalised. This was focussed on the University offering campus-based delivery, in being committed to developing our teaching practice, and enhancing courses with flexible, inclusive supplementary materials. As part of this, Schools were being encouraged to articulate their signature pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning and their belief in what was the right blend of activity for the subject and the course.

The provision of wider services to students, such as Student Services and Careers Services, has retained some online delivery in response to good feedback and demand from students and it was envisaged that a dual delivery model was likely to continue.

Senate expressed support for the work in place and for the direction of travel).

28. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PERFORMANCE

Reported

that Senate was 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;

Noted

that a detailed report of the REF21 results will be provided to Senate at the June 2022 meeting.

Considered

- (1) a report and recommendations from Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) Professor Fiona Lettice and Head of Research Services, Julia Sheldrake
- (2) suggestions for items for inclusion in future reports.

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D016)

(Senate welcomed the report and noted that the key priorities for the next year were:

- to continue to develop the Research and Innovation Success focus and priorities for the next UEA 5-year Plan and to ensure that research is at the forefront of the University's ambitions.
- to analyse and review the REF2021 results, focusing on high quality research wherever it is found. Learning from the results to inform planning for the submission in the next exercise (REF27/28).
- to launch the third interdisciplinary research theme, aligned to life sciences, to join the two already launched (ClimateUEA in 2019 and CreativeUEA in 2020) and continue to scope preliminary ideas for up to two further themes.
- to develop and implement an action plan to maintain and enhance the University's research culture and environment, and to support post-pandemic recovery for the UEA research and innovation community.
- to develop and implement a strategy, action plan and identify resources needed to significantly improve UEA's research reputation.
- to develop strategies and plans to diversify and improve research and innovation related income - to minimise risks around loss of ODA, EU or other key funding streams, to be ready for new funding streams, and to support UEA's post-pandemic financial sustainability.

The discussion focussed on the PGR community and research culture. Senate discussed the importance of not overlooking the PGR community who were contributing well to research outputs and were our next generation of academic staff. The Campus Development Plan was noted to be impacting all staff, and PGR students in particular, and was presenting risks to the post-COVID re-building of research culture. Care would be needed to provide everyone with the necessary research orientated touch points. With PGR students being keen to have opportunities to discuss their research informally it was thought that they could become the core of a new research culture in Schools.

The Doctoral College report contained a useful set of KPIs. Senate noted that our PGR community was not diverse, understood that this was a complex issue with many contributing

factors, and were supportive of local and national initiatives designed to improve PGR diversity.

The interdisciplinary research themes were helping staff to make fewer but larger grant applications and in recovering all eligible costs whilst early career staff were still being supported in making smaller grant applications. Senate supported the encouragement being given to academic and research staff to use PURE to record activities and measures of esteem to aid in the preparation of the next REF and KEF.

Senate were content with the measures in place to monitor research performance and with the actual performance reported this year).

29. ANNUAL INNOVATION REPORT

Reported

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

Considered

- (1) a report from the Pro Vice Chancellor, Professor Fiona Lettice, the Head of Innovation, Dr Jon Carter, and Head of Business Partnerships, Julie Schofield Research and Innovation Division.
- (2) suggestions for items for inclusion in future reports.

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D017)

(Senate noted that there were clear performance measures in this area and that our comparative performance was good. Questions were asked about barriers that might be facing staff wishing to do contract research, but it was noted that consultancy activity was strong. It was noted that our CPD offer was currently focussed on health-related courses and that there was to be some investment of staffing to support the development of a wider CPD offer.

Senate noted the future actions:

- ensuring we are capturing what we do
- ensuring delivery of new initiatives to improve performance; and
- in providing feedback to Research England.

Senate endorsed the approach being made in monitoring activity in this area, the comparator Universities being used, and the actual performance reported).

\*30. UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE

Considered

- (1) a confidential copy of the report and action plan presented to Council in November 2021 and the Learning and Teaching Committee in December 2021 (COU21D026 / LTC21D020) relating to the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes in 2020/21, including evidence from our internal quality assurance processes which involve students and include embedded external peer review or professional review.

Recommended

- (1) that for the 2020/2021 academic year that the methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic and student outcomes were robust and appropriate; and
- (2) that the standards of awards for which the University was responsible had been appropriately set and maintained.

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D018)

(Senate noted the discussion at the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) which included the following points:

- The annual accountability return is the culmination of all the quality assurance activity that takes place across UEA every year.
- Over the last few years UEA has gradually shifted direction of travel around QA processes away from compliance/tick box monitoring towards a framework, giving Schools freedom to apply the framework according to their requirements, in particular the way student feedback is obtained. All Schools have a Teaching Excellence Plan and all QA processes feed into this.
- The need to ensure UEA processes and policies accommodate requirements around apprenticeships, particularly those of ESFA and Ofsted was highlighted by the Head of LTS (Quality). She noted that the report also demonstrated the high level of quality assurance being undertaken in partner institutions.

- The Chair summarised that LTC considered the report to be comprehensive and informative.
- Due to the meetings dates falling out of sequence, the annual accountability return had been taken to Council before it went to LTC and Senate. Council have requested more clarification on some aspects of the report, particularly with regard to key indicators.
- Noting that the report would benefit from a refresh, the Director of Academic Services invited members' feedback on this.
- A review of the data scrutinised by LTC and Senate on an annual cycle has been undertaken to ensure that a robust process is in place to monitor key student metrics. Doing so will allow us to move to a regular timetable for standard data, and to ensure it is properly embedded in decision making in an appropriate and timely way. We therefore expect the data aspect of the report to be significantly improved for the next annual report.
- Clarifying and strengthening our quality assurance processes is also likely to be a priority within the Student Success theme of the UEA Plan, the details of which are currently being drafted.

Senate noted LTC's focus on School Teaching Excellence Plans as the cornerstone element of our quality assurance and enhancement work. The infrastructure around them was being carefully considered to ensure no duplication of activity and good data flow to Schools to aid in their annual maintenance and review. Senate also noted that with our apprenticeship provision being regulated by Ofsted our quality assurance processes now also had to meet their requirements. Senate agreed that the methodologies used were robust and that awards had been well governed and that assurances could be given to Council accordingly.

Senate noted some uncertainty around the APP which might require a review and resubmission and also discussed the three recently launched OfS consultation exercises, on outcome measures and the TEF, noting the significant workload that would be necessitated should they be approved).

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\*31. ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST COMPARATOR UNIVERSITIES

Reported

that an extraordinary meeting of Senate had been arranged for Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm to consider the proposed UEA Plan.

Considered

a confidential report from the Vice Chancellor about the information on the University's performance that is informing the development of the UEA Plan.

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D019)

Senate was reminded of the preparatory activities undertaken as part of the development of the new UEA Plan. A Big Conversation had happened alongside some Big Shift days and Senate had discussions at the November 2019 and June 2021 meetings. The Plan is now 2 years late due to the pandemic but would be presented for approval to Senate in April 2022. The Plan was to have 10-12 goals with sub-success measures and stretching KPIs.

It was proposed to consider the on-going University's performance against similar dual intensive Universities with a commitment to social inclusion and with strong civic and regional roles. The analysis presented showed the proposed comparator group, which were a sub-set of the comparator group used by Research England in the KEF dashboard. Senate's attention was drawn to the comparative University's performance in the following areas:

- the percentage international students
- fee rates
- staff student ratios
- student success measures
- grant income
- ATR/ATS balance
- research outputs
- research reputation

Senate found the comparative data interesting, supported the use of this set of Universities as a comparator group, and



appreciated how beneficial this on-going analysis would be in the development and monitoring of the UEA Plan).

32. CHANGE OF SCHOOL NAME - DEV

Reported

that the number, titles and discipline coverage of Schools of Study and distribution of Schools of Study between Faculties would be determined from time to time by the Vice-Chancellor, having consulted with Senate. (Ordinance 2 para 26)

Considered

a recommendation from the Faculty of Social Sciences supported by the Executive Team

- a) that the School of International Development changed its name to the School of Global Development with effect from 1 August 2023
- b) that the School identifier for internal purposes would stay as DEV

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D026)

(Senate noted that there had been consultation with students and approved the change to be introduced such that all students commencing their studies in 2023/24 and thereafter would graduate from the School of Global Development. Continuing students and those starting in 2022/23 would graduate from the School of international Development.)

**RESOLVED**

33. DISCIPLINARY AMENDMENT PROPOSAL: PLAGIARISM AND COLLUSION CASES

Considered

a recommendation from the Learning and Teaching Committee that High Level plagiarism and collusion cases (suspected breach of Regulation 18) could be considered for summary determination from the Chair of SSDC.

(The Learning and Teaching Committee noted that this was an extension from current procedures and powers where summary

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determination applies only to medium and low-level cases. The new discretion would only be used in cases which would not normally lead to a student being removed from the University. The student involved could also request a full SSDC panel hearing should they wish for their case not to be summarily determined).

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D020)

**RESOLVED**

### 34. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Confirmed

the updated Terms of Reference for the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D021)

**RESOLVED**

### 35. DEGREE OUTCOMES STATEMENT

Reported

(1) that the confidential proposed 2021 Degree Outcomes statement was circulated to Senate members between meetings and feedback sought. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D022)

(2) that the final agreed version was published on our website on the [Terms, Conditions and Regulations webpage](#) and a copy is attached. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D023)

### 36. TIMETABLING

Reported

(1) that the review into the significant challenges faced by staff and students relating to the implementation of a new timetabling system had been completed and the key findings communicated to all staff and the summary report made available via MyUEA.

- (2) that the recommendations, which were already being implemented, included
  - a) To pause and re-set the scope of the timetabling project to allow for more incremental change
  - b) To launch the related Curriculum Review Project as a priority, which had been delayed due to COVID-19
  - c) An Equality Impact Assessment to better understand the individual needs of staff and students in the timetabling system and how they might be accommodated going forwards
  - d) More attention on cultural change, as well as technical change, in future major projects
  - e) To reinstate a Major Programmes Board, or equivalent, to ensure dependencies between major projects are actively monitored.
- (3) that a broader overview of the whole project, lessons learnt and next steps have also been communicated to all staff.

37. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER OF THE SENATE TO SERVE ON THE COUNCIL

Reported

- (1) that the Council includes amongst its membership two members nominated by Senate and these currently were Professor Ratula Chakraborty (2022) and Dr Usha Sundaram (2024).
- (2) that the term of office of Professor Ratula Chakraborty would end on 31 July 2022;
- (3) that nominations of candidates for the vacancy (which need not be for serving members of the Senate) would be sought from Senate members. It was proposed that nominations should be lodged with the Chief Resource Officer by email [university.secretary@uea.ac.uk](mailto:university.secretary@uea.ac.uk) no later than **5pm, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022.**

The proposer should clearly state within the email to the Chief Resource Officer, the name and email address of the person being nominated and that the nominee should be cc'd in on the email (as this would be verified by the

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Vice-Chancellor's Office) as well as their own name/email address;

- (4) the opportunity to serve on Council would be advertised in the Lasdun and Senate members were encouraged to draw attention to the opportunity within their Schools, Faculties or professional service divisions.
- (5) in the event that there are no nominations for this vacancy, at the first ordinary meeting of the Senate nominations would be asked for and voted upon by ballot by those persons present and entitled to vote.

### 38. LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Received

a round up report from the Learning and Teaching Committee from its meeting in 6 October 2021 and 1 December 2021. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D024).

### \*39. STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Received

the minutes of the meetings held on 30 November 2021 and 26 January 2022. This does contain confidential minutes) (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D025)

### 40. OFFICE FOR STUDENTS ANNUAL REVIEW: ENGLISH HIGHER EDUCATION 2021

Received

the 2020 annual review which reflects on a year of challenge and resilience for English higher education. It looked at the support provided by the OfS to students and the sector during the pandemic, and sets out their priorities for 2021. The report could be accessed from the [OfS website](#).

### 41. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Reported

- (1) that the next meeting of the Senate was an Extraordinary meeting on Wednesday 6 April 2022 at 2pm in room 3.02, Julian Study Centre.
- (2) the next following meeting of Senate was scheduled for Tuesday 7 June 2022.