

THE SENATE



Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 November 2021

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (Professor D.J. Richardson) (in the Chair), Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Christine Bovis-Crossen, PVC Student Experience and Education, Professor Emma Sutton, the Executive Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors (Professor S. Barrow, Professor F. Bowen, Professor C. French-Constant, Professor Mark Searcey) Heads of Schools (Professor A. Donnell, Professor K. Hiscock and Professor S Hardy), Academic Representatives (Dr A. Anka, Dr A Davillas, Dr F Naughton, Professor A. Ganesan, Dr N. James, Dr S. Jong, Dr O Margolis, Dr K. Mistry, Dr H. Pallett, Professor G. Parr, Dr K. Russell, Dr C. Seger, Professor A Stephan, Dr L. Stokes, Dr L. Yulita), the Librarian (Mr N Lewis), Director of Student Services (Dr C.J. Sharp), External – Principle of Norwich City College (Ms Corrienne Peasgood) and the Student Representatives except for business marked ** (Mr A Campbell, Mr I Garnham, Ms A. Hida).

With: Associate PVC Learning and Teaching Enhancement (Professor K. Yeoman), Associate PVC UEA Doctoral College (Professor A. Grant), Associate PVC Admissions (Professor R. Harvey), Associate PVC Student Inclusion (Professor Helena Gillespie), Associate PVC Academic Partnerships and Apprenticeships (Professor Zoe Butterfint), Director of Governance and Assurance (Dr A Blanchflower), Director of Academic Services (Eve Dewsnap), Assistant Registrar (Mrs L. Williams), and Mr J Clayton and Ms Sally Howes (Council members)

1. MINUTES

Confirmed
the minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2021.

2. CONFIRMATION OF CHAIRS ACTION

Reported
that the Vice Chancellor, or the PVC Academic and Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Neil Ward, deputising for the Vice Chancellor and both acting as Chair of Senate approved the recommendations included in the following papers which were brought forward to be implemented in the academic year 2021/22.

- 1) A recommendation by Professor Neil Ward as outgoing Chair of LTC, that Brooksby Melton College be re-approved as a partner institution of UEA for a period of up to one year to end of academic year 2021/22. Details can be found in the LTC paper **LTC20D119**.
- 2) Some changes in Disciplinary regulations for implementation in 2021/22. The proposals were developed too late to be considered by LTC but were supported by Professor Emma Sutton, as incoming Chair of LTC and the SU Officers. Two areas of change, those in Part E and Part H were developed in response to concerns raised by the SU officers and members of the SU Advice Centre. Details can be found in the paper **SEN20D047**.
- 3) Some new governance arrangements for piloting during 2021/22 and in particular
 - a) for Student Experience Committee to become a sub-committee of Senate rather than the Learning and Teaching Committee;
 - b) that the Inclusive Education Committee be disbanded and its work on matters related to inclusive education and UEA's Access and Participation Plan (APP) be formally embedded in the Learning and Teaching Committee, Student Experience Committee, Admissions Recruitment and Marketing (ARM) Executive and the Employability Executive;
 - c) to disband the Technology Enhanced Learning Committee;
 - d) to approve new terms of reference and membership of the learning and Teaching Committee and the Student Experience Committee;

noting that further consideration will be given to the role and function of both the Admissions Recruitment and Marketing Executive and the Employability Executive in the Autumn. Details can be found in the paper **SEN20D046**.

- 4) Changes to award regulations for BIM and CMF 2021/22. Details can be found in the attached paper **SEN20D048**.
- 5) The approval of Apostolos Davillas as member of Senate representing the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.
- 6) That the Vice-Chancellor has approved, by Chair's action, for the Undergraduate Education Officer, Ivo Garnham, to replace Hamish Williams until further notice for Senate meetings.

(Senate noted that the effectiveness of the new governance arrangements would be considered at the June Senate meeting.)

3. STATEMENTS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Vice Chancellor reported on

- 1) the opening of Broadcast House in the city centre. The new premises would be a focus for the delivery of courses in media, journalism and liberal arts and would also support the University's civic engagement.
- 2) the opening of Productivity East in September
- 3) this year's Diwali celebrations which had blossomed with the growth in International students from India this year.

4. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made.

*5. BUSINESS CONTINUITY/COVID 19 AND PLANS FOR THE REST OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Considered

a confidential verbal update from the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Christine Bovis-Crossen and PVC Student Experience and Education, Professor Emma Sutton.

(Senate noted that the University was now delivering face-to-face teaching with some blended content and the campus was busy and vibrant once again. Incidences of COVID-19 were being monitored and reported on the website and the University was in a position to respond rapidly should national guidelines change. Arrangements were in place to help mitigate the impact of the pandemic on students studying during 2019/20 and 2020/21 with, for example extensions in place for PGR students, and whilst the regulatory safety net remained in place for continuing UG and PGT students, other COVID related award regulation variations had ended.

In discussion, Senate was made aware that an NHS requirement for students on placements in the NHS to be double vaccinated was about to be introduced as was a similar requirement for social work students).

*6. TIMETABLING 2021/22

Considered

a confidential verbal update from the PVC Student Experience and Education, Professor Emma Sutton and Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Christine Bovis-Crossen.

(Senate acknowledged the difficulties faced by staff and students arising from the timetabling difficulties experienced this Autumn associated with the roll-out of new timetabling software. The timetable

for Semester 1 was now complete with the normal level of maintenance activity on-going and work on Semester 2 had commenced. Senate expressed gratitude to staff for their forbearance and the spirit of collaboration which was characterising the response to the problems being faced.

A project to review the decision-making processes undertaken by the Timetabling Project Group and to roll-out the new system was underway with all four Associate PVCs (LTQ) being on the project board. Senate members encouraged the project board to consider not just the technical issues but also the influence of politics and democratic decision-making in a complex organisation as part of the review).

*7. UNIVERSITY PERFORMANCE

Reported

- (1) that due to work necessitated by business continuity measures related to timetabling the usual reports on University performance with degree outcomes, classification and Good Honours and student retention were not able to be presented at this Senate meeting;
- (2) the data broken down by School and by protected characteristics would be considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee on 1st December; and
- (3) that at the same Learning and Teaching Committee meeting consideration would be given to a required update to the University's degree outcomes statement which needs to be published by 31.12.21.

Considered

- (1) a proposal that the draft Degree Outcome Statement was circulated to Senate members in early December for comment and agreement ahead of publication; and
- (2) further work was undertaken with respect to agenda planning to ensure consideration given to the full set of data by the Learning and Teaching Committee ahead of next year's November meeting of Senate.

RESOLVED

*8. ADMISSIONS PERFORMANCE 2020 AND PLANS FOR 2021

Considered

a confidential presentation from the Provost, Professor Christine Bovis-Crossen, Associate PVC Admissions Professor Richard Harvey and the Head of Admissions Alix Delany, summarising the University's

performance. (Slides are enclosed with the papers) (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D001)

(Senate noted that the intake had grown this year which was a notable success in a very difficult environment where, related to COVID related changes in teaching, learning and assessment, the achievements of applicants had exceeded expectations and so competition between HEIs had been fierce. Pleasingly, there had been no detrimental impact on our widening participation.

Senate noted the imperative need for sustainable growth in student numbers in order that the University might invest in the estate, digital infrastructure and services for the benefit of staff and students. Whilst growth to date had focussed on the Home market it was clear that the focus now had to shift to growing our International student numbers. Therefore, work was required to redevelop our International strategy, and in reviewing and refreshing our portfolio of courses to meet the interests of prospective international applicants, noting that the University's position in league tables was also critical to our performance in the marketplace. Our joint venture with INTO would continue to be important in this regard).

*9. NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2021

Considered

the confidential outcome of the 2021 National Student Survey as presented to LTC in October 2021 by Becky Price, Assistant Head of Planning, Caroline Botwood, Business Intelligence Manager – Market Research Insight, Dr Neil James, APVC Education and Curriculum, Professor Helena Gillespie, APVC Student Inclusion and feedback from that discussion (LTC 21D004) (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D002)

(The results of the 2021 NSS have been scrutinised by Schools and Faculties and Faculty commentaries have been considered by LTC. Schools are using their annual updating of their Teaching Excellence Plans to address identified issues. There was disappointment in some "Assessment and Feedback" scores and it remained the case that there needed to be more communication with students about the actions taken in response to their feedback and to showcase where best practice exists. In future, early insights into student opinion would be gleaned from a new pulse survey and a new listening platform and this would facilitate swifter response times.

Student members of Senate were comfortable with the list of improvements identified and acknowledged the different motivating factors experienced by students when completing the survey).

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*10. PERFORMANCE IN LEAGUE TABLES

Considered

a confidential report summarising the University's performance in recent League tables. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D003)

(The University's ranking in league tables is important to the international student recruitment market and so an understanding of the factors that contribute to the league tables is vital. Whilst the University's ranking had fallen in some domestic league tables primarily due to a fall in NSS scores, a strong research citation performance was maintaining a high ranking in World League tables. The University's international reputation was still lagging behind the excellent citation performance and the Executive Team were determining a way forward to address this).

11. REVIEW OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND HARRASMENT POLICIES

Considered

the findings of a Changing the Culture task and finish group

- 1) that our polices and internal procedures and practices meet the requirements of the OfS Statement of Expectations
- 2) that some identified improvements would further enhance our provision

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D004)

(Senate noted the work underway to improve Report and Support, the roll-out of SafeZone and the Consent Matters training course which was mandatory for all in University accommodation. A new training course for Academic Advisers and other key role holders "Managing first disclosures" was about to be launched to equip them in responding to a disclosure and help them signpost accordingly. It was of concern that some students were reluctant to make reports and so the aim was to make internal processes as comfortable as possible whilst at the same time promoting reassuring messages to those contemplating making a report that any unwelcome behaviour is unacceptable. Students who had made "reports" were also expressing concern about the speed of providing them with feedback at the close of investigations and improvements in this area are being explored by the team in Student Services.

Senate was appreciative of the work being undertaken in this area and looked forward to receiving reports on drug and alcohol use and mis-use and domestic abuse at future meetings).

RESOLVED

12. TACKLING SYSTEMIC RACISM; REVISING THE HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE

Considered

recommendations from the VC Taskforce on tackling racism

- 1) that a member of the VC Taskforce for Tackling Racism joins the Honorary degrees committee.
- 2) that a member of the EDI Committee or EDI Team joins the Honorary degrees committee.
- 3) that the wording of the call for new nominations to be made in October 2021 explicitly references diversity and encourages applications from all races and backgrounds.
- 4) that the current requirement for a link with UEA/Norfolk be downplayed, which it is hoped will broaden the pool of suitable candidates.
- 5) active encouragement be given to certain groups/individuals (e.g. BAME network) to submit nominations.
- 6) encouragement of the Students Union to use their membership of the HDAC committee to bring forward more diverse nominations.
- 7) That where possible more diverse candidates are fast-tracked for award in 2022 (noting that overall numbers of honorary graduates are limited and 26 have already been invited).

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book SEN21D005)

(Senate noted that the recommendations were focussed on tackling systemic racism but wished to extend the encouragement for diversity to include all protected characteristics. It was acknowledged that it was a collective responsibility of all HDAC members to encourage diversity.)

RESOLVED

- 1) to approve recommendations 1, 2, 4 and 7
- 2) with respect to recommendation 3 that the wording of the call for new nominations each year explicitly references diversity and encourages applications from all races and backgrounds and from those with other protected characteristics
- 3) that recommendations 5 and 6 be combined and active encouragement be given to certain groups/individuals, for example the BAME network and the Students' Union, to bring forward more diverse nominations.

*13 UEA PLAN UPDATE

Received

a verbal overview from the Provost, Professor Christine Bovis-Crossen and PVC (Research and Innovation) Professor Fiona Lettice,

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on the plan developed to create the UEA Plan (slide enclosed with the papers) (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D006)
(Senate noted that this would be a substantive item at the next meeting)

14. SENATE AGENDA PLANNING

Considered

- 1) the draft agenda plan for 2021/22
 - 2) whether Senate members would like any additional reports presented.
- (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D007)

RESOLVED

to accept the agenda plan.

15. SENATE EFFECTIVENESS

Noted

- 1) the recommendations of the 2018 Review of Senate effectiveness
- 2) Council's objective of re-looking at Senate membership in 2020/21

Considered

- 1) an update on progress with the recommendations; and
- 2) whether this reflects the experience of members in practice; and
- 3) the next steps.

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D008)

RESOLVED

to pursue this discussion via the Senate Blackboard site.

16. UNIVERSITY ANNUAL RESEARCH INTEGRITY REPORT 2020/21

Considered

- 1) the Annual Research Integrity Report 2020/21 which was ratified by the University Research Ethics Committee on 6th October 2021 and reviewed and approved by the University Research Executive on 11th October 2021 ahead of their meeting on 9th December 2021 and which contains
 - a) a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and the application of research integrity issues in the period 1st August 2020 to 31st July 2021;

- b) a statement on the processes the University has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct in research;
 - c) a high-level statement on any allegations of research misconduct in the reporting period, and
 - d) will be made available to the public on the University's Research Integrity webpages once approved.
- 2) assuring Council
- a) on the activities undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues across the University;
 - b) that the processes in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct in research are transparent, robust and fair and are appropriate for the University's needs; and
 - c) that the single allegation of research misconduct within the University means that it is not possible to identify any trends and further analysis is not warranted.

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D009)

RESOLVED

*17. ANNUAL REPORT FROM SENATE TO COUNCIL

Received

the confidential 2020/21 report from Senate to Council which went to the Council meeting on 28th June 2021 (COU20D069) (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D010)

18. LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Received

a round up report from the Learning and Teaching Committee from its meeting in May and June 2021. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D011).

19. STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Received

the minutes of the meeting on 29th September 2021. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D012)

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20. THE SENATE 2021/22

Received

- (1) the Senate – Membership. Council approved a change in the Ordinances to reflect the introduction of the role of Provost to the Executive Team and as a consequence the membership of Senate had grown to include the Provost as a member. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D013)
- (2) the Senate - Standing Orders (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D014)

21. RESERVED AREAS OF BUSINESS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Received

statements of the University's policies on reserved areas of business and confidentiality. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. SEN21D015)

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Reported

that the next meeting of the Senate was scheduled for Wednesday 23 February 2022.