THE SENATE

Minutes

This paper presents the confirmed Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 16 October 2013 at The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes.

The Senate **approved** these Minutes as a correct record of the meeting on Wednesday 5 February 2014.

Fraser Woodburn
Secretary to the Committee

Julie Tayler
Working Secretary to the Committee
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Attachments:

S-2013-04-M Appendix 1	Strategic Planning and Resources Committee
S-2013-04-M Appendix 2	Validation Committee
S-2013-04-M Appendix 3	Research Committee
S-2013-04-M Appendix 4	Human Research Ethics Committee
S-2013-04-M Appendix 5	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee

THE SENATE

Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 16 October 2013 at 2.00 pm
in the Hub Theatre, The Open University, Walton Hall.

PRESENT:

1) Ex officio

Mr Martin Bean, Vice-Chancellor
Professor Tim Blackman, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Scholarship and Quality)
Professor Musa Mihsein, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Professor Belinda Tynan, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
Professor Anne De Roeck, Dean, Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology
Professor Kevin Hetherington, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
Professor Mary Kellett, Dean, Faculty of Education and Language Studies
Mr Jeremy Roche, Dean, Faculty of Health and Social Care
Professor David Rowland, Dean, Faculty of Arts
Professor Rebecca Taylor, Dean, Faculty of Business and Law
Mr Keith Zimmerman, Director, Students
Professor Josie Taylor, Director of the Institute of Educational Technology
Mrs Nicky Whitsed, Director, Library Services
Ms Anne Howells, Director, Learning and Teaching Solutions

Appointed

2) Central Academic Units

Faculty of Arts

Dr Ole Grell	Dr Lynda Prescott
Dr Graham Harvey	Professor John Wolffe

Faculty of Business & Law

Mr Phil Bates	Mr Mike Phillips
Dr Sharon Slade	Ms Carmel McMahon

Faculty of Education and Language Studies

Dr Jane Cullen	Dr Steven Hutchinson
Dr Tim Lewis	Professor Karen Littleton
Dr Uwe Baumann	Ms Felicity Harper

Faculty of Health and Social Care

Mrs Sue Cole	Dr Mary Twomey
Miss Christine Taylor	Professor Monica Dowling

Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology

Ms Maggie Holland	Dr Mark Woodroffe
Mr Derek Goldrei	Mr Brendan Quinn
Dr Nicholas Moss	Dr Peter Robbins
Dr Tony Nixon	Professor Andy Lane
Dr Toby O'Neil	

Faculty of Science

Dr Arlene Hunter	Dr David Rothery
Dr Nick Rogers	Dr John Baxter

Faculty of Social Sciences

Dr Troy Cooper	Dr Hugh Mackay
Dr Helen Kaye	Dr Anastasia Economou

Institute of Educational Technology

Dr Robin Goodfellow	Professor Agnes Kukulska-Hulme

Other Central Units

Dr Liz Marr

3) Associate Lecturers

Dr Isobel Falconer	Dr Walter Pisarski
Mr Bruce Heil	Ms Janet Dyke
Mr Stephen Pattinson	Mr Ronald Macintyre (alternate)

4) Students Appointed by Open University Students Association

Mrs Marianne Cantieri	Mr Jeferson de Oliveira
Mr Josh Brumpton	Dr Sandra Summers
Ms Jacqui Horsburgh	Ms Alison Kingan

5) Academic-related Staff

Ms Pat Atkins	Mr Tony O'Shea-Poon
Dr Christina Lloyd	Ms Clare Riding
Mr Billy Khokhar	Ms Hilary Robertson
Mr Martin Ferns	Ms Gill Smith
Ms Sandi Guest	Mr Jake Yeo
Mr Martin Kenward	Mr Michael Street

6) Co-opted members

Mr John D'Arcy	Mr Rob Humphreys
Mr Christopher Goscomb	Professor Peter Scott
Dr David Knight	Mrs Lynda Brady

In attendance

Mr Allan Schofield, Higher Education Consultancy Group, supporting the Academic Governance Review

Mr David Wilson, Director, Student Support Team Implementation, for Minute 11

Mr Sam Thorne, Media Project Manager, for Minute 11

Professor Patrick McAndrew, Professor of Open Education

APOLOGIES:

1) Ex officio

Professor Hazel Rymer, Dean, Faculty of Science

Appointed

2) Central Academic Units

Faculty of Arts

Dr Bob Wilkinson	Professor Suman Gupta

Faculty of Business and Law

Mr Alessandro Saroli

Faculty of Education and Language Studies

Mr Pete Smith

Faculty of Health and Social Care

Professor Jan Draper

Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology

Dr Leonor Barroca   Dr David Bowers

Professor Joyce Fortune

Faculty of Science

Dr Robert Saunders   Professor Monica Grady

Dr Claire Turner

Faculty of Social Sciences

Dr Richard Heffernan   Mr Matt Staples

Dr Raia Prokhovnik

Institute of Educational Technology

Professor Eileen Scanlon

3) Associate Lecturers

Mrs Frances Chetwynd

5) Academic-related Staff

Miss Karen Bradbury

Mr Mike Christensen

6) Co-opted members

Dr James Miller

In attendance

Mr Andrew Law

1   WELCOME

1.1   The Chair welcomed the new Director, Students, Keith Zimmerman, to his first meeting of the Senate. Dr Christina Lloyd was thanked for her work as Acting Director, Students for the past nine months.

1.2   New associate lecturer (AL) and student members were also welcomed to their first meeting.

2   MINUTES   S-2013-03-M

2.1   With reference to Minute 9.2 b), Clare Riding said that she had not made the comment attributed to her. The Vice-Chancellor said that the comment would stand, but the name would be removed.

Action: GT

2.2   A member said that minute 14.9 f) did not appear to make sense. The Vice-Chancellor said that this would be clarified.

Action: GT

2.3   The Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 5 June 2013, subject to the above amendments.

3   MATTERS ARISING   S-2013-04-01

3.1   Referring to paragraph 4.3, the President, the OU Students Association (OUSA), asked where the information had come from to suggest that students were not interested in coming to Walton Hall, as evidence from the OUSA conference and other campus-based events did not support this assertion. The University Secretary replied that the remark had been made in the context of the suggestion that the Charter Day should become an Open Day. The University's Open Days had not been successful, so the Charter Day should not become one. However, the University should take whatever opportunities there were, including Charter Day, to encourage students to visit Walton Hall.

3.2   Referring to paragraph 11, a member requested clarification on the statement that work to consider the introduction of Advanced Standing could be managed through the Study Experience Programme (SEP) project Academic Principles for Qualifications. The University Secretary said that this referred to a change in the way the University approached credit transfer, which had not yet been worked through into policy. When it had, the policy would have to come back through the SEP and would have an impact on the way the regulations were framed.

3.3   The Senate **noted** the responses to the matters arising.

4   REPORT FROM AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR

4.1   The Vice-Chancellor reported to the Senate on:

a)   the 'go-live' of FutureLearn, which had now attracted over one hundred thousand people for the first presentation of courses;

b)   the launch of the Wolfson OpenScience Laboratory, which would enable students to access a range of real-world and virtual experiments whenever and wherever it suited them best;

c) the government's decision to introduce an exemption for ELQ students[1] studying engineering, technology or computer sciences. In response to a query, the University Secretary said that this had been a ministerial announcement at the Conservative Party conference, which had yet to be turned into policy; the details would not be confirmed until the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) made a formal announcement;

d) the OU's presence at the Labour, Liberal Democrat and Conservative party conferences, and the University's interactions with MPs with higher education (HE) briefs;

e) the award of a Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) grant of £8 million to help the OU engage with employers outside the world of education;

f) a project between the OU and Red Bull Racing to develop a new system to measure tyre wear in real time;

g) the award of two British Academy of Film and Television (BAFTA) Cymru Awards for The Story of Wales, an OU co-production with the BBC;

h) the award of 'best in the region' by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) to Alan Marham and the grounds team at Walton Hall;

i) the award from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) of £17 million to the Consortium of the Humanities and Arts in Southeast England (CHASE), which consisted of the OU (led by Professor Peter Lloyd, Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology), the Courtauld Institute of Art, Goldsmiths – University of London, University of East Anglia (UEA) and the universities of Essex, Kent and Sussex, for 60 postgraduate research studentships in the humanities;

j) the award from AHRC of £2.2 million to the consortium Design Star, which consisted of the OU (led by dr Paul Lawrence, Faculty of Arts), Goldsmiths – University of London and the universities of Loughborough, Reading and Brighton, for postgraduate research studentships in design.

Student Numbers

4.2 The University Secretary reported on the number of students registering for the October module presentations compared with the planning assumptions of the UK Market Strategy, which underpinned the University's financial strategy. In England, the planning assumptions had been exceeded for both new regime students (112%) and transitional students (111%). However, new regime students did not appear to have re-registered for October 2013: October 2012 entrants had re-registered according to expectation, but February 2013 entrants had not. The reasons for this were being investigated.

4.3 The University had reached its target numbers in Wales; in Scotland, the numbers were slightly under target (98%); and in Northern Ireland, the figures were higher than expected (105%).

4.4 The overall postgraduate intake in the UK was below planning assumptions (82%), but enrolments on the NHS Leadership Academy Programme were likely to ensure that the numbers in November reached or exceeded the target.

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[1] Students with a prior Equivalent or Lower Qualification (ELQ), who are currently unable to access financial support such as a student loan

4.5   A member congratulated the University on a successful student recruitment campaign. The challenge now was to retain these students and, as indicated in the Council report (S-2013-04-16), the targets would not be easy to achieve. It would be helpful if an overview of what the University was doing in advance of the recruitment campaign for October 2014 to enable prospective students to make the right choice could be considered by the Senate at its meeting in February 2014. The University Secretary responded that the step-change in the Enquirer Experience Programme was to be launched in March 2014, and he would report on the thinking and progress to date at the next meeting.

Action: AFW

4.6   On behalf of the Senate, the Vice-Chancellor said goodbye to Professor Josie Tayler, Director, Institute of Educational Technology (IET), who was attending her last meeting of the Senate before retiring from the University; and welcomed Professor Patrick McAndrew, who would be acting in the role for the immediate future.

5   STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE   S-2013-04-02

The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed Minutes from the meeting held on 3 July 2013 (SPRC-2013-03-M);

6   QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE   S-2013-04-03A & B

The Senate **noted** the reports of the meetings of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) held on 16 May and 2 July 2013.

7   RESEARCH COMMITTEE   S-2013-04-04

7.1   A member asked whether there were any restrictions to using non-UK nationals as external examiners as a result of the UK Border Agency (UKBA) requirements. The University Secretary said that the UKBA required employers to assure themselves that people had the right to stay and work in the UK. It was important that the University continued to employ external examiners, but this had to be managed appropriately. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Scholarship and Quality) (PVC-RSQ) said that improvements had been made to the practical arrangements for external examiners, which ensured that any risk was managed

7.2   Another member asked whether further information on the outcomes of the 'Student Perception of Research' survey were available. The PVC (RSQ) said that the pilot survey had produced some interesting results, but he would prefer to have wider feedback from the larger survey now underway before reporting on the outcomes.

7.3   Referring to the review of the postgraduate curriculum a member commented that some faculties were still unable to provide information about what would be on offer or within what timeframe. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (PVC-A) said that a report to the Curriculum and Validation Committee (CVC) meeting in July had said that the development of an online postgraduate qualification-based registration facility was still in progress. The Vice-Chancellor said a progress report would be provided in the Matters Arising paper for the next meeting.

Action: PVC (A)

7.4   The Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Research Committee (RC) held on 3 July 2013.

| 8 | **CURRICULUM AND VALIDATION COMMITTEE** | S-2013-04-05 |

The Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Curriculum and Validation Committee (CVC) held on 9 July 2013.

| 9 | **LEARNING TEACHING AND STUDENT SUPPORT COMMITTEE** | S-2013-04-06 |

9.1 A member asked whether the reference to "renewed focus and emphasis on assessment" (para 1) was in connection with work already in progress or with a new project. The PVC (LT) said that there had already been a focus on assessment within the Study Experience Programme (SEP) and the PVC (LT) office was looking at developing a new assessment policy which would complement the SEP work, particularly on Project Retain and the new assessment principles.

9.2 Referring to Project Retain (para 13) a member commented that more detail was required on the recommendations. The PVC (LT) responded that an implementation plan was in progress under the SEP project and welcomed input on the operational specifics.

9.3 A student member commented that it was essential that module websites and calendars were available in good time for the module start. The Vice-Chancellor said that the PVC (LT), PVC (A) and Director, Students would provide a response to the next meeting.

Action: PVC (LT)/PVC (A)/Dir, S

9.4 Referring to the new deferral and withdrawal policy allowing students to change their module after its start date (para 31), a member commented that this should not mean that they could do so without talking to an advisor. Dr Christina Lloyd, Director, Teaching and Learner Support, confirmed that if a student wanted to change their module, this would not happen automatically, but on the basis of a discussion with an advisor or equivalent. Another member asked whether the policy applied to changes to qualifications. Returns to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the fulfilment of qualification targets were on the basis of students completing their study goal; what was the mechanism for dealing with an approved change to that study goal? Lynda Brady, Director of Learner Support Services, confirmed that the deferral and withdrawal policy covered any change that a student wished to make. Changes that students made to modules and qualifications would be monitored closely as part of the retention project. The University Secretary said that he did not know how the HESA returns were being managed, but an answer would be provided to the next meeting.

Action: AFW

9.5 The Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee (LTSSC) held on 15 July 2013.

| 10 | **SENATE MEMBERSHIP PANEL** | S-2013-04-07 |

The Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Senate Membership Panel (SMP) held on 24 June 2013.

| 11 | **STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE** | S-2013-04-08 |

11.1 The PVC (A) introduced the paper, which confirmed that work was on track for Student Support Teams (SSTs) to 'go live' on 3 February 2014 thanks to Faculty and Student Services staff, under the effective leadership of Dr Christina Lloyd. Dr Lloyd said that the introduction of SSTs was not changing what the OU did in support of students and

learning, but how it was done. It was hoped that this would contribute to an improvement in student retention.

11.2   A member said it had been an extraordinary project, with positive spirit, good communications and unprecedented cross-unit working. Referring to the pilot in his region, another member said that the presence of Student Services staff within the Faculty had provided a much more coherent and integrated student experience. A Faculty member agreed that the pilots had been very positive. Another member said that it was important not to lose sight of the excellent job already being done by staff in nations and regions to provide information, advice and guidance (IAG) to students; SSTs would improve on something that was already good.

11.3   A member observed that the paper suggested that the project was reaching a conclusion and that 'business as usual' would take place after 3 February 2014. However, this was not the case and a comparison of paragraphs 9 and 13 indicated a number of tensions. It was hoped that the implementation project would not be wound up in February and that progress reports would continue to come back to the Senate. Dr Lloyd responded that the report was intended to provide a flavour of the University's readiness to 'go live' with SSTs in February 2014. There were some issues that were being addressed and a judgement would be made nearer the time as to whether the University was ready; the current analysis suggested that it would be. It was intended to allow SSTs to evolve and to learn from experience; the implementation project team would remain in place at least until July 2014.

11.4   A member noted that the involvement of ALs was important for the seamless experience that students were to have through SSTs. In some areas, ALs were being involved and kept informed; however, this approach was not consistent across all faculties. In response it was noted that David Wilson, the Director of the SST implementation, had been meeting with Deans on a one-to-one basis in order to discuss the support that Student Services could provide and to make sure ALs were consistently briefed.

11.5   A member suggested the period February 2014 to October 2014, intended as a period of limited implementation, could also provide the opportunity for ALs to feedback. Dr Lloyd welcomed the suggestion. There was a plan to evaluate the process of implementation of SSTs, which would also consider the quality enhancement processes that should be in place when the teams reached 'steady state'. However, these two activities had to be bridged and the University needed to create a mechanism to make it happen.

11.6   Another member commented that faculties had to be able to design their curriculum to best suit their needs, so the system should be sufficient flexible to ensure that inappropriate ways of working were not imposed. Dr Lloyd noted there was a generic framework for SSTs, but it did include the concept of tailoring. This would enable faculties to engage with Student Services to deliver what was right for their curriculum and their students.

11.7   A member asked whether processes were in place to ensure a smooth transition for students with complex needs who had become familiar with particular staff in their regional centres. Lynda Brady said that the senior managers in each of the 13 locations had already identified the need for every location to specify those students with particular complex needs and to ensure that there was a bespoke process of handover for them.

11.8   Referring to responsibilities for the Open Programme on SSTs, a member said that the identification of a named person was extremely variable and some faculties were unable to identify such a person. Dr Lloyd noted that Professor Peter Taylor, who was responsible for the Open Programme, had recently presented the arrangements in place for the Open Degree and named the individuals who had been identified as leads in each SST. A role description had been drafted for these individuals, as well as some support material, and they would meet regularly as a virtual team to ensure continuity of support

for Open Degree students. A paper outlining these arrangements could be provided to provide students with the necessary assurances.

Action: Dir, S

11.9　Referring to the section of the paper on risk (para 13), members asked what action was being taken to address those flagged as 'amber', what was meant by "the risk is low because the latest forecast student numbers suggest that there will be sufficient resource available", and what arrangements were in place to ensure the student experience was not detrimentally impacted during initial implementation. In response, Dr Lloyd said that the distribution of SSTs had been significantly related to the capacity of staff in each location, but, student numbers now suggested that there was greater capacity than had originally been envisaged, that a decision would need to be taken by Christmas 2013 if the University was not confident it could 'go live' in February 2014, and that it might be possible to run a session with student representatives to provide them with further information on the specific procedures and structures being put in place to support students.

Action: Dir, S

11.10　A member asked what provision had been made for the first 6 – 12 month period to enable adjustments to be made to meet user requirements, particularly from a system perspective, and whether there would be capacity to respond. Dr Lloyd said discussions were on-going with colleagues in IT regarding phase 3 or 'post go live' developments, some of which were about maintaining and improving the current system from day one.

11.11　A member noted that SSTs were about more than improving administrative systems, but were intended to provide the best possible student experience. Dr Lloyd agreed that the project was about integrating learning and student support and that this could have been given more emphasis in the paper.

11.12　A member observed that SSTs would be the focus of knowledge about what is required for a student to successfully complete a programme of study. However, clarification was necessary with regard to the information, advice and guidance being provided in the lead up to student registration on a qualification. This should be covered by the University Secretary's report to the Senate in February 2014, even if it was work in progress.

Action: AFW

11.13　The Senate **noted**:

a)　that work was on track for 'go live' on 3 February 2014;

b)　the main risks to successful implementation and how these were being managed.

12　QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　**S-2013-04-09**

12.1　The PVC (RSQ) introduced the second annual report from QAEC. The report related to the 2012/13 committee year and aimed to assure the Senate that the University's quality processes were being effectively managed. This year the report had also been designed to meet the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) requirement for a statement of assurance, which the Senate were being asked to endorse.

12.2　A member reported that the Quality Office had flagged a concern about the way in which the OU quality-assured its partnerships with Further Education (FE) colleges in Scotland, where OU modules were taught within a college by its own staff with staff tutor support from the OU. An AL member, who had been involved in setting up such a partnership, said that the members of staff delivering in these colleges were recruited according to

normal practice, and operated and were monitored under the normal quality procedures. The only real difference was the greater amount of face-to-face contact that they had with students. The PVC (RSQ) was not aware of any issue regarding partnerships with Scottish FE colleges being raised with QAEC, but it would be referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

Action: PVC (RSQ)

12.3   With reference to the improvement in student satisfaction with academic support indicated in the 2012 NSS (National Student Survey) results (para 25), an AL member noted that it was important to remember how vital ALs and their work were in maintaining quality. The PVC (LT) said that students were looking at academic support in a broad context covering career development, personal development planning (PDP) and other complementary aspects of the curriculum. The qualitative data was providing a richer picture of what students were looking for and this was informing some of the OU's developments, particularly around employability and PDP.

12.4   The reference to the positive impact of AL involvement (para 15) was welcomed; but the reason for monitoring PPR (Periodic Programme Reviews) reports in this context required clarification. The PVC (RSQ) explained that the issue of AL engagement and development was frequently raised in PPR reports. In future, the Quality Office would try to identify any themes and recurring patterns arising through the quality assurance process in order to inform University activity with regard to AL development.

12.5   Referring to online communications, a student member asked if it would be possible for students to receive an update on the MyOU project and a reaffirmation that the need for student involvement was essential. The PVC (LT) said that she would ensure that students were updated on the MyOU project as soon as possible.

Action: PVC (LT)

12.6   Referring to Periodic Programme Reviews (PPRs), the OUSA President commented that it was essential that students were engaged with the panels in order to provide the student view. Another member asked if there was opportunity to extract information from PPRs that would inform and shape the postgraduate experience. The PVC (RSQ) said that student involvement with PPRs was an area of continuing dialogue and the contributions made by students were appreciated; and that the suggestion on extracting data to inform the postgraduate experience was useful. Both comments would be referred back to the Committee.

Action: PVC (RSQ)

12.7   A member asked whether the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency) would be taking an interest in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The Chair said that the QAA had run their first conference on MOOCs with the sector; the general impression had been that if it was not credit bearing then it would not come under the Code.

12.8   Further comments were made on the need to take account of professional and work-based programmes in decisions affecting OU systems and processes; and of the amount of work that went into quality assurance within a programme, which meant that the time for quality enhancement was curtailed.

12.9   The Senate **endorsed** the statement of assurance required by the Scottish Funding Council and contained in paragraph 30 of the paper.

13   COMMITTEE MATTERS   S-2013-04-10

The Senate

a)   **approved** the recommendations for the constitutional changes to the following committees arising from the annual effectiveness review (AER):

   i)   Strategic Planning and Resources Committee (Appendix 1);

   ii)   Validation Committee (Appendix 2);

   iii)   Research Committee (Appendix 3)

   iv)   Human Research Ethics Committee (Appendix 4)

   v)   Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (Appendix 5)

b)   **noted** the matters for report set out in paragraphs 10 and 11 of the paper.

14   AWARD OF THE TITLE OF EMERITUS PROFESSOR   S-2013-04-11

The Senate **approved** the recommendations from the Chair and Readership Subcommittee that the title Emeritus Professor be awarded to:

a)   Professor Stephen Potter

b)   Professor Hugh Robinson

c)   Professor Martin Woodhead

d)   Professor Josie Taylor

e)   Professor James Coleman

f)   Professor Frank Banks

g)   Professor Joan Swann

15   EMERITUS PROFESSOR PROCEDURES   S-2013-04-12

15.1   With regard to the implementation of the new procedures, the Dean and Director, Faculty of Arts, observed that the next submission deadline was 21 October 2013, so cases would have been made already using the current procedures. With this in mind, should implementation be immediate or for the next round of submissions due in February 2014? The PVC (RSQ) responded that it would be sensible to approve the implementation of the new procedures for the next round of submissions. The Chair supported this proposal.

15.2   The Senate **approved** the revised procedures for the award of the title of Emeritus Professor, with implementation coming into effect for submissions to be made in February 2014.

16   INTERNATIONAL TUITION MODEL UPDATE   S-2013-04-13

16.1   Several members raised issues around the statement "Current international students … are usually placed into international-only tutor groups" (para 2). Mixed groups were used and the briefing note regarding tutor-student allocation (TSA) for international students suggested "an entirely pragmatic approach to how to allocate international students, either mixed in with UK students or as a separate group". The inclusion of international students in a group was a good way of keeping the group going.

16.2 The PVC (LT) responded that mixed groups were not an exception and there was nothing in the policy that would prevent them from continuing. The wording of the policy would be amended to clarify the situation.

16.3 The Senate **noted** that the existing policy, where international students (including those recruited through the Global Direct website) were in international-only and/or mixed tutor groups, continues until 2014J presentations while the model is appraised.

17 SENATE ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW S-2013-04-14

17.1 A student member noted that there had been no survey of members this year, which was disappointing as some new student members had felt unable to contribute last time and that the Academic Governance Review would go ahead without the most up to date information; and that some student members had interpreted paragraph 14 as meaning there were concerns about the timing and length of the AL and OUSA Senate Reference Group (SRG) meetings. This was not the case, but the OUSA SRG did have an on-going concern about the timeliness of papers.

17.2 The University Secretary responded that the 2011/12 AER and self-assessment questionnaire had been late (January) and the intention had been to conduct it before the main summer holiday period (June/July) in future. However, as extensive consultation would be taking place in respect of the AGR, it had been considered too soon to conduct another survey after 6 months. The issue of late papers would be noted. There had been comments from some members about the timing of the Senate meetings, but changing the timing would pose problems for the Senate Reference Groups.

17.3 The Senate **noted:**

a) the report on the annual effectiveness reviews of the Senate substructure committees for the period September 2012 until August 2013;

b) that a more in-depth review of the effectiveness of the Senate substructure will be conducted during the Academic Governance Review, which commenced in September 2013.

18 SENATE SUBSTRUCTURE ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW S-2013-04-15

18.1 A member commented that the annual effectiveness review (AER) for the Senate Membership Panel (SMP) had highlighted some interesting issues and asked for clarification on the suggestion that the number of Senate members that could be considered for any given vacancy was not large and also how the Panel ensured an open and transparent approach to finding candidates for forthcoming vacancies.

18.2 Members of SMP responded that matching a vacancy to a suitable Senate member could be difficult when trying to provide the range of skills and experience to meet the needs of a committee. Either the committee already had a member with the same expertise, or the potential candidate was already busy on other committees. If the AGR were to reduce the size of the Senate, but not that of the substructure, it would become more difficult to populate vacancies on subcommittees. Whilst the Panel was small its members were widely based. Business was conducted in an open manner, using face-to-face meetings when timely and an e-forum. If there were limited expressions of interest in a particular vacancy, the Panel sought advice and nominations from faculties and committee chairs as required and considered Senate members statements before reaching a decision.

18.3 Referring to the AER for the Faculty of Science, a member observed that the greater integration of Student Services staff into faculties should be formally recognised through the faculty and programme committee structure.

18.4   The Senate **noted:**

    a)   the report on its effectiveness for the period September 2012 until August 2013;

    b)   that a more in-depth review of the effectiveness of the Senate will be conducted during the Academic Governance Review, which commenced in September 2013.

19   THE COUNCIL   **S-2013-04-16**

19.1   Referring to the measure of student retention from Year 1 to Year 2 (para 1), a member said that this language could be ambiguous and sought clarification that it referred to students moving from the first year to the second year regardless of the amount of content studied in that year. The PVC (A) confirmed that this was the case, as progression from the first year of study was seen to be a critical to student retention. The member responded that it was essential that students received the right information, advice and guidance to ensure that they were not set up to fail.

19.2   The Senate **noted** the report on matters discussed at the meeting of the Council held on 16 July 2013.

20   ACTION BY THE CHAIR   **S-2013-04-17**

    The Senate **noted** the report on action taken by the Chair since the last meeting of the Senate, which included appointments to Academic Staff Promotions Committee, Academic Staff Promotions Appeals Committee, LTSSC and Research Committee.

21   FUTURE ITEMS OF BUSINESS   **S-2013-04-18**

21.1   A member asked when, in the light of the UK Market Strategy Refresh and other developments around the University, the Senate might expect to consider the Curriculum Strategy. The Chair said that an update would be included in the Matters Arising paper in February 2014.

Action: PVC (A)

21.2   The Senate **noted** the potential items for the agenda for the Senate meeting on 5 February 2014.

22   DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

    Meetings will be held on the following dates:

    a)   Wednesday 5 February 2014
    b)   Wednesday 2 April 2014 (tbc)
    c)   Wednesday 11 June 2014

Fraser Woodburn
Secretary to the Committee

Julie Tayler
Working Secretary to the Committee
Email: Julie.Tayler@open.ac.uk
Tel: 01908 332729

Attachments:

S-2013-04-M Appendix 1   Strategic Planning and Resources Committee
S-2013-04-M Appendix 2   Validation Committee
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S-2013-04-M Appendix 5   Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee

Key:

GT   Governance Team
AFW   Fraser Woodburn
PVC(A)   Professor Musa Mihsein
PVC(LT)   Professor Belinda Tynan
Dir, S   Keith Zimmerman
PVC(RSQ) Professor Tim Blackman

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~28.02.2012~~16.10.2013

Terms of Reference

1. To recommend, for approval by the Council, the broad strategy and priorities for the University having, where appropriate, taken account of the view of the Senate.

2. To approve proposals for strategically significant developments and business opportunities ~~and~~ to ensure that ~~the~~ proposals are viable ~~in terms of the staff and non-staff resource available to support them.~~having, where appropriate, taken into account of the view of the Senate.

3. ~~To advise the Senate of the financial and planning assumptions influencing the academic plans and priorities of the University~~

3̶4̶. To review~~recommend, for approval by the Council,~~ the allocation of resources to inform future strategy.

4̶5̶. To recommend for approval by the Council University Fee and Financial Support Strategy and guidelines, and subsequently to approve the University fees on behalf of the Council.

5̶6̶. To review progress against strategic priorities and to advise the Council on the sustainability of the institution.

6̶7̶. To recommend, for approval by the Council, the redundancy of:

   a) academic-related staff, where the recommendation is agreed by SPRC;

   b) academic staff, where the recommendation is agreed by a redundancy subcommittee of SPRC (Mode of Operation 6 sets out the membership for this academic staff redundancy committee).

7̶8̶. To exercise such powers as may be delegated to the Committee by the Council or the Senate.

Membership

1. The Pro-Chancellor, Chair, *ex officio*.

2. The Vice Chancellor, Deputy Chair, *ex officio*.

3. The Treasurer, *ex officio*.

4. A dean, to be nominated by the deans.

5. Two members of the Council, who shall not be members of staff or students of the University, appointed by the Council.

6. Three members of the Senate, elected by the Senate.

In Attendance

7.   The Pro-Vice-Chancellors.

8.   The University Secretary.

9.   The Director, Students.

10.   The Chief Information Officer.

11.   The Commercial Director.

12.   The Finance Director.

13.   The Director of Strategy

Mode of Operation

1.   The Committee is a joint committee of the Council and the Senate and will report to the Council and the Senate as appropriate. Where issues being considered by the Committee require the approval of the Council, the Committee will, where appropriate, take account of the views of the Senate in making its recommendations.

2.   Subject to the University's rules on the confidentiality of committee business, the Committee shall take appropriate steps to keep members of the University informed about its work.

3.   The Committee shall normally meet three times a year.

4.   The Committee shall be quorate if three members, of whom at least one from categories 1, 3 or 5 are present.

5.   The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee shall have executive authority to act on its behalf in consultation (as appropriate) with other university officers and with the Secretary of the Committee.

6.   The academic staff redundancy committee is a Council-appointed subcommittee of SPRC and will meet when necessary. Its membership consists of the Vice-Chancellor or nominee from the University Executive as Chair, two lay members of the Council and two members of academic staff from Senate, drawn from the membership of, or those in attendance at, SPRC.

Secretary: A member of the University Secretary's Office

VALIDATION COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~06.02~~16.10.2013

Purpose

On behalf of the Curriculum and Validation Committee (CVC), to recommend policy on the approval of institutions and the validation and review of programmes, to propose the terms for the approval and review of specific institutions, and to validate and re-validate specific awards offered by such institutions.

Terms of Reference

Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities

1. To approve the validation and re-validation of awards offered by associated and partner institutions, taking into account the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) requirements relating to programme specifications, learning outcomes and subject benchmarking, and taking account of the University's taught awards.

2. To approve the imposition of sanctions on associated and partner institutions where the quality and standards of an award are at risk, including the approval of the close of entry to a validated award.

Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance

3. To monitor the appointment of external examiners at each meeting and to monitor the number of associated and partner institutions, the number of re-approvals, the number of validated awards and applications for re-validation, and student numbers on the University's validated awards and to receive an annual report on these items.

4. To monitor, in consultation with the Curriculum Partnerships Committee, the process for the annual review of validated awards, requiring evidence from associated and partner institutions of effective management of the quality of provision and of the academic standards, reporting to the CVC on the overall progression and completion statistics and referring any major issues arising from the reports to the CVC.

5. To monitor compliance with any conditions arising from the approval or re-approval of institutions, and the validation, re-validation or review of individual awards.

Assuring quality and standards, including approving regulations

6. To maintain and monitor the University's procedures for the approval of institutions as suitable for the conduct of programmes leading to Open University awards by validation or other means of approval, ensuring that the quality of learning opportunities and student support provided by the institution meet the University's standards.

7. To maintain and monitor the University's procedures for the validation and review of programmes, with reference to the current guidance from the QAA.

8. To maintain and monitor the procedures for the external examination of validated awards.

9. To keep under review the handbook for the University's validated awards, having regard to the relationships between such awards, their comparability with the University's taught qualifications and the relevant national qualifications frameworks.

10. To make recommendations to the Curriculum and Validation Committee for new or revised regulations for the University's validated awards.

Advising other governance bodies or management

11. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the approval of institutions, their re-approval and the terms of their approved status and to make recommendations to the CVC on their approval.

12. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the termination of the approval of an institution, ensuring that commitments to continuing students are protected to the completion of their studies, and to make recommendations to CVC on the termination of the approval.

Making governance arrangements e.g. appointing to other committees

13. To appoint one member of VALC to serve as a member of Curriculum Partnerships Committee.

Matters of public record e.g. ratifying appointments of staff or external examiners

None.

Judicial: deciding individual cases

14. To delegate to the Director of the Centre for the Inclusion and Collaborative Partnerships the responsibility for resolving complaints and appeals, where a partner institution's own procedures have been exhausted, on matters relating to programmes of study, awards, and validation and review processes, in accordance with procedures approved by the Senate.

Membership

1. A Chair appointed by the Curriculum and Validation Committee

2. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

3~2~. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) or nominee.

4~3~. One nominee of the Director, Students

5~4~. The Director, Centre for Inclusion and Collaborative Partnerships

6. The Commercial Director, or nominee

7~5~. The Head of Quality

8~6~. ~Two~ One members having experience in appropriate branches of industry or commerce or in appropriate professions, including members with experience in the field of occupational standards.

9~7~. Three members from ~partner~ approved institutions of The Open University, to include one student.

108. One representative of each of the central academic units of the University, normally at associate dean level.

119. ~~Three~~ Two members from other higher education establishments having suitable experience, for example of ensuring standards and quality assurance through peer validation.

1210. One representative appointed by the Curriculum Partnerships Committee who is a member of that Committee.

1311. Such other members as may be appointed by the Curriculum and Validation Committee up to a maximum of three.

1412. Such others as the Committee may co-opt up to a maximum of three, to include members with expertise in HE issues including foundation degrees.

Members in Categories ~~8~~ 6 to ~~11~~ 9 to be appointed by the Chair of the Curriculum and Validation Committee on the advice of officers.

Secretary

Mode of Operation

1. The Committee shall meet as and when required, and shall report at least annually to the Curriculum and Validation Committee.

2. The Chair of the Committee shall have executive authority to act on its behalf in consultation with its Secretary.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~17.10.2012~~16.10.2013

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Purpose

The Research Committee is responsible to the Senate for strategy, policy and standards relating to research, research degrees and higher doctorates in the University.

Terms of Reference

Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities

1.   To maintain and promote the University's strategy on research, in consultation with central academic unit committees, and to recommend the strategy to the Senate for approval.

2.   To determine policies and guidelines within the agreed strategy for research, making recommendations to the Senate in cases which fall outside these limits. Matters of strategy and policy relating to research degrees and higher doctorates are delegated to Research Degrees Committee.

3.   To oversee the processes for preparation approval and review of the research aspects of central academic unit plans, encouraging collaboration between central academic units and sub-units in their research activities.

Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance

4.   To monitor the implementation and operation of policy in all matter within the Committee's remit.

5.   To contribute to the Senate's annual academic review of the University.

Assuring Quality and Standards, including approving regulations

6.   To ensure that standards are set for research activities within the context of external research quality monitoring.

7.   Responsibility for the recruitment, admission, registration, supervision and progress of research students, and for research degree and higher doctorate examinations is delegated to the Research Degrees Committee.

8.   The approval of recommendations of examiners for research degrees and higher doctorates and the award of research degrees and higher doctorates is delegated to the Research Degrees Examination Result Approval Committee.

9.   To approve applications from organisations wishing to become affiliated research centres after guidance and recommendation from the Research Degrees Committee.

Advising other governance bodies or management

10. To advise the Senate, the Strategic Planning and Resources Committee and Central Academic Unit (CAU) Committees on all aspects of the development of research, and research degree activities in the University, including resources and priorities for strategic development.

Making governance arrangements e.g. appointing to other committees

11. To appoint the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Research Degrees Committee.

12. To appoint the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee.

13. To appoint the regionally/nationally-based Senate representative of the Research Committee to the Research Degrees Committee.

Matters of public record e.g. ratifying appointments of staff or external

None

Judicial: deciding individual cases

None

Membership

1. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Scholarship and Quality), Chair, *ex officio*.

2. The relevant associate deans or equivalent of faculties, *ex officio*.

3. A representative of the Knowledge Media Institute (KMi), nominated by the Director of KMi.

4. The Directors of the Research Centres, *ex officio*.

5. The Chair of the Affiliated Research Centres Management Group, *ex officio*

6. The Chairs of any committees reporting to the Committee.

7. Four representatives of the Senate, elected by the Senate, of whom at least one shall be a member of regionally/nationally-based staff.

8. One registered full-time research student and one registered part-time external student, appointed by the Open University Students Association.

9. Two members of the research staff elected by and from such staff.

10. A representative from an affiliated research centre.

11. The Research School Academic Co-ordinator, *ex officio*.

12. A Dean or Director, to be nominated by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

13. Such others as the Committee may co-opt up to a maximum of four.

Secretary

Mode of Operation

1. The Committee shall meet in accordance with the University's Committee Timetable, not less than three times a year, and on such other occasions in the year as have been approved by the Senate. It shall report to each meeting of the Senate.

2. It shall be permitted to delegate tasks to a duly constituted executive committee or committees of itself; or to specific individuals; and may make rules relating to its own procedure, but should not further delegate powers delegated by the Senate without the Senate's agreement.

3. The Committee should designate a Deputy Chair. The Chair shall have executive authority to act on behalf of the Committee and any of its executive committees, in consultation with any body designated to assist in this capacity by the Committee.

4. The Committee shall review each year according to agreed University criteria how efficiently, effectively and economically it is working in respect of participation, the conduct of business and production of high quality decisions, the schedule of the review to allow for implementation of improvements from the beginning of the next committee year.

5. The Committee shall ensure that strategies, policies plans and priorities within its remit are compliant with relevant University-wide policies implemented or being developed, particularly those relating to equal opportunities, environmental management and health and safety.

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED 01.08.2012 16.10.2013

Purpose

On behalf of the Research Committee to advise on ethics considerations relating to all Open University research involving investigations on human participants or materials, other than research that is deemed to be 'no risk', and to grant or withhold approval for such research proposals.

Terms of Reference

Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities

1.   To provide guidance to researchers on the need for ethical scrutiny through the publication of internal guidelines, advice on external ethical documentation and dissemination of information on best practice.

2.   To develop a code of practice on investigations involving humans and human materials.

Monitoring and reviewing actions and institutional performance

3.   To keep under review its terms of reference to take into account the developing needs of the research community, and national and international research ethics review standards and legislation.

Assuring quality and standards, including approving regulations

4.   To ensure institutional compliance with national guidelines and legislative requirements and to provide guidance to University officers on matters of compliance.

Advising other governance bodies or management

5.   To advise all levels of the University on ethical considerations relating to any research which involves investigations on humans.

Matters of public record e.g. ratifying appointments of staff or external examiners

6.   To operate in a manner that is consistent with relevant national and legislative guidelines concerning the scrutiny and confidentiality of individuals and projects without adversely affecting institutional commitment to transparency and openness.

Judicial: deciding individual cases

7.   To grant or withhold approval of proposals for research involving human participants or materials. [Note that if approval of a proposal is withheld the applicant may lodge an appeal, in the first instance with the HREC (Human Research Ethics Committee) and then if the appeal is not settled to the applicant's satisfaction, to the Research Committee.]

Membership

1. Five external members appointed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Scholarship and Quality), to include:

    a)   a medical practitioner

    b)   a researcher from a research institution other than The Open University

    c)   a lay person

    d)   a representative from a corporate body

    e)   ~~a person~~up to two people with specific ethics expertise

2. The Chair of the Research Committee, *ex officio*, or nominee

3. Two members nominated by the Research Committee

4. One registered research student appointed by the Open University Students' Association

5. Up to eight members co-opted by the Committee so as to cover any aspect, professional, scientific or ethical, of a research proposal which lies beyond the expertise of existing members.

Note 1: The Chair and Deputy Chair shall be appointed by the Research Committee

Note 2: At least one member of the Committee shall have expertise in psychological research

Mode of Operation

1. The Committee shall meet as and when required and shall report to the Research Committee at least annually.

2. The Chair, and by delegation the Deputy Chair, shall have executive authority to act on the Committee's behalf, in consultation with other members of the committee, to consider research proposals in between meetings.

3. A HREC Review Panel comprising the Chair, two internal members and one external member will work on a rota basis, consider and approve research applications via email.

4. The Committee shall seek the advice of specialist referees so as to cover any aspect, professional, scientific, or ethical, of a research proposal which lies beyond the expertise of existing members

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED 06.02.201316.10.2013

Purpose

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee assures the Senate that quality assurance and enhancement arrangements are appropriately established and implemented, and oversees the University's engagement with external quality assurance processes.

Terms of Reference

Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities

1. To maintain the University's quality assurance and quality enhancement strategy for approval by the Senate, to ensure that a strategic approach to quality is maintained and cross-University quality-related issues are properly addressed and satisfactorily resolved; and to assure the Senate accordingly.

Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance

2. To approve and review the University's arrangements for the management of quality assurance and enhancement, including use of student monitoring and feedback, in accordance with University policy and in the context of external requirements and guidelines.

3. To contribute to the quality assurance frameworks for Higher Education.

4. To oversee the preparation for, and the institutional organisation of, external quality assurance processes, including reviews by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and other Public and Statutory Bodies.

5. To approve plans for follow-up action to external quality assurance and enhancement processes and internal periodic review, and reports on the implementation and effectiveness of measures to address recommendations.

Assuring Quality and Standards, including approving regulations

Terms of reference 2 to 5 above are relevant to this core function.

Advising other governance bodies or management

6. To advise appropriate University committees on matters relating to academic quality.

7. To facilitateoversee arrangements for the exchange of best practice on quality assurance and enhancement matters between units of the University and between the University and its accredited and associated institutions, and affiliated research centres.

Membership

1. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Scholarship and Quality), Chair, ex officio.

2. The Head of Quality, *ex officio*.

3. Six members appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the Senate Membership Panel, of whom at least four shall be members of academic units (to include at least two centrally-based academics) and one external to the University. At least one of the internal members should be regionally/nationally-based. These members shall normally serve for a period of four years.

4. One registered student, appointed by the Open University Students' Association.

Mode of Operation

1 The Committee shall meet in accordance with the University's Committee Timetable, not less than three times a year, and on such other occasions in the year as have been approved by the Senate. It shall report to each meeting of the Senate.

2 It shall be permitted to delegate tasks to a duly constituted executive committee or committees of itself; or to specific individuals; and may make rules relating to its own procedure, but should not further delegate powers delegated by the Senate without the Senate's agreement.

3 The Committee should designate a Deputy Chair. The Chair shall have executive authority to act on behalf of the Committee and of its executive committees, in consultation with anybody designated to assist in this capacity by the Committee.

4. The Committee shall review each year according to agreed University criteria how efficiently, effectively and economically it is working in respect of participation, the conduct of business and production of high quality decisions, the schedule of the review to allow for implementation of improvements from the beginning of the next committee year.

5. The Committee shall ensure that strategies, policies, plans and priorities within its remit are compliant with relevant University-wide policies implemented or being developed, particularly those relating to equal opportunities, environmental management and health and safety.

6. The Chair shall have executive authority to act on the Committee's behalf, in consultation with the Secretary.