

THE SENATE

Minutes

This paper presents the confirmed Minutes of the last meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 18 April 2018 at The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes.

The Senate is **approved** these Minutes as a correct record of the meeting on 20 June 2018 subject to the inclusion of an amendment to Minute 6.13.

Keith Zimmerman
University Secretary

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THE SENATE

Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 18 April 2018
in the Hub Theatre, The Open University, Walton Hall

PRESENT:

1) Ex officio

Professor Mary Kellett	Vice-Chancellor (Acting)
Professor Hazel Rymer	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching Innovation)
Professor Kevin Hetherington	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Academic Strategy)
Mr Ian Fribbance	Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Professor Josie Fraser	Executive Dean, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
Professor Patrick McAndrew	Learning and Teaching Innovation Director of Research
Ms Rosie Jones	Director of Library Services
Mr Chris Rooke	Learning and Teaching Innovation Director of Translation

Appointed

2) Central Academic Units

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

Dr Cristina Chimisso	Dr Elaine Moohan
Dr Naoko Yamagata	Professor John Wolffe
Professor Ole Grell	Dr Helen Kaye
Dr Jovan Byford	Dr Troy Cooper
Dr Deborah Drake	Dr Richard Heffernan
Dr Anastasia Economou (remote)	
Dr Daniel McCulloch	

Faculty of Business & Law (FBL)

Miss Carol Howells	Mr Mike Phillips
Dr Kristen Reid	Dr Devendra Kodwani
Dr Sharon Slade	

Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

Dr John Baxter	Professor David Rothery
Dr Janet Haresnape	Mrs Diane Butler
Professor Hilary MacQueen	Professor Claire Turner
Dr David Bowers	Dr Leonor Barroca
Dr Rachel Hilliam	Dr Stephen Burnley

Professor Andy Lane
Dr Toby O'Neil
Mr Brendan Quinn
Dr Magnus Ramage

Dr Jon Hall
Dr Hayley Ryder
Dr Gareth Williams
Dr Ann Walshe

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS)

Ms Annie Eardley (remote)
Dr Uwe Baumann
Mrs Anna Comas-Quinn
Professor Jan Draper
Mr Mick McCormick (remote)
Dr Jackie Watts

Ms Tyrrell Golding
Dr Elodie Vialleton
Professor Regine Hampel
Dr Aravinda Guntupalli
Dr Verena Waights
Dr Indra Sinka

Learning and Teaching Innovation (LTI) (Academic)

Mr Chris Edwards
Dr Anne Adams

Professor Eileen Scanlon (remote)

Other Central Units

Dr Liz Marr

3) Associate Lecturers

Mrs Frances Chetwynd
Dr Clare Spencer
Dr Hilary Partridge
Mr Tim Parry

Dr Fiona Aiken
Mr David Knowles
Dr Walter Pisarski

4) Students Appointed by Open University Students Association

Mrs Nicola Simpson
Ms Lorraine Adams
Miss Claire Smith

Mr Rory Powell
Mr Peter Cowan (alternate)
Dr Barbara Tarling

5) Academic-related Staff

Mr Mike Innes
Mr Michael Street
Ms Pat Atkins
Mrs Joanne Smythe
Mr Billy Khokhar
Miss Barbara Poniatowska
Mrs Clare Ikin

Mr Jake Yeo
Mr Denzil DeSouza
Ms Elaine Walker
Mr Phil Berry
Mrs Maria Crisu
Mrs Selena Killick
Mrs Kate Signorini

6) Co-opted members

Mr Christopher Turner
Mr John D'Arcy
Ms Susan Stewart
Mrs Louise Casella

Dr David Knight
Mr Tony O'Shea-Poon
Mrs Mary Kirby

In attendance

Mr Keith Zimmerman, University Secretary
Mrs Dawn Turpin, Head of Governance
Mr Jonathan Wylie, Chief Operating Officer (Acting)
Ms Sue Thomas, Senior Manager, Governance
Miss Teresa Coyle, Manager, Governance

Members of the Council in attendance

Mr Richard Gillingwater, Chair and Pro-Chancellor
Ms Mary Curnock Cook
Ms Ruth Girardet
Ms Anna Henderson
Dr Greg Walker
Mr Bob Spedding
Mrs Caroline Stockmann
Ms Sue Unerman

Members of the Senate also attending as members of the Council

Dr John Baxter	Mrs Frances Chetwynd
Mr John D'Arcy	Professor Jan Draper
Professor Mary Kellett	Mrs Nicola Simpson
Dr Clare Spencer	Dr Barbara Tarling
Professor John Wolffe	

Observing

Ms Kathryn Baldwin, Vice-Chancellor's Business Manager
Mr Lucian Hudson, Director of Communications
Ms Fiona Roberts, Group Human Resources Director
Mr Laurence Holden, Group Finance Director
Mrs Lesley Kane, UCU Branch President
Dr Caitlin Adams, UCU Branch Vice-President
Mr Gary Clifford, Associate Lecturer
Mrs Julie Tayler, Senior Manager, Governance
Dr Diana Stammers, Director Academic Strategy (for Minute 6)
Ms Jacky Hinton, Academic Lead, SFTP (for Minute 6)

APOLOGIES:

Appointed

2) Central Academic Units

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

Professor David Johnson

Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

Dr Karen Olsson-Francis

4) Students

Ms Danielle Smith

In attendance

Mr Andrew Law, Director, Open Media Unit

**MEETING OF THE SENATE: 18 APRIL 2018
OPENING STATEMENTS**

1 STATEMENT FROM THE PRO-CHANCELLOR, MR RICHARD GILLINGWATER

Mr Gillingwater thanked the Senate for the invitation extended to him and the members of Council to join the meeting of the Senate. He considered that in the context of the last few weeks, this coming together of the Council and the Senate was very timely.

He thanked members of the Senate for their feedback and continued support for the University. Even in the most challenging of circumstances, members had shown that their commitment to the University's mission and to its students was unequivocal. He considered this to be a powerful message for students, policy makers and the University's partners and it was a strong foundation upon which a collaborative way forward must be established. The recent media coverage had made more prominent the importance of part-time education and the value of the Open University.

Mr Gillingwater explained that the Council understood that the events of the last few weeks had been very difficult. Members had heard the strength of feeling expressed by staff and students and the Council had taken its collective responsibility to do the right thing for the University and individuals concerned very seriously. He hoped Senate was reassured that the University's governance processes had operated well and that the Council had listened to the concerns raised. However, Mr Gillingwater emphasised the importance of the Council listening even more intently and acting upon information it received and he gave a commitment on behalf of the Council to work together with the Senate and other members of staff to find the right way forward for the University.

Collective efforts needed to be focussed on achieving the University's strategic objectives and Mr Gillingwater considered that the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mary Kellett had the right blend of experience and leadership to take the University forward in a collaborative and united way. He emphasised that the challenges the University faced both externally and internally remained and everyone must now come together to address them. He urged the Senate to support Professor Kellett and the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE). The University must decide how to address those challenges, the solutions, and the extent and pace of change, but it needed to change, and not doing so was not an option.

As well as supporting students better, the University had to achieve financial sustainability. This was vital to ensure the future of the University and allow it to reach its 50th anniversary celebrations with a renewed vigour and strengthened sense of pride.

Mr Gillingwater concluded by acknowledging that events over the last year had undoubtedly taken their toll on staff across the institution, and particularly student facing staff. He thanked the staff for their professionalism, determination and commitment to supporting students which enabled the University to continue to deliver an excellent student experience. The Council was very grateful.

2 STATEMENT FROM THE ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR MARY KELLETT

The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mary Kellett thanked the Pro-Chancellor for his remarks and said she had been overwhelmed by the warmth, encouragement and support she had received since her appointment. She believed it was clear that staff from all across the University were united behind its mission and proud of its heritage and wanted to be constructive and supportive in helping it to stay strong and viable for the future.

Professor Kellett informed the Senate that messages she had received indicated that staff were not averse to change and understood and endorsed the need for the University to change in order to safeguard its future. However, she was aware that the approach, size, scale and pace of that change and the resulting effects on the student experience had caused concern. Staff had also indicated that their trust in decision making has been eroded and she assured the Senate that she intended to earn and restore that trust. Professor Kellett appealed to members to help to instil a period of calm to enable the University to take stock of areas where there was consensus or disagreement and to value the experience, expertise and skill within the University to solve problems.

Reiterating the Pro-Chancellor's message, Professor Kellett affirmed that the Council supported the overall strategy for the University and the key objectives enshrined within it. She emphasised that the University should focus on success for its students' benefit but also for the future success of the institution as the University had to acknowledge the challenges that lay ahead particularly in relation to its financial position. Professor Kellett assured the Senate that she, and the Vice-Chancellor's Executive would listen to concerns raised and stop if it was the right thing to do. By working together the challenges ahead could be addressed collaboratively.

Over the next two months, a critical review of the Students First Transformation Programme (SFTP) would be undertaken. Alongside the more controversial and problematic, Professor Kellett noted that there were many proposals upon which there was agreement, for example that the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure required improvement. Much good and hard work has been done by those focussed on change and each proposal deserved serious consideration as part of that critical review. The initial recommendations from the review would be shared with the Senate at its meeting in June, however as part of the wider review, it had been agreed that the proposed changes to the Charter and Statutes would be halted.

Turning to research, Professor Kellett informed the Senate that proposals on the future of Research at the University would be re-considered. Research and scholarship were crucial to the underpinning of the pedagogy and quality of the teaching materials produced and the University would continue to support research and scholarship in an affordable way in order to remain financially viable. The University was not turning its back on research. The Research and Enterprise Plan would therefore be presented to Senate in June for discussion to inform the further development of the Plan and frame the ongoing consultation around it over the summer, so that the Plan could return for consideration for approval in October 2018.

In relation to teaching, Professor Kellett explained that the proposals for a Teaching Framework had been withdrawn from the agenda of the meeting of the Senate. Deferring discussion until June would provide opportunities to make further refinements to the Framework, especially in the areas of assessment and Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) metrics, and to provide more models for how it would operate. The process for setting up, evaluating and (where appropriate) implementing pilots also needed to be established.

Referring to the announcement at the meeting of Senate in October 2017 of the creation of a number of institutional professorships, Professor Kellett acknowledged the excellent proposals that had been generated through engagement across the academic community. She announced however that in the light of a voluntary severance scheme being launched for staff she considered it inappropriate to proceed with posts that were not central to the University's core curriculum. These would not now be progressed. Some of the funding that had been identified for this purpose in 2018/19 would be used to support preparations across Faculties for Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 submissions including the provision of modest levels of funding to Units of Assessment not already in receipt of strategic investment through the review earlier this year.

Professor Kellett also advised the Senate that the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) would also be re-examining the curriculum portfolio review. She acknowledged the detailed work behind the proposal agreed at Education Committee and considered that there was consensus around the core proposals to create a more sustainable and viable curriculum. The majority of the proposed cuts were judicious trimming that responsible institutions would undertake. However, there were some proposed cuts on the fringe of this core which were more contentious that faculties may want to revisit. This might result in some small discretionary changes as plans were finalised.

Professor Kellett reiterated that the University needed strong and effective governance through the Senate and Council, working together with VCE and listening to staff and students. She illustrated this by pointing out that as a result of feedback, the plan to introduce starring of substructure items on the Senate agenda for advance response would not be introduced. However that listening could only be effective if colleagues felt empowered to speak. She expressed her concerns over the proposal to introduce secret voting at meetings of the Senate. She saw two reasons behind such a desire for secrecy, fear of management reprisals or fear of reprisals from other members of staff and considered this to be appalling for any University, but particularly for The Open University with its first and key value being inclusivity. Professor Kellett emphasised that if solutions were to be created together, everyone's ideas needed to be valued. She confirmed it would be her personal responsibility to change this position, and VCE would also be held to account on it too. She hoped everyone could adopt the same principle and in working together solutions would be reached.

Turning specifically to the operation of the Senate, Professor Kellett reflected that she was proud of the traditions of the Senate as the guiding hand governing the University's academic endeavour. It was an academic debating chamber, and over the years there had been excellent debates, hearing views respectfully, challenging, endorsing, scrutinising and critiquing to ensure robust academic governance. She was concerned that the openness of that kind of academic debate sat uncomfortably with the need to vote secretly. Professor Kellett gave the Senate her personal reassurance that expressing a view in Senate, provided the opinions of others were equally respected would not result in any reprisals. She wished to be informed if any member found differently. She hoped that the motion on the agenda might be postponed to give openness and transparency another chance.

In her message to staff on appointment as Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Kellett reminded the Senate that she had wished to instil a period of calm, of healing and of rebuilding trust. She considered it essential that this took place in Senate and that it demonstrated to the University that it was possible to find and agree solutions together to protect academic excellence and serve its students well. Professor Kellett reiterated that she simply wanted to do the best possible for the University, its students and its staff, and to steer it into safe waters, out of jeopardy, primed for the challenges ahead. She urged the Senate to give her the chance to earn its trust.

3 QUESTIONS TO THE PRO-CHANCELLOR AND ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR FROM MEMBERS OF THE SENATE

A member enquired as to whether there would be any reflection on the recent requirement not to schedule tutorials for students during the first five weeks of a module's timetable in 18J presentations. An Associate Lecturer (AL) representative emphasised that the deadline for scheduling tutorials was approaching and that this matter needed to be resolved urgently. The Acting Vice-Chancellor explained that this issue was currently under review and would be addressed shortly. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching Innovation) (PVC LTI) confirmed that she was currently working with Associate Deans (Curriculum) to consider options for 18J presentations.

A member expressed his concern over the position in which the University currently found itself and considered this to be the result of governance processes failing. He asked what action was being taken to rectify the situation. The Pro-Chancellor acknowledged that the situation had been challenging for all concerned and it would be reviewed to enable lessons to be learnt. Another member was concerned that the distinction between governance and management now appeared blurred in the University and cited an example of decisions on funding for research being taken in different fora. The Acting Vice-Chancellor agreed to reflect on this point.

Another member thanked the Acting Vice-Chancellor for her statement but considered that in order to rebuild trust, it was essential to examine the reasons for the University's current situation. He stated that the University community recognised the need for change but had no confidence in VCE in its entirety to take forward the appropriate strategies. The Acting Vice-Chancellor reiterated her full confidence in VCE as a team of experienced, senior leaders. She explained that the University would be entering a different period of operation and she urged the Senate to support them to put actions into place. The Pro-Chancellor reiterated his request to the Senate to support Professor Kellett and allow her the opportunity to develop and lead VCE.

A Senate member of the Council disagreed with an earlier point and considered that the University's governance structure had operated effectively in relation to recent events. He was concerned however over the external perceptions of current events at the University and felt the media campaigns to "Save the OU" whilst well-meaning had promulgated the idea that the University was on the brink of no longer existing. He urged colleagues to reflect on such external perceptions and emphasise that the University was strong and confidently moving forward into its change programme.

An AL representative expressed his support for the Acting Vice-Chancellor and said that the Senate should be viewed as a "critical friend" challenging and questioning to enable the University to make better decisions for the future.

A member considered that attention should be paid to the representation of the Senate and how it perform its functions. She was concerned that processes were not sufficiently transparent and that the Senate needed to have greater oversight of the governance structure. She also expressed disquiet that membership of the Education Committee appeared to comprise predominantly of VCE members. Professor Kellett responded that the Committee also included representation from students and associate lecturers. The PVC LTI confirmed that the Committee comprised 5 VCE members and 8 academic or student members .

In response to a point raised, the Pro-Chancellor and Acting Vice-Chancellor agreed to review the position of non-academic staff who, during the past weeks, had felt they had no forum in which to express their opinions.

Another member thanked the Acting Vice-Chancellor for the tone and content of her opening statement. Referring to the proposal for secret voting, he explained that some members would prefer it in order to avoid 'block voting'. He acknowledged the concept of corporate responsibility for decisions but he was concerned that VCE members were expected to vote in a particular way and not according to their own consciences. The Acting Vice-Chancellor assured the Senate that she fully expected her VCE colleagues to speak freely and that there were no instructions to them in respect of voting.

A member asked the Pro-Chancellor and Acting Vice-Chancellor for their vision of the key attributes and background the next Vice-Chancellor of the University should possess. The

Pro-Chancellor said a period of calm was required under Professor Kellett's leadership and there was no immediate process to appoint a Vice-Chancellor. Mr Gillingwater considered that a record of strong academic leadership would be important for the role. Professor Kellett commented that it would be essential to appoint the best candidate for the University. Professor Kellett confirmed that she intended to defer her retirement and remain at the University until an appointment was made. The University needed to make itself attractive again as an institution and she was confident that this could be done quickly as the foundations were very strong. In response to another member, Professor Kellett acknowledged that the University had lost its way recently but its governance processes had been robust in helping it negotiate through difficult times.

The President, OU Students Association offered her support to the Acting Vice-Chancellor and the intention to pause and reflect on the University's situation. She voiced her concern though that a number of staff in senior leadership roles were leaving the University. Professor Kellett explained that staff turnover was inevitable but urged the Senate not to be overly concerned as VCE continued to include appropriate expertise.

Professor Kellett acknowledged the recent anxiety amongst colleagues in the Faculties of Business and Law (FBL) and Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS) over uncertainty over the structure of the two faculties. She confirmed that there would not be any further restructuring of these two Faculties and that two interim Executive Dean appointments, Professor Devendra Kodwani (FBL) and Dr Sally Hayes (WELS), had been appointed. The process for making substantive internal appointments would commence shortly. Professor Kellett also reported that an experienced interim University Secretary would be appointed in due course.

In welcoming the positive statements from the Pro-Chancellor and Acting Vice-Chancellor, another member emphasised the importance of restoring confidence. She felt this must be acted upon quickly as recent negative publicity could have caused external reputational damage to the University. The Acting Vice-Chancellor agreed that upholding the external reputation of the University was crucial to its success and that all members could help in this regard. She urged members to respond positively and help the University move forward.

The Acting Vice-Chancellor thanked members for their insightful comments and questions and explained that the meeting would now proceed to the formal agenda.

MEETING OF THE SENATE: 18 APRIL 2018
FORMAL BUSINESS

1 WELCOME AND THANKS

- 1.1 The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mary Kellett, welcomed the following to their first meetings of the Senate:

Ms Kate Signorini, academic related staff,
Dr Sally Hayes, Interim Executive Dean, WELS

Professor Devendra Kodwani, was also welcomed in his capacity as Interim Executive Dean, FBL

- 1.2 The Acting Vice-Chancellor recorded the Senate's thanks to Dr Troy Cooper who would be standing down from the Senate.

2 MINUTES

S-2018-01-M

- 2.1 The Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 24 January 2018 subject to the inclusion of the following amendments shown in ~~strike through~~ or *italics*:

2.2 Minute 3.2

A member commented that he was not aware that information on the University's financial position considered by the Council had been made available to the Senate as ~~stated~~ *promised* in minute 4.18. He considered that the financial background to the scale of the changes proposed to the academic operation of the University was relevant to the Senate. The University Secretary explained that members of the Senate were advised to seek information on the financial context of a wide range of decisions through their faculties and units. *The University Secretary agreed to inform Senate members about where to find this information through their faculties and units.*

2.3 Minute 19.2

Another member commented that the ~~numbers of success rate~~ *for staff* submitting cases under the Teaching profile appeared low *relative to those for the Research and the Research and Teaching profiles*. He considered this to be of concern especially as the University was encouraging the development of teaching pathways. He felt this profile and the criteria within it required further examination.

3 MATTERS ARISING

S-2018-02-01

The Senate **noted** the responses to the matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 24 January 2018

4 REPORT FROM AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR

- 4.1 The Acting Vice-Chancellor formally welcomed members of the Council who were in attendance at the meeting.

External environment

- 4.2 In Scotland, for the second year running, the Scottish Funding Council awarded the OU in Scotland a higher than sector average increase in funding. In England the

Post-18 Review into education was expected to produce an interim report in the autumn and a full report in early 2019. Following extensive campaigning by the University and others there was now widespread support for the transformative role of part-time higher education which required greater prominence in the Post-18 Review. The University was advocating a 'flexible learning incentive' based on Government support for part-time students to reduce their fees.

Nations' news

- 4.3 The Department of Health in Northern Ireland had confirmed another increase in the number of funded students in the University's pre-registration nursing programme to 130. The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had also announced it would double the number of funded places for nursing in Scotland. A new portal to support small to medium sized companies across Ireland was due to begin its pilot phase in June. Funded by donors, "Open for Growth" was supported by Enterprise Ireland and Invest Northern Ireland.
- 4.4 After campaigning by the OU in Wales, from 18J new part-time students in Wales would be able to apply for grants to help with living costs. The OU in Wales hosted a lecture last month by two academics, Dr Mark Brandon and Dr Phil Sexton, who had worked on the award-winning BBC/OU coproduction Blue Planet II. It drew an audience of over 200 at the National Museum in Cardiff.

Other successes

- 4.5 These included:
- a) an award for excellence in elearning from the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities.
 - b) a research grant to support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the South East Midlands to embrace the digital economy. The project, CityLabs, was a consortium led by the University.
 - c) launch of the Carer-Related Research and Evidence Exchange Network (CAREN) which positioned the University as an international leader in carer-related knowledge.
 - d) Emeritus Professor Robin Wilson, has been awarded the 2017 Stanton Medal by the Institute of Combinatorics for outreach activities in combinatorial mathematics

Senate agenda

- 4.6 Professor Kellett thanked the Senate for its patience following the issuing of a revised agenda for the meeting. She drew attention to the importance of the Academic Performance Report (item B5) and particularly the data on retention rates which continued to be a significant challenge for the University.
- 4.7 Professor Kellett reiterated that she considered the meeting marked an important turning point for the Senate and a recommitment to listening to and learning from different opinions, to enable the University to move forward.

TEA BREAK

5 MOTION: VOTING PROCEDURES

S-2018-02-02

- 5.1 Mr D Knowles, seconded by Mr T Parry proposed an amendment, in accordance with Standing Orders 68-73, to the Motion as stated in S-2018-02-02.

5.2 The amendment stated:

This Senate calls for all votes in Senate to be conducted electronically. Between now and the June Senate, a method should be chosen and trialled at the June Senate.

5.3 In proposing the amendment, Mr Knowles considered that electronic voting would modernise the practice of counting votes at meetings and speed up proceedings. It would be possible for members to use either voting pads or members own tablets or computers. In response to a question, he confirmed that voting would follow the current practice of not recording voters' identities unless a member wished a record of their vote to be specifically documented in the minutes as stated in the Standing Orders.

5.4 A member considered the amendment useful but believed it was important for voting to be open to see how members and constituencies in the Senate voted. He was concerned that two different issues, secrecy and efficiency, had become confused in the motion. The proposer confirmed that the default position he wished to see was anonymous electronic voting. Another member was concerned over the implication that seeing how others voted would assist a Senate member in their own voting. She believed that at that point it was too late to make an informed decision and it was incumbent on Senate members to express opinions so voting was informed.

5.5 Another member considered that the amendment complicated matters. She expressed her strong opposition to any form of secret voting and considered the Senate a chamber for open debate and decision. Another member was concerned that electronic systems would not necessarily make voting quicker as they relied on robust information technology (IT) infrastructure. She also emphasised that any system must be fully inclusive.

5.6 A member understood the background to the motion but expressed his support for the Acting Vice-Chancellor's assurances in her earlier statement that in future the Senate would operate in a different way. He considered that members should respect differences in opinions and be open with their views and votes.

5.7 The Chair, Associate Lecturers Executive (ALE) supported the motion and informed the Senate that she was aware of members who considered themselves under pressure to vote in particular ways. She acknowledged the Acting Vice-Chancellor's assurances but still felt it important that the Senate considered how it operated in respect of voting. Another member added that she too was aware of members being under pressure not to speak on certain business or to vote in a particular way. She expressed her concern that a culture of bullying must never occur within the Senate. Another member supported this point. He welcomed the Acting Vice-Chancellor's assurances of a different approach to the operation of the Senate and urged the Senate to trust these intentions.

5.8 The Director, Academic Policy and Governance (APG) welcomed modernisation but considered that the proposed amendment to the motion was confusing. He drew attention to guidance from the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) which promoted transparency and openness in governance. He also reminded the Senate that voting on matters before the Senate was a relatively recent development and in the past debates would continue until consensus was reached.

5.9 The Acting Vice-Chancellor reminded the proposer of the motion of her earlier suggestion that the motion be withdrawn but be resubmitted at a future meeting if the proposer felt the issues upon which he was concerned remained. The proposer

responded that his proposal for electronic voting was designed to simplify proceedings within the Senate. He echoed the support given to the Acting Vice-Chancellor but was anxious that procedures were future-proofed to cover the situation when the Acting Vice-Chancellor was no longer in post.

5.10 In accordance with Standing Orders 68-73, the University Secretary requested that the Senate voted firstly on the proposed amendment as set out in minute 5.2

5.11 The amendment was **not carried** with the following votes recorded:

For the amendment:	28
Against	46
Abstentions	17

5.12 The Senate then proceeded to vote upon the original substantive motion as set out in paper S-2018-02-02.

5.13 The motion was **not carried** by an overwhelming majority.

6 CURRICULUM PLAN

S-2018-02-03

6.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Academic Strategy) (PVC RAS) introduced Ms Jacky Hinton, Academic Lead for the Curriculum Plan and Dr Diana Stammers, Director, Academic Strategy. He explained that the Curriculum Plan would be considered for discussion and the intention was to reflect on the feedback received and submit the Plan for approval at the next meeting of the Senate. Key areas of the Plan upon which feedback had been received included concern over the role of the proposed oversight body in overseeing the sustainability of curriculum in the future and the setting of contribution levels and the full-time equivalent (FTE) market size. Professor Hetherington also proposed that any matters relating to the Curriculum Review arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee on 21 March 2018, should be raised at this point.

6.2 A member commended the report and considered it to be much improved from previous iterations. She drew attention to the proposal for a flexible undergraduate (UG) open degree and queried how the costs of this might be met given previous experience of named degrees. Ms Hinton explained that this was still currently under review but it would not result in a proliferation of new named degrees to allow for every possible combination of subject.

6.3 Another member requested that the links between the University's research and teaching should be demonstrated more clearly in the Plan.

6.4 A member commented that references to the Nation-specific areas within the Plan were insufficient and required more consideration. He also expressed concern that the proposed cross University group for approval of curriculum might reduce the University's agility. Ms Hinton explained that the group would provide institutional level oversight to achieve a balance between Faculty autonomy, overall control of the total curriculum portfolio and the impacts of decisions taken regarding curriculum on the entire University. She would welcome further thoughts on this balance.

6.5 Another member suggested it would be preferable to have a holistic curriculum vision as the separate Plan and Review were confusing. She had also had concerns over the future of research if it did not fit into curriculum areas. In response, Ms Hinton explained that the Curriculum Review was a one-off retrospective exercise to review

the University's curriculum whereas the Plan was a proposed strategic way forward for the University. Professor Hetherington added that further reflection would take place in respect of research informed curriculum, including appropriate connections with the Research and Enterprise Plan, currently in development.

- 6.6 A representative of the OU Students' Association supported the rationale on page 7 for offering taught post-graduate (PG) qualifications where there was a clear pathway from sustainable UG study and these being explicitly marketed to the OU UG Alumni. She requested that consideration be given to offering such students a discounted fee on these qualifications. She also sought reassurance that other students would not be excluded from these qualifications. Another member drew attention to degree apprenticeships on pages 6 and 7 of the Plan and hoped that there would be opportunities to broaden apprenticeships to higher apprenticeship level. She suggested that the Plan should be less prescriptive in this area.
- 6.7 Another member expressed her concern over decisions being taken outside of the University's governance system, for example, in the oversight body. She also sought clarification over intentions in the Plan to review the use of "pathways" in qualifications. Another member requested a more detailed breakdown of the 67% contribution in curriculum required to operate. Another member urged the University to engage with academics early on in the development of PG curriculum aligned with UG curriculum. She expressed concern that, while there was a rationale for linking PG curriculum to that for which there was an appropriate, related UG qualification, imposing this as a restriction might mean viable opportunities were missed. A request was also made for a review of the University's approach to engaging with employers.
- 6.8 Ms Hinton explained that what was under review was the utilisation of pathways given that different approaches had been adopted across the University. She assured the Senate that decisions were not being taken outside of governance processes and attention would be given to how the oversight body worked alongside formal governance. Professor Hetherington explained that in place of the previous StageGate process that considered business cases for curriculum at institutional level, a broader institutional oversight was now required. More information on the contribution levels required to achieve a surplus in teaching activities could be included in the Plan. The Interim Executive Dean, WELS, also confirmed that the Enhanced Employability and Career Progression workstream of the SFTP was examining ways to ensure the perspectives of employers were embedded in the University's academic endeavour.
- 6.9 A member wished to see removal of references in the cover paper to approval by the Senate as a risk in the development of plans for the University. He also noted that the SFTP Update issued in March had included similar inference. He requested that that more information on how risk was addressed be provided. Another member was concerned over the reference to "outsourced curriculum development" in section 6 and requested further detail. Concern was also expressed that the Plan was based on assumptions on current models and included very little information on implementation.
- 6.10 Dr Stammers explained that reference to Senate not approving the Plan was appropriately identified in terms of an operational risk within the project, although it was not necessarily usual to raise such a risk with Senate. She agreed to revisit the wording of the sections on partnerships as it was intended to imply working in collaboration (which was current practice). Dr Stammers acknowledged the concerns expressed about agility in respect of the University Group providing institutional

oversight of curriculum and agreed to look further at this to achieve the desired outcomes.

- 6.11 Turning to the Curriculum Review referred to in the minutes of the Education Committee (S-2018-02-12), a representative of ALs commented that the Curriculum Review would give rise to £15 million of savings in curriculum. It was however important to see how curriculum could be made less expensive rather than introduce drastic cuts. He wished to see more information on the composition of the projected £15 million of savings. Dr Stammers commented that this detail was available to Senate members in the responses to Section C and D questions published ahead of the meeting.
- 6.12 A member asked for information on whether the Curriculum Review recommendations would proceed in the light of the review of the SFTP. The Acting Vice-Chancellor reiterated that the majority of the core proposals in the Review were prudent and had been carefully considered by faculties. However, some proposed cuts on the fringe of this core were more contentious and faculties may want to revisit these, which might result in some small discretionary changes as plans were finalised. Professor Kellett confirmed this work would be undertaken as a priority. Where recommendations were proceeding, then the Qualifications and Assessment Committee would need to assess aspects of teach-out for curriculum being ceased at its meetings in May and June 2018 for this to be in effect for October 2019.
- 6.13 The member enquired how this work on the Review could be progressed as a pause and review had been announced on the SFTP. He was concerned that this indicated governance processes had failed and that rushing into decisions could have critical implications. A member stated that at a Senate workshop held in September 2017, it had been noted that the Senate would decide on the outcomes of the Curriculum Review. Another member voiced concerns as to the impact of the Review on colleagues' jobs and the timing of the voluntary severance scheme recently launched. The Acting Vice-Chancellor emphasised that the review had to be undertaken to address the University's financial deficit. Faculties had examined their curriculum in detail and Professor Kellett asked the Senate to trust their colleagues' judgement in this area.

Post Meeting Note: Minute 6.13

A detailed explanation of the governance of decisions in relation to the Curriculum Plan and Review is available on the log of responses to questions provided in advance available on the Governance website with meetings papers,

- 6.14 The President, OU Students' Association informed the Senate that students were anxious over issues in relation to the curriculum and requested that a communication be issued to reassure those who were currently studying or contemplating registering. She also reminded Senate that the final Review outcomes needed to be tested against the Curriculum Plan.

Post Meeting Note: Minute 6.14

At its meeting on 21 March 2018, the Education Committee agreed that the Curriculum Portfolio Review proposals were consistent with the draft Curriculum Plan, and that the draft Plan provided a sufficient basis for agreeing submission of the curriculum revisions to the Quality and Assessment Committee (EC-2018-01-M minute 19.3)

- 6.15 Another member requested a clearer definition of what was considered to be at the "core" in terms of the Review. She urged the University to remember that whilst

decisions were taken on numbers, many colleagues advised individual students whose studies could be affected by curriculum changes. If modules were discontinued students could withdraw from their studies. The Acting Vice-Chancellor noted this point and reminded the Senate that the Review had been very carefully considered within Faculties.

- 6.16 Professor Kellett thanked the Senate for its insightful comments which would inform further work prior to submission of the Plan for approval at the next meeting.

7 LEARNING, TEACHING AND INNOVATION PRINCIPLES AND TEACHING FRAMEWORK

S-2018-02-04

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

8 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REPORT

S*2018-02-07

The Senate **agreed** that:

- a) this item would be deferred to the next meeting of the Senate in June though any points could be sent to the authors in the meantime.
- b) that due to the importance of this item for consideration by the Senate, in future this item would be the first item for discussion on the agenda.

9 UNIVERSITY CHARTER AND STATUTES

A: PAPER S-2018-02-05
B: MOTION S-2018-02-06

- 9.1 Paper S-2018-02-05 was withdrawn from the agenda.

- 9.2 Dr D Drake, the proposer of the motion set out in paper S-2018-02-06 acknowledged that the substantive paper on the University Charter and Statutes had been withdrawn but she considered that there were important issues of governance to consider should the paper proceed in future. The Acting Vice-Chancellor assured members that any subsequent proposals would be brought to the Senate for comment before being considered by the Council.

- 9.3 The motion was withdrawn.

- 9.4 A member informed that Senate that he wished to propose an amendment to the motion, however this was not accepted as the substantive motion had been withdrawn.

10 MOTIONS OF NO CONFIDENCE:

VICE-CHANCELLOR

S-2018-02-09

- 10.1 Dr G Williams, the proposer of the motion, informed the Senate that he wished to withdraw the motion. He clarified that it related to the previous Vice-Chancellor, and considered that it had served its purpose and it was important not to dwell on the past. However, he wished to acknowledge the courage of colleagues during a difficult time for the University and thanked the Senate for its support to him in proposing the motion. A representative of ALs recorded the Senate's thanks to the proposer for submitting the motion.

STUDENTS FIRST TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME (SFTP)

S-2018-02-08

- 10.2 Dr M Ramage, the proposer of the motion, acknowledged that the background circumstances to the motion had changed and also that work undertaken by colleagues across the University thus far. He welcomed the Acting Vice-Chancellor's announcement that the SFTP would be paused and reviewed but he did not intend to withdraw the motion. He considered that a line needed to be drawn under the Transformation Programme. Another member supported this position and reminded the Senate that it had passed a resolution at the last meeting expressing disquiet over the Programme. He urged the Senate to dissociate itself with the Programme and support the motion.
- 10.3 Another member explained that he wished the University to move forward positively. He agreed the need to pause and reevaluate the SFTP and supported work underway in the Programme to improve IT infrastructure and the student experience overall. However he urged the Senate to back the motion in its entirety as he considered the institution had been undermined in the past year and this expression of support would boost morale. The member supported the Acting Vice-Chancellor but explained that he had no faith in the Transformation Programme and viewed the name as a 'toxic' brand.
- 10.4 The Acting Vice-Chancellor accepted that members of the Senate might have concerns, but urged members not to dismiss all of the work of the Programme as that could leave the institution in a state of uncertainty. She accepted that the name of the programme might have been problematic as she knew colleagues prioritised students in their work. However she asked the Senate not to blur its perceptions of the name with the good work already carried out within the programme.
- 10.5 The member explained over 400 emails had been received supporting the sentiments of the motion and that the Senate wanted to engage in moving the University forward. He explained that he would be agreeable to revising the wording of the motion so it only constituted part (a). Another member felt the motion should include a reference to the Senate recognising that students had to be the central focus of policy making and referring to a lack of confidence in the Transformation Programme. Another member suggested that part (a) of the motion could be deleted and debate focus on parts (b) and (c) only.
- 10.6 The Acting Vice-Chancellor advised caution over the re-drafting of motions on the floor of the Senate and reiterated her earlier statement that she be given time to institute the critical review of the Programme.
- 10.7 Dr J Hall, seconded by Professor D Rothery, proposed an amendment to the motion:
- The Senate recognised that:
- a) there was a large overlap in those that sit on VCE and Education Committee (EC) and that this made it difficult for EC to fulfill its role of independent academic governance in matters, particularly that of SFTP;
 - b) that EC business on SFTP had not received the appropriate level of academic scrutiny.

The Senate recommended that:

- a) the SFTP should be halted pending an independent audit;
- b) that an audit by internal and external academics of all OU academic governance be conducted and that Academic Quality and Governance Committee personnel should not be involved in that audit and
- c) that VCE business should be brought under general scrutiny of Senate and other bodies as far as is appropriate.

10.8 The President, OU Students Association expressed her frustration that the amendments did not appear to acknowledge the assurance given by the Acting Vice-Chancellor in her statement before the meeting that she would pause and reflect and undertake a critical review of the Transformation Programme with an initial report being brought back to the next meeting of the Senate. The President, OU Students Association felt that this work covered elements of the motion and was concerned over the perception of the Senate if the motion was carried. She felt that the message from Senate members should be one of support for the Acting Vice-Chancellor's assurances and not for the motion at this point in time.

10.9 It was confirmed that the President, OU Students Association was proposing a procedural motion in accordance with Standing Order 74, that the matter be deferred to the next ordinary meeting.

10.10 The procedural motion (minute 10.9) was **accepted** by an overwhelming majority

11 ACADEMIC QUALITY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE S-2018-02-10

The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Governance Committee held on 26 February 2018.

12 RESEARCH COMMITTEE S-2018-02-11

Minutes 5.13, 7.3 and 8.12

12.1 A member enquired why actions were recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2018 yet it was not quorate, so unable to make decisions. The PVC RAS confirmed that no actions had been taken and that business had been progressed through a subsequent meeting by correspondence. The minutes identified this progression of business.

Minute 8.10

12.2 A member noted the reference to the Research and Enterprise Plan needing to articulate the target aspirations for the REF more clearly. She requested that consideration also be given to the impact of research on the TEF as research underpinned the University's teaching activity.

12.3 The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting of the Research Committee held on 7 March 2018

13 EDUCATION COMMITTEE S-2018-02-12

Minute 20.2

13.1 A member enquired whether the reputational risks identified in relation to the partnership with Lincoln College were fully evaluated. The Director, OU Validation

Partnerships (OUVP) confirmed that the risks were considered and subject to ongoing monitoring. The changes to the titles of the qualifications had also been revised as a condition of the validation.

- 13.2 The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting of Meetings held on 21 March 2018 and by correspondence between 28 March and 5 April 2018.

14 ACADEMIC STRATEGY: IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE S-2018-02-13

The Senate **noted** the Implementation Update for the Academic Strategy.

15 EMERITUS PROFESSORS S-2018-02-14

The Senate **approved** the recommendations from the Chairs Subcommittee that the title of Emeritus Professor is awarded to:

Professor Mary Kellett,	Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS) (when applicable)
Professor Nicholas Rogers	Faculty of Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics
Professor Michael Stewart	Faculty of Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics

16 THE COUNCIL S-2018-02-15

Minute 9.3

- 16.1 A member commented that as a Visitor had not been appointed to the University it was therefore not possible for a member of the University to petition him/her. The University Secretary confirmed that such appointments were at the discretion of the Privy Council which could be petitioned to make such an appointment.

- 16.2 The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed Minutes and Confidential Minutes of meeting of the Council held on 6 March 2018

17 CHAIRS ACTION S-2018-02-16

The Senate **noted** the reports on action taken by the Chair since the last meeting of the Senate

18 FUTURE ITEMS OF BUSINESS S-2018-02-19

The Senate **noted** the provisional items for the agenda for the meeting of the Senate on 20 June 2018.

19 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Meetings would be held on the following dates:

Wednesday 20 June 2018
Wednesday 10 October 2018

Keith Zimmerman
University Secretary

Sue Thomas
Working Secretary to the Committee
Email: sue.thomas@open.ac.uk