



THE SENATE

Minutes

This paper presents the confirmed Minutes of the last meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 10 October 2018 at The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes.

The Senate **approved** these Minutes as a correct record of the meeting on 24 January 2019 subject to an addition to Minute 11.5.

Jonathan Nicholls
University Secretary

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THE SENATE

Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 10 October 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)
Professor Ian Fribbance	Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Professor Devendra Kodwani	Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Law
Professor Josie Fraser	Executive Dean, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
Dr Sally Hayes	Executive Dean, Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (Acting)
Professor Patrick McAndrew	Learning and Teaching Innovation, Director of Research
Ms Rosie Jones	Director of Library Services

Appointed

2) Central Academic Units

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

Dr William Brown	Dr Elaine Moohan (remote)
Dr Sarah Crafter	Professor John Wolffe
Professor Ole Grell	Professor Nicola Watson (remote)
Dr Jovan Byford	Dr Richard Heffernan
Professor David Johnson	Mr Matt Staples
Ms Karen Hagan	

Faculty of Business & Law (FBL)

Miss Carol Howells	Mr Mike Phillips
Dr Kristen Reid	Dr Caroline Clarke
Dr Sharon Slade	

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

Dr John Baxter	Professor David Rothery
Dr Janet Haresnape	Mrs Diane Butler
Dr Robert Brignall	Professor Claire Turner
Dr Helen Fraser	Dr Leonor Barroca
Professor Simon Green	Dr Stephen Burnley

Dr James Hague
Dr Toby O'Neil
Dr Magnus Ramage
Dr Jon Hall

Dr Hayley Ryder
Dr Mark Slaymaker
Dr Ann Walshe
Dr Karen Olsson-Francis

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS)

Dr Kristina Hultgren (remote)
Dr Uwe Baumann
Mrs Anna Comas-Quinn
Dr Jackie Watts
Ms Tyrrell Golding
Dr Elodie Vialleton

Mr Andy Rixon
Dr Aravinda Guntupalli
Dr Verina Waights
Mr Jeremy Wilcock
Ms Suan Kotschi

Learning and Teaching Innovation (LTI) (Academic)

Mr Chris Edwards
Professor Allison Littlejohn

Professor Eileen Scanlon

Other Central Units

Ms Jacky Hinton

3) Associate Lecturers

Mrs Frances Chetwynd
Dr Walter Pisarski
Dr Hilary Partridge
Mr Gary Clifford (alternate)

Mr David Knowles
Mr Rob Parker
Dr Linda Walker

4) Students Appointed by Open University Students Association

Ms Cath Brown
Ms Danielle Smith
Ms Alison Kingan

Mr Rory Powell
Mr Peter Cowan
Dr Barbara Tarling

5) Academic-related Staff

Dr Caitlin Adams
Mr Derek Sheills
Mrs Rukhsana Malik
Mr Billy Khokhar (remote)
Mrs Clare Ikin
Mr Toby Scott-Hughes
Ms Julia Barkans

Dr Mark Nichols
Ms Elaine Walker
Mr Phil Berry
Mrs Maria Crisu
Mrs Selena Killick
Mrs Kate Signorini

6) Co-opted members

Mr John D'Arcy
Ms Susan Stewart
Mrs Louise Casella

Dr David Knight
Mr Tony O'Shea-Poon
Mr Chris Rooke

In attendance

Mr Jonathan Nicholls, University Secretary
Mr Jake Yeo, Director, University Secretary's Office
Mrs Dawn Turpin, Head of Governance
Ms Sue Thomas, Senior Manager, Governance
Miss Teresa Coyle, Manager, Governance

Observing

Professor Iain Gilmour, Associate Dean (Commercial and External Relations) (for Minute 12)
Professor Paul Lawrence, FASS (for Minute 12)
Dr Helen Fisher, Head of Academic Strategy, RAS (for Minute 12)
Mrs Katrina Chambers, Manager Academic Strategy, RAS, (for Minute 13)
Dr Clem Herman, Senior Lecturer in Telematics, STEM (for Minute 13)
Mr Scott Sherriff, Ambitious Futures Graduate Trainee (for development)
Miss Eleanor Dodd, Ambitious Futures Graduate Trainee (for development)

APOLOGIES:

Appointed

2) Central Academic Units

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

Dr Deborah Drake

Dr Alison Penn

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS)

Professor Jan Draper

3) Associate Lecturers

Mr Tim Parry

5) Academic-related Staff

Ms Tracy Lawson

6) Co-opted members

Mr Christopher Turner

Dr Liz Marr

In attendance

Mr Andrew Law, Director of Open Media and Informal Learning

1 WELCOME AND THANKS

- 1.1 The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mary Kellett welcomed new and returning members to the Senate following the biennial elections held earlier in the year. She also welcomed Ms Cath Brown to her first meeting as President, OU Students Association. Professor Kellett hoped that the meeting signified the opening of a new chapter in shared leadership across the University.
- 1.2 In the light of the full agenda, the Acting Vice-Chancellor asked that to assist with managing the debates, particularly in section C discussion items, members respected the time limit for remarks set out in the Standing Orders and avoided repeating points made by other members.

2 REPORT FROM AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR

- 2.1 The Acting Vice-Chancellor reminded the Senate that it was World Mental Health Day and many events had been held on the campus for staff and students. She also confirmed that The Big White Wall, offering free online support for student wellbeing and mental health was now available for all Open University (OU) students.
- 2.2 Professor Kellett informed the Senate that the University Pro-Chancellor, Richard Gillingwater completed his term of office in December 2018 and had decided not to stand for re-appointment. This had been a difficult decision and she was sure that the Senate would join her in thanking Mr Gillingwater for his selfless dedication to the University through some very challenging times. Recruitment for a new Pro-Chancellor was already underway, with an aspiration to have an appointment made before the end of December. The University Secretary would update the Senate on the implications this had for the appointment of the new Vice-Chancellor under agenda item C5. Professor Kellett also reported that recruitment for the substantive Executive Dean, Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS) was progressing with interviews due to take place on 6 November 2018.
- 2.3 Reporting on external events, the Acting Vice-Chancellor informed the Senate that in Northern Ireland the provisional grant letter from the Department for the Economy had confirmed that there would be no reductions to the funding allocation for the University. In Wales, a grant had been received from the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) to support the University's civic mission proposal as well as a successful partnership bid with other South East Wales universities and Further Education (FE) colleges to HEFCW's HE/FE Collaboration Fund. In Scotland, the Programme for Government had set out the Scottish Government's legislative priorities for the year ahead which included implications for the Government's responses to the independent review of student finance.
- 2.4 Professor Kellett also informed the Senate that along with many other Vice-Chancellors she had signed a letter to the Minister of State (Universities and Science) calling for action against "essay mill" companies. The letter called for the UK Government to follow the lead of the Irish and New Zealand governments in announcing a new law that would make it illegal to provide or advertise contract cheating services.
- 2.5 Turning to internal news, Professor Kellett informed the Senate that student numbers were currently 8% ahead of target for new undergraduate registrations and at 100% of target for continuing undergraduate students. Postgraduate numbers were currently 91% of target and 8% behind this point last year.

- 2.6 Congratulations on behalf of the Senate were also recorded to Dr Cheryl Hawkes, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and her team for a grant of £50k from Alzheimer's Research UK to explore the link between maternal obesity and the risk of their offspring developing Alzheimer's disease in later life, and Dr Shafquat Towheed, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) who was part of a €1 million research project funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Joint Programme Initiative for Cultural Heritage to develop digital tools to research reading from the 18th century to the present day.
- 2.7 The Acting Vice-Chancellor also advised the Senate that a Code of Conduct for all members of all governance committees at the University, which had been agreed by both the Governance and Nominations Committee of the Council and the Academic Quality and Governance Committee, was available on the Governance website. Members would be sent a link to it.

Action: Governance Team

3 MINUTES S-2018-03-M

- 3.1 The Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 20 June 2018
- 3.2 A member commented that he had understood that Senate had been advised at the last meeting that new members of the Senate would be invited to the Senate Workshop held in July 2018 on the Research and Enterprise Plan. He reported he was not aware that such involvement had taken place. The Acting Vice-Chancellor confirmed that this had been the intention and apologised that it had not materialised.

4 MATTERS ARISING S-2018-04-01

The Senate **noted** the response to the matter arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 20 June 2018.

5 ACADEMIC QUALITY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE S-2018-04-02

Minute 3.2 of meeting held on 2 July 2018 (AQGC-2018-03-M) and minute 13 of the meeting held on 17 September 2018 (AQGC-2018-04-M)

- 5.1 The Chair, Associate Lecturers Executive (ALE) queried whether the issue of recording tutorials had been resolved as it had been an outstanding action for some time and she was not aware of any communication to associate lecturers (ALs) on the matter nor on any relevant data protection issues.
- 5.2 The Director, Research, Learning and Teaching Innovation (LTI) informed the Senate that a revised approach to recording tutorials was being adopted and was described in the paper that had been presented to the September meeting of AQGC. The guidance would lead to one instance of each learning event being recorded and being made available to students. Legal and copyright advice had also been provided to the Chair of AQGC to address the action in the minutes. Work was ongoing with colleagues in Academic Services to communicate this message to students and ALs. The Chair, ALE expressed concern that this was a complicated issue and that the 18J presentations had already started and no information had yet been disseminated. The Acting Vice-Chancellor assured the Senate that these issues were being addressed and suggested that the detail be discussed outside of the meeting

Action: PVC LTI

Minute 3.3 of meeting held on 2 July 2018 (AQGC-2018-03-M)

- 5.3 A representative of ALs drew attention to the post meeting note added to minute 3.3 on the SEAM survey and reported that ALs were not aware of the developments identified. It was agreed to seek further information and report back

Action: LTI Director of Teaching

- 5.4 The Senate **noted** the confirmed Minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2018 and the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2018.

6 RESEARCH COMMITTEE S-2018-04-03

Minute 5.10 of meeting held on 4 July 2018 (RC-2018-04-M)

- 6.1 The President, OU Students Association welcomed the principle of post graduate research (PGR) students being offered teaching opportunities. She was concerned however that the interests of undergraduate students were protected and that as the module tutor was the main contact for students, any such opportunities should not trespass on the role of the AL. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Academic Strategy) (PVC RAS) explained that at present the suggestions listed were ideas under discussion and further consultation would take place if it was decided to proceed. He assured the Senate that if the ideas were developed training would be offered to PGRs and monitoring would be in place. The aim was to be supplementary to, and not to replace AL or other academic roles. A representative of ALs enquired how offering such opportunities for PGRs would impact upon the contract for ALs currently under negotiation. The PVC RAS explained that once a permanent contract was in place for ALs, he envisaged the carrying out of teaching duties by PGRs being accommodated alongside this.

- 6.2 The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed Minutes of the meetings held on 4 July 2018 and 17 September 2018.

7 EDUCATION COMMITTEE S-2018-04-04

Minute 4.5 of meeting held on 9 July 2018 (EC-2018-03-M)

- 7.1 A representative of ALs sought further information on the provision of support by ALs to students on postgraduate courses in FutureLearn. He cited an example of current advertisements for ALs for H880 yet he was unclear as to what conditions of employment were being offered as FutureLearn was a separate entity to the University. It was confirmed that those appointed would be employees of the University and the appointments would be made under the same conditions as other AL appointments. The PVC RAS commented that Human Resources was aware of this issue but the final sentence in minute 4.5 referring to the negotiation of different contracts was inaccurate, and he would raise this when the minutes were approved at the next meeting.

Action: PVC RAS

- 7.2 A member participating remotely also sought information on the recruitment and appointment of ALs to postgraduate courses on FutureLearn particularly for those ALs who would be losing contracts because of the Curriculum Review, and where these modules were being suggested for presentation on FutureLearn. It was confirmed that opportunities would be available for these ALs on the same conditions of employment as previously.

- 7.3 The Senate **noted** the confirmed Minutes of the meetings held on 9 July 2018 and by correspondence between 2 July and 6 August 2018, and the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2018.

8 CENTRAL DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE REPORT S-2018-04-05

- 8.1 A member enquired whether there was any information on the level of contract cheating at the OU as the report appeared to indicate this was not a problem at the University. He explained that many partner institutions with whom he worked were aware of issues and were wishing to share practice in this area. The Director, Academic Policy and Governance commented that the report focussed on reporting serious cases of misconduct but that further work could be carried out. The Interim Director Academic Services offered to discuss the examples from other institutions outside of the meeting.

Action: Interim Director Academic Services

- 8.2 The Senate **noted** the report of student misconduct cases referred to the Central Disciplinary Committee between 1 May 2017 and 31 July 2018

9 SPECIAL APPEALS COMMITTEE S-2018-04-06

The Senate **noted** the report of the Special Appeals Committee of the Senate covering student appeals against decisions of the Central Disciplinary Committee for the period 1 May 2017 to 31 July 2018

10 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REPORT S-2018-04-07

- 10.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Academic Strategy) (PVC RAS) introduced the report and explained that it also included the annual student numbers report. The key performance indicators (KPIs) were continually being developed to provide the most relevant information for the Senate.

- 10.2 Members welcomed the report and its improved presentation. It was suggested that further information be included on the Open Degree Programme as over 25% of the University's students were registered on this, yet the report focussed on data from Faculties. The PVC RAS agreed to investigate this.

Action: PVC RAS

- 10.3 A member drew attention to section (f) (iv) in the report and considered that the text referring to an improvement over the past two years in the proportion of female professors to male was misleading. He noted that the numbers of female senior lecturers had increased by 4% but there had been no corresponding increase in the number of female professors. He urged the review of the promotions process to investigate this thoroughly. He also requested that data for ALs be presented separately and the PVC RAS agreed to refer this to the authors of the report.

Action: PVC RAS

- 10.4 The Acting Vice-Chancellor assured the Senate that there was no intention to mislead members and that the University was fully aware of the position and had resolved to take action. She was heartened to see increases in female senior lecturer numbers but acknowledged there would be a period of time before these colleagues would consider promotion to professor. A member commented that such reports should also reflect that gender was not binary.

- 10.5 Commenting on student numbers, a member was pleased to see student registrations were currently above targets set. In response to a question, it was confirmed that implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) had not had the projected impact on numbers registering.
- 10.6 Another member reflected that the Critical Review Action Plan referred to Professional Services staff working to enhance academic services for students. She suggested that the work of Professional Services should also be given attention in a similar type of report. The University Secretary welcomed the idea of benchmarking performance and accountability though work was required to develop appropriate measures and KPIs.

Action: University Secretary

11 RESPONSE TO THE CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE STUDENTS FIRST TRANSFORMATION: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN S-2018-04-08

- 11.1 The Acting Vice-Chancellor introduced the paper and explained that it set out a high-level Action Plan in response to the Critical Review findings and recommendations previously approved by the Council on 17 July 2018. At its meeting on 25 September 2018, the Council had agreed the approach to implementation and accountability as set out in the Action Plan. The Plan set out six guiding principles and included specific proposals for structural and leadership portfolio changes as key enablers for the changes required. Professor Kellett emphasised that the changes proposed were laying strong foundations for the University and she hoped that the process so far had proved that all stakeholders could work differently, with openness and honesty.
- 11.2 A member drew attention to the second guiding principle and enquired whether research was implicit in “academic matters” as it was not referred to separately. The Acting Vice-Chancellor commented that research was very important to the University and she would ensure this was made more explicit. Another member requested that the consequences of the changes to the PVC portfolios and in particular the transfer of scholarship activities to the Research, Scholarship and Enterprise portfolio be considered very carefully. He drew attention to the very valuable work in areas such as scholarship for learning and teaching carried out by colleagues in LTI (Academic). The Acting Vice-Chancellor explained that scholarship was equally valued as an academic endeavour, so it was important not to create barriers but bring such activity together.
- 11.3 Another member drew attention to the importance of the People and Culture Programme and enquired whether it would be tested with staff. She considered that the perceptions of staff were critical to its success. The University Secretary agreed and confirmed the importance of embedding the Programme and that the Group Director Human Resources was leading on this area of the Action Plan.
- 11.4 Drawing attention to the Sub-Recommendation 2 (i) and the work of the Four Nations Operating Model, a member commented that a significant amount of key activity such as widening participation work, marketing and outreach work had been lost following the closure of regional offices across England. He felt local engagement through the three locations in England was not effective and he asked that further reflection be given to the appointment of a Director, England to lead such activity. A member participating remotely had also requested consideration be given to such an appointment. She commented that throughout the Research and Enterprise Plan and the Scholarship Plan there were numerous references to the need to address the specific requirements of the Four Nations, to build relationships with external partners and make best use of the OU’s pan-UK presence. She requested clarification as to

how such initiatives would be delivered in England. The Acting Vice-Chancellor confirmed that these issues would be discussed during the forthcoming Strategy Week.

- 11.5 The Director, Research LTI welcomed the sharper focus being given to the LTI Portfolio as PVC Students and the establishment of the new 'Academic Board'. He reported however feelings of concern amongst colleagues in LTI (Academic) over a lack of involvement with the restructuring and its pace. He urged the Acting Vice-Chancellor to consult fully with colleagues and consider the Portfolio as a whole. Another member commended the work of colleagues in the LTI (Academic) Portfolio and its high external profile. The Acting Vice-Chancellor explained that the University management had been tasked by the Council with producing an Action Plan in a very tight timescale. Professor Kellett explained that she considered it essential to share the Plan but acknowledged that elements of it were not fully developed yet. She assured the Senate that colleagues in LTI (Academic) would be consulted further and she intended the restructuring to further enhance its work and the international reputation of research carried out by the Institute of Educational Technology.
- 11.6 Another member questioned principle (b) in paragraph 9 and enquired how academic matters could be owned and managed by Faculties as many areas were outside of academic units, for example research and scholarship. It was acknowledged that certain areas required institutional oversight but that academic staff carrying out research and scholarship would be within faculties. Another member was concerned that if activities were managed and owned in faculties, there was increased risk of local policies being devised and she urged the importance of fairness to staff across the University.
- 11.7 A representative of the OU Students Association welcomed the Action Plan and the spirit of openness and collaboration associated with its development. She noted the risks set out in paragraph 43 and in particular risk 2 which referred to the risk of insufficient staff engagement and change fatigue. She considered that students also faced uncertainty and asked that this not be prolonged. The Acting Vice-Chancellor acknowledged this point and reiterated that the University was working closely with the OU Students Association now.
- 11.8 A member emphasised the importance of developing the University's analytics capability to avoid crises due to registration patterns being difficult to predict due to increased student choice and late registrations. A representative of the OU Students Association emphasised that efficient IT systems were essential for students and she hoped that systems would be thoroughly tested including the replicating of particular stress points, eg release of module results, to ensure they were robust. The University Secretary assured the Senate that curation and collection of data was a priority for the Core Systems Replacement (CSR) Project and that feedback from the Senate members on issues they experienced with data and systems was very helpful. He assured the Senate that considerable investment had been allocated to developing student interface systems and robustness and security were fundamental elements of this development.
- 11.9 In reflecting on the changes to PVC and Commercial and Strategy Portfolios, a member expressed concern that despite there being a desire to increase external funding in the guiding principles, responsibility for such activity had been separated from oversight of research and scholarship activities. The University Secretary explained that the Commercial and Strategy Portfolio would focus on business-to-business and business-to-customer activities to diversify and grow students in the UK and internationally. Research activity from external funding was an academic

process and institutional oversight would rest with a PVC. This responsibility would also include a focus on enterprise. The Acting Vice-Chancellor reiterated that this was a high level Plan and further information would be shared with Senate.

- 11.10 An AL representative acknowledged the content of the Plan but felt that it was not helpful to ALs as it was not clear how they could contribute to the processes of change. He felt there could be a sense of activities just being dictated to them and he asked how ALs could become involved. The Acting Vice-Chancellor acknowledged that areas for contribution might not be specific at this stage but emphasised that ALs had a critical role to play in increasing student success and developing a more inclusive workforce.
- 11.11 A member welcomed the Plan and considered that its recommendations would be essential in achieving the objective of a modern University. He felt though that more focus should be put on external engagement. In response to a question, the Acting Vice-Chancellor explained that further information on accountability and a timeline for implementation would be presented to the Council at its November meeting.
- 11.12 Another member welcomed the references in paragraph 1 to cultural change in the University and the importance of it for driving success. He urged the University to give this high importance. He also reflected on the role of the Vice-Chancellor as chair of Senate yet also being responsible to it. He noted the reference to a review of governance and suggested that all committees should be focussing on their roles and purpose and reflecting on whether they were still required. He also sought clarification on the relationship perceived in future between the new Academic Board and Education Committee as he saw considerable overlap between their roles. The Acting Vice-Chancellor emphasised the need to avoid duplication and this would be included in the review.
- 11.13 The University Secretary thanked the Senate for the insightful comments and valuable debate. The points raised in relation to Committees and governance would be referred to the review but he agreed with the desire to have simpler and more responsive structures. He clarified that the University Charter stated that the Vice-Chancellor was chair of the Senate in their capacity as Chief Academic Officer of the University. The Vice-Chancellor was not Chair of the governing body, the Council.

12 RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE PLAN 2018-2023 S-2018-04-09

- 12.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Academic Strategy) (PVC RAS) introduced the Plan and explained that following approval of the Academic Strategy by the Senate in April 2017, a new institutional Research and Enterprise (R&E) Plan had been developed to provide a vision and overall framework for the delivery of research and enterprise at the University. Professor Iain Gilmour, Academic Lead and Professor Paul Lawrence, Co-academic Lead summarised the Plan as outward looking and ambitious but achievable. It aimed to enhance the distinctiveness of research at the University and increase its sustainability.
- 12.2 A member commented that he had submitted views via the consultation in relation to the length of the Plan and research prospects for regional academic staff but these did not appear to have been addressed. He was concerned however that the Plan, in setting out differential expectations for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 failed to address the heterogeneity of research at the University. He emphasised that the University had in the past always adopted a collegial approach and he feared the three categories proposed may prove divisive. The PVC RAS explained that the strategic direction was set at a high level and was not specific for

each area of research. He did not consider the change to be a significant shift in approach but it reflected the changing landscape and the outcomes of the Review of the REF chaired by Lord Stern in 2016. It was a realistic and achievable approach, reflecting upon the strengths of the University.

- 12.3 Another member commented that determining institutional investment in research was not within the remit of the Senate, however the Plan referred to a specific target for internal net investment in research. He felt he could not support the Plan without further information on the basis for determining the figure or how it would be used to benefit students and further the University's mission. The PVC RAS explained that the figure was included to provide transparency to assist the Senate. It was determined through benchmarking against other institutions within the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) Peer Group C, the Group to which the University had been assigned by the TRAC Development Group (formerly part of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, now the Office for Students).
- 12.4 A member enquired how the Plan would assist early career researchers and develop succession planning as she was concerned this support was not clearly evident. The PVC RAS explained that the University was a signatory to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers which set out clear standards that research staff could expect from their institution. The specific requirements of early career researchers would be the responsibility of Faculties.
- 12.5 Another member expressed concern over the prescriptive nature of the benchmarks set out in Appendix A to the Plan. He considered that using Marks of Esteem was unwise as he was concerned that they could be discriminatory, for example he was not aware of formal procedures for appointments to editorial boards and often these were made via informal networks. Professor Lawrence explained that such judgements were usually reached by panels of academic peers with external input but he offered to review the wording in the Appendix.

Action: PVC RAS

- 12.6 Referring to section 3 of the Plan, another member felt that further insight could have been provided for direction beyond the REF 2021, for example, in relation to external engagement to strengthen the University's position. Professor Gilmour explained that reference was included to the importance of collaborative partnerships, for example in doctoral training, to enhance the University's capabilities. Further work would be carried out on completion of the post-REF Review.
- 12.7 The Senate **approved** the Research and Enterprise Plan subject to the editorial amendment identified in minute 12.5.

13 SCHOLARSHIP PLAN 2018-2023

S-2018-04-10

- 13.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Academic Strategy) (PVC RAS) introduced the Plan and explained that following approval of the Academic Strategy by the Senate in April 2017, a Plan for Scholarship at the University had been developed. Dr Clem Herman, Academic Lead, explained that the Plan aimed to deliver the renewed and reimagined focus, role and ambition for scholarship as set out in the Academic Strategy.
- 13.2 A representative of the OU Students Association expressed his strong support for the Plan and welcomed the opportunities for students to make contributions during the formulation of the Plan. He also welcomed the inclusion of reference in the Plan to student participation in and engagement with scholarship.

- 13.3 A member explained that he was not opposed to scholarship to enhance teaching and learning. However he felt he could not support the Plan as he felt the separation of scholarship from research was a missed opportunity for the University. He considered that one single plan for research, enterprise and scholarship would have been a more appropriate way forward and would have removed divisive divisions between colleagues who engaged in different activities. The definition of scholarship referred to in paragraph 12 was described as inclusive but the member felt that it focused only on the scholarship of teaching and learning and other important aspects of scholarship, as defined by Boyer (1990) such as scholarship of integration, had been lost. The Plan did not make any reference to investment in scholarship or cross subsidies from fees directed to the scholarship of teaching and learning. Another member supported the concerns expressed over the separation of research and scholarship activities. He sought clarification as to how scholarship as set out in the Plan would be recognised for Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) as it appeared to take a more restrictive approach than that required by the HEA.
- 13.4 Another member hoped that within the implementation of the Plan, there would be parity for professional services staff working outside of academic units who were active in scholarship. She believed that the University should be encouraging professional services colleagues to engage in scholarship activities. The Director, Research LTI confirmed that the Plan aimed to achieve this and had adopted a generic approach to scholarship engagement.
- 13.5 The PVC RAS confirmed that the Plan recognised all forms of scholarship. The Plan recognised the challenges of achieving students' success and as these were crucial to address, some forms had been identified as particular priorities.
- 13.6 Another member reiterated a concern previously expressed that the Plan made no reference to what might be considered an appropriate institutional investment in scholarship. The PVC RAS explained that determining such investment would be the responsibility of Faculties and would be monitored across the University. The Acting Vice-Chancellor assured the Senate that investment would be made in scholarship activity including pump priming of funds to enhance scholarship centres
- 13.7 Following a vote, the Scholarship Plan was **approved** by an overwhelming majority.

14 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHANCELLOR **S-2018-04-11**

- 14.1 The University Secretary explained that following the decision of the Pro-Chancellor not to seek reappointment for a second term the search for a new Vice-Chancellor (VC) would commence in early 2019 following appointment of the Pro-Chancellor's successor. The new Pro-Chancellor would chair a Joint Committee of the Council and the Senate established in accordance with the University's Charter and Statutes to make the appointment. The Joint Committee would also be asked to appoint Professor Kellett as Vice-Chancellor until a successor had been appointed. Professor Kellett was currently appointed as Acting Vice-Chancellor until 31 December 2018. Dr Nicholls also informed the Senate that in order to ensure student input to the appointment process the Council had agreed that the President, OU Students Association would have observer status on the Joint Appointment Committee and by agreement with the Chair, take a full part in the interviews with candidates but not take part in any vote in the unlikely event that one were needed at any point.

- 14.2 The President, OU Students Association recorded her appreciation of the efforts made to involve students in the appointment of the next Vice-Chancellor and welcomed this as a demonstration of transparency and trust between the University and students.
- 14.3 A member questioned the need to engage an external recruitment agency to the appointment process. The University Secretary reflected that he had been involved in the recruitment of six Vice-Chancellors through his career and had found engagement of a recruitment partner had been very valuable in identifying candidates from a range of networks and supporting candidates who were not successful. He emphasised that ultimate responsibility for the list of candidates rested with the Joint Committee. He encouraged Senate members to email in confidence any suggestions of possible candidates for the role. Another member agreed that an external agency could identify a range of candidates but felt that the key attribute required was an understanding of the collegiate nature of academia. A representative of ALs agreed but felt that candidate also had to understand the uniqueness of the University especially the distance between students and staff. Another member requested that the person specification for the role of Vice-Chancellor be carefully reviewed to take account of the points raised.
- 14.4 The University Secretary thanked the Senate for its helpful comments and reiterated that there would be other opportunities for it to input into the appointment process.

15 ANNUAL QUALITY REPORT

S-2018-04-12

- 15.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Academic Strategy) (PVC RAS) explained that this important report from the Academic Quality and Governance Committee provided information to the Senate on the effectiveness of the University's management of quality and standards.
- 15.2 The Chair, ALE, informed the Senate that funding for the Progression Contact by Tutors programme referred to in paragraph 10 was under review. She requested that this be reflected upon further as the project had been successful
- 15.3 A representative of the OU Students Association commented that students were able to access external examiner reports on modules, but it was via a cumbersome online route. She requested that the University prioritise the development of the publication site to make these reports available more available more easily (paragraph 15). She considered that students would then see the valuable work carried out by external examiners and the University's response to issues raised. The reports would also be a means of demonstrating the quality of the University's modules.
- 15.4 Another representative of the OU Students Association drew attention to the reference in paragraphs 37 and 51 to the Digital-by-Design strategy. She was concerned over the reference to this and emphasised that students did not wish to learn via online materials only and supported a blended approach to the provision of study materials. The PVC RAS explained that reference to the strategy was included in the report as it was a retrospective evaluation of the 2017-18 academic year. The Acting Vice-Chancellor assured the Senate that the University supported a blended approach to student learning, to provide the best possible student experience and that provision of text books remained an important element of this approach.
- 15.5 The President, OU Students Association requested that reference to students as key stakeholders be included in paragraph 14.

- 15.6 The PVC RAS agreed to refer the points raised to the authors of the report for revision and relevant areas of the University where applicable.
- 15.7 The Senate **recommended** to the Council that it endorse the statement of assurance required by the Office for Students (paragraph 94).
- 16 FUTURELEARN S-2018-04-13**
- Minutes 16.1 to 16.11 and a Post Meeting Note are recorded in confidential minutes (S-2018-04-CM)
- 17 ACADEMIC STRATEGY: IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE S-2018-04-14**
- The Senate **noted** the update on the implementation of the OU Academic Strategy
- 18 FASS: SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING S-2018-04-15**
- The Senate **approved** the proposal to restructure the schools in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences from four to three schools:
- School of Psychology & Counselling
School of Arts & Humanities
School of Social Sciences & Global Studies
- 19 EMERITUS PROFESSORS S-2018-04-16**
- The Senate **approved** the recommendation from the Chairs Subcommittee that the title of Emeritus Professor be awarded to
- Professor Lynda Prescott, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS),
Professor Robert Lambourne and Professor Shailey Minocha,
Faculty of Science, Mathematics, Technology and Engineering (STEM)
- Post Meeting Note*
The Acting Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of the Senate, also took Chair's Action to approve the award of the Emeritus Title to Professor Nigel Harris, STEM whose name had been omitted from the paper.
- 20 THE COUNCIL S-2018-04-17**
- The Senate **noted** the minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 17 July 2018.
- 21 CHAIRS ACTION S-2018-04-18**
- The Senate **noted** the report of action taken by the Chair since the last meeting
- 22 FUTURE ITEMS OF BUSINESS S-2018-04-19**
- The Senate **noted** the provisional items for the agenda for the meeting of the Senate on 24 January 2019

23 DECLASSIFICATION OF PAPERS: POST MEETING DECLASSIFICATION:

Papers to remain classified as highly confidential:

S-2018-04-13 FutureLearn
S-2018-04-17B Council - Confidential Minutes

Paper declassified:

S-2018-04-16 Emeritus Professors

24 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Meetings would be held on the following dates:

Thursday 24 January 2019 (Note: Change of day)
Wednesday 3 April 2019
Wednesday 26 June 2019

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University Secretary

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