



## THE SENATE

### Minutes

This paper presents the confirmed Minutes of the last meeting of the Senate held on Thursday 24 January 2019 at The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes.

The Senate **approved** these Minutes as a correct record of the meeting on 3 April 2019 subject to an amendment to Minute 11.6.

Jake Yeo  
Director, University Secretary's Office

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## THE SENATE

Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Thursday 24 January 2019  
in the Hub Theatre, The Open University, Walton Hall

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### PRESENT:

#### 1) Ex officio

Professor Josie Fraser	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Acting)
Dr Liz Marr	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students)
Professor Kevin Hetherington	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Academic Strategy)
Professor Devendra Kodwani	Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Law
Professor Nicholas Braithwaite	Executive Dean, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (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
Dr Sarah Crafter	Professor John Wolffe
Professor Ole Grell	Professor Nicola Watson
Dr Jovan Byford	Dr Richard Heffernan
Professor David Johnson	Mr Matt Staples
Ms Karen Hagan	Dr Deborah Drake
Dr Alison Penn	

##### Faculty of Business & Law (FBL)

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

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

Dr John Baxter	Professor David Rothery
Dr Janet Haresnape	Mrs Diane Butler
Dr Robert Brignall	Dr Rachael Luck
Dr Helen Fraser	Dr Leonor Barroca
Professor Simon Green	Dr Stephen Burnley
Dr Toby O'Neil	Dr Hayley Ryder
Dr Magnus Ramage	Dr Mark Slaymaker
Dr Jon Hall	Dr Ann Walshe

**Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS)**

Dr Kristina Hultgren (remote)	Mr Andy Rixon
Mrs Anna Comas-Quinn	Dr Aravinda Guntupalli
Dr Jackie Watts	Dr Verina Waights
Ms Tyrrell Golding	Mr Jeremy Wilcock
Dr Elodie Vialleton	Ms Susan Kotschi (remote)

**Learning and Teaching Innovation (LTI) (Academic)**

Mr Chris Edwards	Professor Eileen Scanlon
Professor Allison Littlejohn	

**3) Associate Lecturers**

Dr Walter Pisarski	Mr David Knowles
Dr Hilary Partridge	Mr Rob Parker
Mr Tim Parry	Dr Linda Walker

**4) Students Appointed by Open University Students Association**

Ms Cath Brown	Mrs Sarah Jones (alternate)
Ms Danielle Smith	Mr Peter Cowan
Ms Alison Kingan	Dr Barbara Tarling

**5) Academic-related Staff**

Dr Caitlin Adams	
Mr Derek Sheills	Ms Elaine Walker
Mrs Rukhsana Malik	
Mr Billy Khokhar	Mrs Maria Crisu
Mrs Clare Ikin	Mrs Selena Killick
Mr Toby Scott-Hughes	Mrs Kate Signorini
Ms Julia Barkans	Ms Tracy Lawson

**6) Co-opted members**

Mr Phil Berry	Mr Christopher Turner
Ms Susan Stewart	Dr David Knight
Mrs Louise Casella	Mr Chris Rooke

**In attendance**

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**

Dr Laura Lauer, Head of Governance  
Ms Anna Barber, Director of Strategy (for Minute 12)  
Mr Michael Flack, Academic Strategy and Planning (for Minute 15 and 16)  
Mrs Kym Gosling, member of support staff  
Miss Charlotte Boardman, Governance Assistant

**APOLOGIES:**

**1) Ex officio**

Professor Mary Kellett, Vice-Chancellor (Acting)  
Professor Ian Fribbance, Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Dr Sally Hayes, Executive Dean, Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (Acting)

**Appointed**

**2) Central Academic Units**

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

Professor Claire Turner

Dr James Hague

Dr Karen Olsson-Francis

**Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS)**

Professor Jan Draper

Dr Uwe Baumann

Dr Jackie Watts

**3) Associate Lecturers**

Mrs Frances Chetwynd

**4) Students Appointed by Open University Students Association**

Mr Rory Powell

**5) Academic-related Staff**

Dr Mark Nichols

**6) Co-opted members**

Mr John D'Arcy

**In attendance**

Mr Jonathan Nicholls, University Secretary

## 1 WELCOME AND THANKS

- 1.1 Professor Josie Fraser, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Acting), reported that the Vice-Chancellor was unwell and unable to attend the meeting. The Vice-Chancellor had taken Chair's Action as Chair of the Senate and asked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to take the chair for the meeting. The Pro-Vice Chancellor, Students (Interim) would assume the chair at 4.30pm as Professor Fraser had to leave the meeting.
- 1.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Acting) welcomed Mrs Tracey Lawson and Ms Gemma Malder, Academic-Related members and Dr Rachael Luck, STEM to their first meeting of the Senate. She also welcomed Professor Nick Braithwaite, Executive Dean (Interim), Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Dr Liz Marr in her new role as Pro-Vice Chancellor, Students (Interim) and Ms Sarah Jones, alternate member for the OU Students Association. Apologies for absence were as noted and Mr Jake Yeo, Director, University Secretary's Office was acting as Secretary to the Senate in the University Secretary's absence.

## 2 MINUTES

S-2018-04-M

- 2.1 The Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 10 October 2018 subject to the inclusion of the following amendments shown in *italics*:

### Minute 11.5

- 2.2 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.*

## 3 MATTERS ARISING

S-2019-01-01

### Minute 5.2 of S-2018-04-M

- 3.1 An Associate Lecturer (AL) representative expressed concern that the draft policy on recording tutorials was not workable and advised caution over adding new policies to existing policies. He was unclear over the OU Students Association's requirements within a policy on recording tutorials but requested that the University consider a fully integrated policy on tuition. The President, OU Students Association, explained that students wished to access recordings of tutorials, and the position was currently very varied across clusters of tutorials. She emphasised that a policy on recording tutorials must be flexible and incorporate appropriate pedagogical considerations and supported by robust guidance.
- 3.2 The Director, Research LTI emphasised that the approach to the recording of tutorials was part of a broader pedagogic approach to tuition. The PVC, Students (Interim) had been working closely with Associate Deans in Faculties, sharing the approach and working together to improve the availability and effective use of tutorials. The guidance was currently being drafted. The President, OU Students Association urged the University to consult students on the proposed approach.

- 3.3 The Senate **noted** the responses to the matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 10 October 2018.

#### **4 APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS IN SECTIONS B AND D**

- 4.1 A member queried why paper *S-2019-01-17 Appointment Procedures for Heads of Schools* had been listed on the agenda under *Section D – Items for Formal Approval or Report*, as he did not consider it to be an item of routine business. He expressed concern that the proposals within it had not been discussed sufficiently in Faculties and this was in contravention of the principles focusing on greater transparency and consultation arising from the Critical Review of the Students First Transformation. The Senate should not decide upon matters that had not been discussed with stakeholders. He requested that the paper be withdrawn, and Executive Deans discuss it within their Faculties and it be brought back to a future meeting of the Senate.
- 4.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the paper had been starred for discussion and that it would be discussed at the conclusion of Section B on the agenda to ensure she was present for the debate.

#### **5 REPORT FROM AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR**

- 5.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor explained that she would deliver the remarks as they had been prepared for the Vice-Chancellor. She reminded the Senate that 2019 would be a year of celebration for the University and hoped as many members as possible would join in the programme of events for the University's fiftieth birthday.

##### Appointments

- 5.2 The Senate was informed that Mr Malcolm Sweeting had been appointed as Pro-Chancellor, and Professor Josie Fraser as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Acting). The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) role had been created to provide support for the Vice-Chancellor allowing her to balance the internal and external demands on her time in the University's 50th year. The DVC would be chairing the new VCE-Academic group, which had collective accountability for all aspects of the University's academic endeavour, before making recommendations to Senate for approval. The role was for 12 months and any decision regarding a substantive position would be taken by the new Vice-Chancellor, supported by a full recruitment process including due Senate involvement. Professor Fary Cachelin had been appointed as the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS). Professor Cachelin would be considering the integration of LTI-Academic into the faculty and recommendations were being compiled by a Steering Group in WELS. The Senate's views would be welcomed and any changes that required governance approval would be brought back to the Senate in due course.

##### External news

- 5.3 Mr Chris Skidmore has been appointed as the Government's new Universities and Science Minister in England following the resignation of Mr Sam Gyimah. Mr Skidmore had recently called for more action to support disabled students, so the University's provision and support for such students had been flagged with his office. The Report from the Augar Review on Post-18 education and funding was still expected to be published in February. It was also reported that Mr Jonathan Nicholls, University Secretary, and Council Member, Ms Maggie Galliers have been invited to join an advisory group supporting an independent review of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF).

##### Internal news

- 5.4 Student numbers for the February presentation (19B) were currently ahead of targets at 114% for new undergraduate students and 122% for continuing students. Figures for postgraduate students also exceeded target at 105%.

- 5.5 The ballot on the adoption of the new Associate Lecturer (AL) contract would be closing shortly and thanks were recorded to all those involved in reaching this point. A vote in favour of the contract would lead to the start of extensive implementation and transition planning with many stakeholders including AL managers, module team chairs and ALs. On behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Fraser acknowledged that several Senate members of Council had expressed concern that there had not been sufficient time for discussion of the contract as they would have liked. Members of the Senate were assured that a substantive item would be brought to the meeting of the Council in March 2019 and the Senate in April 2019, to enable members to discuss the academic implications (including risks and mitigations).

#### Research news

- 5.6 Researchers from the Faculties of Business and Law (FBL) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), had been awarded a one-year £307,000 contract by the European Space Agency to investigate the socio-economic benefits of the European Space Agency's (ESA) exploration programme. The Knowledge Media Institute (KMi) was playing a lead role in a project using blockchain technology to allow learners to manage and verify their educational and employment qualifications. The Open University Sexuality Alliance (led by Dr Sarah Earle in WELS) together with Hospice UK have received funding to explore the sex, relationships and intimacy needs in the lives of young people with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions, as part of an initiative to support seriously ill young people.

#### Thanks

- 5.7 On behalf of the Senate, Professor Fraser thanked Ms Dawn Turpin, Head of Governance, and Ms Teresa Coyle, Manager, Governance Team who were leaving the University, for their expert support, guidance and commitment during many meetings of the Senate. Professor Fraser wished them both well and every success for the future.

#### Questions to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor

- 5.8 A member sought information on the pause announced in the expansion of Open Create. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor explained that the University was committed to direct authoring of module materials, but the Vice-Chancellor's Executive had undertaken a prioritisation exercise and made some difficult decisions around refocussing expertise and resource to support areas of highest priority. Key priorities had been set as student success, the replacement of core systems and the implementation of the AL contract. A number of other projects had therefore been paused for 12 months, with a commitment to review.
- 5.9 A member commented that if the transfer of LTI (Academic) to WELS was within the Senate's remit, then attention must also be given to the management of the Open Programme. This was a major qualification for the University and he felt it was inappropriate for it to reside within one single faculty.
- 5.10 Another member enquired whether there was any update for the Senate in relation to FutureLearn, following the extensive debate at the last meeting. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported that discussions were ongoing with interested parties. She explained that the operation of the business relationship with FutureLearn was the remit of the Council however the Senate had a role in the development of the academic partnership. Another member emphasised the importance of transparent dialogue with FutureLearn and was concerned that a lack of openness and communication could lead to suspicion. It was suggested that it could be helpful for the Senate to have a discussion session with representatives of FutureLearn and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor agreed to take this forward.

**Action: Deputy Vice-Chancellor**

- 5.11 Concern was expressed that at an institutional level the University appeared to be failing some of its most vulnerable students by not providing them with alternative format materials or meeting other additional requirements for their studies. Some students with additional requirements on the October (18J) presentation had not received their module materials until three months after the module start date. This was particularly problematic for disabled students who required printed versions of materials where the module material was all online. The member was concerned that the sheer volume, lack of resource and limited institutional understanding of the processes involved resulted in a coherent distribution process not being in place. She urged that this matter be addressed as a matter of urgency.
- 5.12 The PVC Students (Interim) thanked members of the Senate for raising the matter and expressed her disappointment that the problem was still ongoing and taking time to resolve. The reasons for this failure were complex and included unacceptable service levels from an external provider. There had been an increased requirement in the last two years, in part due to increasing requests but also to the increase in modules moving more content online, however these were not sufficient reasons for the failure to deliver. She was also aware that in some cases the alternative formats issued were not ideal for many students. As delays increased, other areas of the University had helped the Alternative Formats Team in Academic Services to manage the volumes of materials produced and the in-house printing of bespoke alternative formats. Students were also informed of other possible ways to access course material including Daisy talking books. The Alternative Format Team had worked with the OU Students Association to monitor student communications so that if any student indicated that their lack of alternative format material was negatively affecting their studies then the Team endeavoured to print that material in-house and deliver it to the student.
- 5.13 Looking forward, a workshop was taking place in February bringing all stakeholders across the University together to identify points of failure and agree actions to eliminate them. Under the University's Accessibility Policy, the longer-term solution would be the full adoption of a universal design model for module production that would allow individual students to personally choose the best format to access their course materials.
- 5.14 The PVC Students (Interim) acknowledged that many colleagues had raised this issue and she agreed it was an unacceptable operational failure. She apologised to all those affected and assured the Senate that her team was committed to ensuring the matter was resolved. She offered to provide progress updates to subsequent meetings, until the situation was fully resolved.

**Action: Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Students (Interim)**

- 5.15 A member drew attention to information which had appeared in the press from the Augar Review on Post-18 education and funding relating to differential fees and those with low-grade A levels possibly not being eligible for student loans. He requested that the University establish if part-time higher education would be exempt from any such requirements. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the Strategy and Information Office were examining this area.

**6 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE S-2019-01-02**

The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2018/September 2018.

**7 ACADEMIC QUALITY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE S-2019-01-03**

The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held by correspondence between 24 October 2018 and 5 November 2018.

**8 RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

**S-2019-01-04**

8.1 Minute 15: Postgraduate Research Student Experience Survey

The President, OU Students Association welcomed the initiative to explore opportunities for postgraduate research students (PGRs) to gain experience of teaching and particularly through partnerships with other institutions. It was important however that undergraduate students were consulted in the process to ensure arrangements made were of benefit to them as well. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research, Enterprise and Scholarship (RES) explained that provision of development opportunities for PGRs through teaching was common practice in the higher education sector and any arrangements made would be sensitive to OU Teaching requirements and consultation would be carried out. Members drew attention to examples of successful initiatives for PGRs including teaching at STEM residential schools and a pilot scheme in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS).

8.2 The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2018.

**9 EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**S-2019-01-05**

The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held by correspondence between 29 November 2018 and 10 December 2018.

**10 PROCEDURES FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF HEADS OF SCHOOLS**

**S-2019-01-17**

10.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced the paper which had been starred for discussion. She explained that the procedures were drafted for approval by the Council, however the intentions of the newly established VCE-Academic group were to work with the Senate and academic colleagues to obtain feedback and views. Professor Fraser reported that she had been notified in advance of concern that stipulating 'relevant subject matter expertise' in the membership of the appointment panel was not sufficient and that the procedures needed to be explicit that the panel included members from the School in question. This point was acknowledged, and a revision would be made.

10.2 The Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Law (FBL), explained that the VCE-Academic group was aware of different practices operating across Schools in respect of appointments. Several Heads of School posts were due for appointment shortly, so it was considered prudent to seek consistency across the processes. The Head of School role was very important for the Faculty as it led the strategic direction of the School. The VCE-Academic group had thus reflected that the current three-year term (plus two optional years), in place for most current appointments, was too short as it did not encourage strategic long-term development and was not considered to be sufficiently attractive for potentially talented colleagues to apply. A term of five years (plus two optional years) was considered more appropriate. The VCE-Academic group had also acknowledged the importance of postholders being able to continue their academic work and career track so posts must be supported and have an academic base to be attractive.

10.3 A member reiterated his earlier concerns on the process by which the paper had been presented to the Senate for discussion. He did not consider that sufficient consultation had taken place in faculties over the proposals and this was not in the spirit of openness that the Critical Review had identified. In his view, the procedures proposed very profound changes to how a School would be run and it was unacceptable to push through this change in role. He also considered there to be more risks than those identified in the paper. He requested that the paper be withdrawn, discussed in Faculties and brought back to a future meeting of the Senate. Concern was also expressed that an equality analysis had not been carried out for the changes and that no evidence had been produced to demonstrate that a longer period in office would be more effective.

- 10.4 Other Senate members queried whether the paper should be discussed at all as it was issued less than six days before the meeting and thus in contravention of the Standing Orders. The Secretariat confirmed that with the Chair's permission an item can be added to the agenda but if a paper was issued less than six days before a meeting the consent of the Senate was required to debate it.
- 10.5 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor asked the Senate if it wished to discuss the paper. The Senate voted with an overwhelming majority not to discuss the paper. In response to a question, the Acting University Secretary confirmed that as the paper had not been discussed, it would not be recommended to Council at its next meeting.
- 10.6 A motion was then proposed by Jovan Byford and seconded by several members:

The Senate asks the Vice-Chancellor's Executive to engage in meaningful and thorough discussion with Schools and Faculties on any proposed changes to the Head of School role, before bringing the proposals to Senate and Council for discussion and approval.

- 10.7 The motion was **carried** overwhelmingly.

## **11 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**S-2019-01-06**

- 11.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research, Enterprise and Scholarship, (PVC RES) introduced the paper on behalf of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and reported that performance against the targets for student numbers for the October (18J) presentation was strong.
- 11.2 A representative of Associate Lecturers (ALs) questioned why ALs were included in the data on career stages in paragraph 2(e) as they did not have a career progression path. He also considered that other data presented in the report was unhelpful. Other members however considered that the report presented data that was useful, though acknowledged it was presented rather briefly in places.
- 11.3 Concern was expressed that the position in relation to module retention, completion and pass rates was not improving despite numerous initiatives underway to help students. The report did not describe the complex situations in which some students found themselves, but it was essential students received help and guidance promptly to avoid problems exacerbating, for example, having to miss a year of study. The PVC Students (Interim) informed the Senate that work was ongoing to improve reporting in this area, including the establishment of a new advisory board with members from student-facing operational areas. It was acknowledged that colleagues across the University were working very hard to support students in their studies and that more information on the retention and completion measures that had been adopted on different qualifications and how successful these were would be very helpful.
- 11.4 It was also suggested that it would be helpful to understand more clearly how target figures for student numbers and student satisfaction were calculated. More comparative data would also help to gauge performance, for example presentations in one year compared to the equivalent presentations in subsequent years. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor explained that the student number planning teams operated across the Information Office and Faculties to produce targets. She agreed it would be helpful to see more detailed data in the report and would discuss this with the Director, Strategy.

**Action: Director, Strategy**

- 11.5 A member sought further information on the University's strategy for postgraduate study. It was felt that marketing for postgraduate study was ineffective, and some postgraduate

qualifications were now being offered under the auspices of FutureLearn. The PVC RES explained that the approach to taught postgraduate study was included in the University's Curriculum Plan under the auspices of the VCE-Academic group. As part of this, Faculties had responsibility for their own strategies in conjunction with the University Curriculum Group.

- 11.6 Frustration was expressed over the focus in the University on large research bids and their limited success, as reported in section 2 (d). Resources were limited, and it was felt that improved training in this area would be beneficial. A member also urged the University to increase its external engagement as an organisation and thus show leadership externally to drive developments in the sector. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor assured the Senate that the University was highly engaged in the external environment, engaging with national governments, participating in high level consultations and producing influential responses. A member questioned the nature of accountability within the university in that, when an individual was listed as being accountable for a University task or in a university role, what that actually meant in measurable terms.
- 11.7 The Senate **noted** the Academic Performance Report.

*Tea break*

**12 PROGRESS UPDATE ON CRITICAL REVIEW ACTIONS AND RE-ARTICULATED STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES** **S-2019-01-07**

- 12.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced the paper and thanked the Director, Strategy and her team who had worked hard to produce the revised objectives. The team had posed challenging questions about achievability and feasibility whilst still focussing on doing the very best for students. The Director, Strategy, explained that the paper summarised progress with the implementation of the actions in response to the Critical Review and set out the refreshed strategic objectives. The University's mission, vision and values remained unchanged with the primary strategic objective being student success. The Council would be considering the refreshed objectives at its forthcoming meeting in March, and the views of the Senate would be welcomed at this point.
- 12.2 A representative of the OU Students Association welcomed the revised vision of student success and the clear statement of investing in technology that enabled success. It was hoped that more opportunities would be established to work in partnership with the Students Association.
- 12.3 Clarification was sought on the intention to grow apprenticeships within the UK. Concern was expressed that the strategy was not clear and the opinions of academic staff working on apprenticeship qualifications were not being considered. There was also concern over the retention rates and costs of tuition for apprenticeship students. The PVC Students (Interim) acknowledged the issues raised and asked for them to be forwarded to her for consideration by the Apprenticeships Steering Group.
- 12.4 In response to a question on the University's ability to manage strategic change, the Director, Strategy confirmed that the Director, OU in Wales had been appointed as the new Chair of the Major Change Board and the recommendations from her wide-ranging review of the Board would be considered by the University Secretary and the Vice-Chancellor's Executive.
- 12.5 Another member reflected on recommendation 5 from the Critical Review, to address the disconnect between leadership style and University culture. She emphasised the importance of building morale and empowering staff and was concerned that insufficient action was being taken to change the culture of the University. The Director, Strategy

commented that changing a culture would take time and it was incumbent on everyone to model positive intent.

- 12.6 The Senate **noted** the progress update on actions in response to the Critical Review of the Students First Transformation and the re-articulation of the University's Strategic Objectives.

**13 STUDENT SUCCESS: UPDATE REPORT S-2019-01-08**

- 13.1 The PVC Students (Interim) introduced the report and drew attention to two corrections. In paragraph 8, in the last line, the text in brackets required deletion and in paragraph 16, the suggested merging of three established groups focussing on student voice, student engagement and student satisfaction would not now progress. The primary responsibility of the PVC Students (Interim) was the success of the University's students and work to support this aim included widening access, improved quality monitoring and enhancement, and planning and preparation for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) in 2020. In pursuing these aims, Dr Marr confirmed that she was committed to engaging with a wide range of colleagues and would welcome the Senate's views on the responsibilities of the portfolio.
- 13.2 A representative of ALs sought further information on the "quick wins" referred to in paragraph 8 and also enquired how the proposal for staggered starts would work in practice. The PVC Students (Interim) explained that staggered starts were still under discussion and the identification of "quick wins" was an attempt to focus on areas which were of greatest impact on student success and could be actioned quickly. Proposals would be discussed with Module Teams. Another AL was concerned that a proliferation of advisory groups could result in a lack of accountability for student success. He urged the University to ensure that student success and satisfaction were key overall responsibilities with clear measures, outcomes and accountability. It was also suggested that although it was important to concentrate on what was done well, the PVC Students portfolio should also include exploration of new methods and initiatives.
- 13.3 The provision of improved guidance in supported open entry was welcomed but it would be essential that trained staff were in place to provide this and in time for the 2019-20 academic year. Clarification was also sought on the statistics quoted in relation to the increasing numbers of students studying at full-time intensity and it was confirmed that the figures referred to percentages of student numbers and not full-time equivalents (FTE). Concern was also expressed that the quality monitoring and enhancement (QME) processes were complex and time consuming.
- 13.4 The PVC Students (Interim) thanked the Senate for its insightful comments and assured members that the issues raised would be given consideration.

*The Deputy Vice-Chancellor left the meeting at this point and the PVC Students (Interim) took the chair.*

**14 ACADEMIC STRATEGY: IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE S-2019-01-09**

- 14.1 A representative of Associate Lecturers (ALs) drew attention to paragraph 5 (b) and enquired about the timeline for the refresh of the University's teaching model and whether provision for ALs would be included in the academic career pathways. The Pro-Vice Chancellor, Research, Enterprise and Scholarship (PVC RES) explained that insufficient capability to renew and refresh the OU's teaching model had been identified as a risk and was not a specific action, so no timeframe was available at present. The work on creating academic career pathways was an element of the Sustainable Academic Communities project which was currently paused and under review by the VCE-Academic group.

14.2 A representative of the OU Students Association emphasised the importance of engaging students in the processes of their learning and urged the University to do this at every opportunity.

14.3 The Senate **noted** the update on the implementation of the OU Academic Strategy.

**15 ANNUAL REPORT ON ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS S-2019-01-10**

15.1 A member sought information on the number of cases submitted from Staff Tutors for promotion to a Chair. It was agreed to provide this information in a post-meeting note.

**Action: Governance Team**

15.2 The Director, Open University Validation Partnerships queried whether work undertaken by academic staff in relation to validation activity could in future be recognised in the promotion criteria. The University had approximately 40,000 students studying with 40 validated partner institutions and the oversight of academic standards was significant and important work for staff. The PVC RES agreed to refer the point to the Chair of the Review of the Promotions Scheme for consideration.

**Action: PVC RES**

15.3 The Senate **noted** the report of academic promotions for 2018.

Post-Meeting Note

*Cases submitted to the Chairs Subcommittee of the Academic Staff Promotions Committee from Staff Tutors for consideration for promotion to Chair*

*2016 one case, female, not promoted*

*2017 one case, female, not promoted*

*2018 two cases, one male, one female, both promoted*

**16 INTERIM REPORT ON REVIEW OF PROMOTIONS SCHEME S-2019-01-11**

16.1 A member commented that the existing promotion scheme permitted flexibility in the use of supplementary evidence to support cases and he requested that the University issue advice to Staff Tutors to use this provision. The PVC RES informed the Senate that additional guidance in the interpretation of the criteria for Staff Tutors was available but would be reviewed in the light of the outcomes of the review of the promotion scheme.

16.2 The Senate **noted** the interim report from the review of the academic promotions scheme.

**17 EMERITUS PROFESSORS S-2019-01-12**

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

Professor Janette Rutterford, Faculty of Business and Law

Professor David Wilson, Faculty of Business and Law

Professor Ian Wright, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

**18 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHANCELLOR: UPDATE S-2019-01-13**

The Senate **noted** the update on the Vice-Chancellor appointment process.

**19 THE COUNCIL**

**S-2019-01-14**

- 19.1 A representative of the OU Students Association expressed her concern over the convening of meetings by correspondence particularly when matters of significant or controversial business required consideration. The Acting Chair agreed to refer the concerns for consideration during the forthcoming review of academic governance.

**Action: Governance Team**

- 19.2 The Senate **noted**:

- a) the minutes and confidential minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 25 September 2018 (confirmed) and 27 November 2018 (unconfirmed)
- b) the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting held by correspondence between 11 – 18 December 2018.

**20 CHAIRS ACTION**

**S-2019-01-15**

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

**21 FUTURE ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

**S-2019-01-16**

The Senate **noted** the provisional items for the agenda for the meeting of the Senate on 3 April 2019 subject to the inclusion of an item relating to the Associate Lecturers contract.

**22 DECLASSIFICATION OF PAPERS**

To remain confidential:

S-2019-01-02B Strategic Planning and Resources Committee: Confidential Minutes  
S-2019-01-14B The Council: Confidential Minutes

To be declassified:

S-2019-01-07 Progress Update on Critical Review Actions and Re-Articulated  
Strategic Objective: Appendix  
S-2019-01-12 Emeritus Professors

**23 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Meetings would be held on the following dates:

Wednesday 3 April 2019 (with members of the Council in attendance)  
Wednesday 26 June 2019

Jake Yeo  
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