



## THE SENATE

### Minutes

This paper presents the confirmed Minutes of the last meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 3 April 2019 at The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes.

The Senate is **approved** these Minutes as a correct record of the meeting on 26 June 2019, subject to an amendment to Minute 7.2.

Jonathan Nicholls  
University Secretary

Sue Thomas  
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## THE SENATE

Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 3 April 2019  
in the Hub Theatre, The Open University, Walton Hall

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### PRESENT:

#### 1) Ex officio

Professor Mary Kellett	Vice-Chancellor (Acting)
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 Ian Fribbance	Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Professor Nicholas Braithwaite	Executive Dean, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (Acting)
Professor Patrick McAndrew	Learning and Teaching Innovation, Director of Research
Professor Fary Cachelin	Executive Dean, Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies
Ms Ann Davies	Director of Library Services (Interim)

### Appointed

#### 2) Central Academic Units

##### Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

Dr William Brown	Dr Elaine Moohan
Professor Ole Grell	Professor John Wolffe **
Dr Jovan Byford **	Professor Nicola Watson (remote)
Professor David Johnson	Dr Richard Heffernan **
Ms Karen Hagan	Mr Matt Staples
Dr Alison Penn	Dr Deborah Drake

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

Miss Carol Howells	Mr Mike Phillips
Dr Caroline Clarke	

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

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

Dr Karen Olsson-Francis (remote)  
Dr James Hague

Dr Ann Walshe

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

Dr Kristina Hultgren (remote)  
Mrs Anna Comas-Quinn (remote)  
Dr Jackie Watts  
Ms Tyrrell Golding  
Dr Elodie Vialleton  
Professor Jan Draper

Dr Aravinda Guntupalli  
Dr Verina Waights  
Mr Jeremy Wilcock  
Ms Susan Kotschi (remote)  
Dr Jackie Watts

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

Mr Chris Edwards

Professor Eileen Scanlon

**3) Associate Lecturers**

Dr Walter Pisarski  
Dr Hilary Partridge  
Mr Tim Parry \*\*

Mr David Knowles  
Mr Rob Parker  
Mrs Frances Chetwynd \*\*

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

Ms Cath Brown \*\*  
Ms Danielle Smith  
Ms Alison Kingan

Mrs Nicki Hadjipanteli (alternate)  
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  
Ms Elaine Walker  
Mrs Maria Crisu  
Mrs Selena Killick  
Mrs Kate Signorini  
Mrs Tracy Lawson

**6) Co-opted members**

Mr Phil Berry (remote)  
Ms Susan Stewart  
Mrs Louise Casella

Mr John D'Arcy \*\*  
Dr David Knight  
Mr Chris Rooke

**In attendance**

Mr Jonathan Nicholls, University Secretary  
Mr Jake Yeo, Director, University Secretary's Office  
Dr Laura Lauer, Head of Governance  
Ms Sue Thomas, Senior Manager, Governance  
Mrs Alison Benson, Senior Manager, Governance (remote)  
Ms Anna Barber, Director of Strategy

**Members of the Council in attendance**

Mr Malcolm Sweeting, Chair and Pro-Chancellor  
Ms Mary Curnock Cook  
Mr Ruth Girardet  
Ms Maggie Galliers  
Ms Anna Henderson  
Mr Robert McCracken  
Mrs Rachel Lock (remote)

**Observing**

Dr Sally Hayes, PVC Students office  
Mr Aaron Porter, Advance HE (for Academic Governance Review)  
Professor Ella Ritchie, Advance HE (for Academic Governance Review)  
Professor Paul White, Advance HE (for Academic Governance Review)  
Mrs Kym Gosling, member of support staff  
Mrs Dagmara Rochowski, Head of Strategic Planning (for development)

\*\* Also members of the Council

**APOLOGIES:**

**1) Ex officio**

Professor Devendra Kodwani, Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Law

**Appointed**

**2) Central Academic Units**

**Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)**

Dr Sarah Crafter

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

Dr Kristen Reid

Dr Sharon Slade

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

Professor Claire Turner

Dr Robert Brignall

Dr Stephen Burnley

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

Mr Andy Rixon

**3) Associate Lecturers**

Dr Linda Walker

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

Mr Rory Powell

**5) Academic-related Staff**

Mrs Gemma Maldar

**6) Co-opted members**

Mr Christopher Turner

## 1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1.1 The Vice-Chancellor welcomed the Pro-Chancellor and members of the Council who were attending this meeting of the Senate. She reflected that the University felt very different from the situation it faced at this point in 2018 and expressed her gratitude for the support of the Senate and the role it played in the University's recovery. Professor Kellett acknowledged that whilst there was work still to be done, it was important as it approached its fiftieth anniversary, to take pride in and celebrate the University's great achievements.
- 1.2 The Vice-Chancellor also welcomed Professor Fary Cachelin, Executive Dean, Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS) to her first meeting of the Senate. The Senate was also informed that Aaron Porter, Ella Ritchie and Paul White from Advance HE were observing the meeting as part of the Academic Governance Review. Advance HE had extensive experience supporting institutions in reviewing their academic governance and over the coming weeks, the team would be observing committees and arranging to speak with constituent groups. The report of the Review would be presented to Senate on 26 June
- 1.3 The Vice-Chancellor invited Mr Malcolm Sweeting, Pro-Chancellor to address the Senate.

## 2 PRO-CHANCELLOR'S REMARKS

- 2.1 Mr Sweeting thanked the Senate for the opportunity to speak and said that he was delighted and excited to have been appointed as Pro-Chancellor in the University's fiftieth year. He was inspired by the numbers of OU stories he had heard since his appointment was announced and believed they reflected the importance of the University in changing lives. Mr Sweeting saw many parallels between his own professional career as a lawyer in an international practice and the operation of the University, emphasising the importance and value of collaboration.
- 2.2 On taking up his new role, Mr Sweeting considered the University faced six key areas to prioritise. These included the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor, the establishment of stability and talent in senior roles, the outcomes of the Augar Review when published, the implementation of the new associate lecturer (AL) contract, the Core Systems Replacement (CSR) project and the future of FutureLearn. Mr Sweeting believed there to be numerous opportunities for the University and it must be bold and seize initiatives. He looked forward to an exciting period for the University and to working closely with the Senate.

## 3 MINUTES

S-2019-01-M

- 3.1 The Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 24 January 2019 subject to the inclusion of the following amendment shown in *italics*

### Minute 11.6 Academic Performance Report

- 3.2 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.*

#### 4 MATTERS ARISING

S-2019-02-01

- 4.1 A member acknowledged the work undertaken to resolve the difficulties experienced in distributing alternate format materials to students at the beginning of the 2018J presentation and the much improved position for students on the 19B presentation. She was aware that students who proactively indicated that the lack of alternative format material was negatively affecting their studies were sent the material they needed. However, concern was expressed that other students who were reluctant to complain might also have been affected. The member enquired as to what was being done to ensure that all students on the 18J presentation who were affected by the delay in delivery of alternative format materials were identified and offered appropriate guidance and/or fee waivers where deferral had been necessary because of the delay.
- 4.2 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) (Interim) reiterated her apologies for the problems that some students experienced. She assured the Senate that colleagues in Widening Access and Success Services and Student Recruitment and Support Centres were proactively following up on the potential impact of late delivery of material to students and identifying support requirements as appropriate. This included outbound calling to students registered as disabled. Colleagues in Academic Services had analysed the reasons given for deferrals of study in the 18J presentation and a very small number had indicated late arrival of alternative format material as the reason. In these instances, all students had been offered a transfer to a subsequent presentation. If any complaints were received, then these would be considered via the appropriate student complaints procedures.
- 4.3 In response to a question, the Vice-Chancellor explained that it had not been possible to bring an item in relation to FutureLearn to the Senate at this meeting. The University had entered an exclusivity period with a potential partner and was legally obliged to keep commercial information confidential at this time. The intention was to bring an item to the next meeting of the Senate.
- Action: University Secretary**
- 4.4 The Senate **noted** the responses to the matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 24 January 2019.

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

##### External News

- 5.1 With the Brexit negotiations' ongoing, the Spring Budget contained little of substance other than to confirm the Comprehensive Spending Review timetable. The Scottish Funding Council announced their indicative funding for higher education and the University's allocation was identical to the amount received in 2018/19. This was a relatively good outcome for the University, broadly in line with the overall settlement for the sector. The report from the Government's Review of Post-18 Education and Funding (the Augar Review) had been delayed and was unlikely to be available before May 2019. The Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Chris Skidmore MP, had visited the University recently. It had been a very successful visit and the Minister had been introduced to the OU's role in society, and its reach, scale and diversity; and some of its staff and students.
- 5.2 The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) had recently visited the Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS) to inspect the Health Care Practitioner Higher Apprenticeship programme. The University had received a 'good' grade overall and Ofsted had commended the programme's high retention and achievement levels. The Vice-Chancellor considered this to be a very promising start for the programme.

- 5.3 The University had received confirmation of its registration with the Office for Students (OfS). All initial conditions of registration had been satisfied, with no specific ongoing conditions being imposed. The Vice-Chancellor explained that there would be some enhanced monitoring, particularly around student outcomes and the actions being taken to improve progression and retention for undergraduates. The University was continuing to work with the OfS on how to define and measure student success for OU students. A further update would be presented to the Senate in June 2019.

**Action: PVC (Students)**

#### Research News

- 5.4 The Economic and Social Research Council (ERSC) had awarded £1 million to a project investigating the care of child migrants separated from their families, with Dr Sarah Crafter from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) as Principal Investigator. The ERSC had also awarded a research fellowship grant of £89,000 to Dr Jan van Duppen, FASS, for the Working the Playground: Urban Gardens and Sustainable Futures project. In STEM, researchers have been awarded £979,000 from the UK Space Agency to develop an X-ray observatory and contributing to a large-scale mission to develop the next generation of X-ray observatories due for launch in 2032.

#### Internal News

- 5.5 Registration had recently opened for the May 2019 presentations and in the first five days 2,463 new students had registered for qualifications and over 14,000 module reservations had been recorded.
- 5.6 The Vice-Chancellor reported that there had been significant interest following the Blue Planet Live series on the BBC with vast numbers of requests for OU materials. This was very positive for the University but had resulted in excessive loads on already over-burdened IT systems. The situation was being monitored closely.
- 5.7 In Wales, the University had been awarded the contract for the Welsh Government's PGCE Alternative Routes into teaching, worth £3.6m over a 4-year period. A contract has also been agreed with Yum Restaurants International to provide a tailored BA (Honours) Business Management degree to Pizza Hut Restaurant General Managers. The contract would generate over £1.3 million core fee income over the next five years.

#### Appointment of new Vice-Chancellor

- 5.8 The University Secretary reported the recruitment process for the new Vice-Chancellor was proceeding in accordance with the planned timetable. Shortlisting of candidates would take place on 9 April 2019 and a two-day selection process was due to take place on 25/26 April 2019. A meeting of the Council was planned for 3 May 2019 to approve a recommendation for appointment from the Joint Appointment Committee. A change to the membership of the Joint Appointment Committee had been agreed by the Pro-Chancellor. Mr Sandie Begbie, representative of the Council had stood down due to work commitments and Mr Robert McCracken had been appointed in his place.

#### Cybersecurity

- 5.9 The Vice-Chancellor informed the Senate that a recent meeting of the University's Audit Committee had highlighted increased risks of a data breach during the University's fiftieth anniversary year. No organisation was immune to cyber threats and the Chief Information Officer and his team had undertaken considerable work to protect University systems. The results of a recent pilot phishing simulation in the University had identified the need for continued awareness, and there were likely to be difficult decisions ahead in relation to user autonomy and data security. The Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) were exploring appropriate mitigations to these risks and any changes necessary.

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

- 5.10 A special 50th Anniversary issue of Open Minds magazine had been sent to over 400,000 alumni which included a bespoke illustration titled 'The Gift' by OU honorary graduate, Sir Quentin Blake. The "Tree of Learning" alumni fundraising campaign had now reached over 5,400 donations, raising over £240,000 in just four weeks which would fund ten full Carers' Scholarships. It was the most successful fundraising appeal from alumni to date. In June 2019, the University would demonstrate its commitment to inclusivity and turn the University logo rainbow coloured to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of Pride. The University and the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL) would be co-hosting a Pan-Commonwealth Forum event in Edinburgh in September 2019. This significant gathering of educationalists from across the Commonwealth reflected the joint commitment of the University and the CoL to quality education and life-long learning.
- 5.11 The Director General of the BBC had hosted an event to celebrate the University's unique partnership with the BBC in advance of a special documentary to mark the OU at 50 which it was hoped would be aired on BBC4 on Charter Day, 23 April 2019, the University's "official" birthday. A 50th Anniversary photography collection, including ten unseen archive images and ten new images showing the University to be more relevant today than ever before would also be launched.

Staff Survey

- 5.12 The Vice-Chancellor concluded by expressing her pride that results from the Staff Survey in January 2019 had shown an encouraging improvement. Confidence in senior management had increased by 18% (in line with the sector average), staff sense of security in role was up by 11% and overall engagement scores rose by 3% which was higher than the UK benchmark. Professor Kellett acknowledged that the University should not become complacent as there were still areas to address such as the proportion of staff experiencing stress at work, but there were many positive signs which she hoped would progress further.

Questions

- 5.13 The Chair, AL Executive, agreed that it was vital the University protected the security of its systems and data but pointed out that over 4000 ALs needed to use the Tutor Home website. Most accessed this from their own computers over which the University had no control and often needed to access sensitive data. It was suggested that the University provide ALs with computer equipment and training. The costs of this was acknowledged, but this had to be balanced against the risks and damage if there was a serious breach of systems.

**6 ACADEMIC QUALITY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**S-2019-02-02**

Minute 11 Guidance on The Recording of Online Rooms Tutorials

- 6.1 The President, OU Students Association emphasised that students valued recordings of tutorials and urged the University to resolve the issues and issue guidance as soon as possible to help and support students. The PVC (Students) acknowledged that progress had been slow and informed the Senate that a group including representation from the OU Students Association had been established to examine the policy in relation to recording of tutorials. In response to a question, the PVC (Students) confirmed that the aim was to issue a clear policy statement and then provide guidance on implementation.

Minute 3.4: Teaching Excellence Framework

- 6.2 The student representative on the Council confirmed that in February 2019 the Council had approved evidence for the Independent Review of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF). The Students Association itself had not submitted evidence to the Review but had encouraged students to submit evidence individually, to ensure a wide range of views had been represented.

- 6.3 The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Governance Committee held on Monday 25 February 2019

**7 RESEARCH COMMITTEE S-2019-02-03**

Minute 10.1: Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 – Draft Code of Practice

- 7.1 A member commented that it was important to ensure time allocated to research was fully utilised particularly to enhance teaching activities. It was not always easy to recruit researchers so codes and regulations should be sympathetic to the requirements of researchers to ensure that creativity was not stifled in any way. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Academic Strategy) (PVC RES) explained that the Code of Practice was a requirement for the REF 2021 and it identified ways in which the REF submission would be conducted. He noted the concerns expressed over the recruitment of research staff but did not consider these related to this particular code of practice.
- 7.2 In response to a further question, the PVC RES explained that the University's Central Research Fund supported strategic investment in research. All 21 Units of Assessment would receive baseline level funding to support their development and Executive Deans would have discretion to allocate further funds following the outcomes of the Mock REF Exercise, with guidance from the Institutional Review Team (IRT).
- 7.3 The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting of the Research Committee held on Wednesday 06 March 2019

**8 HONORARY DEGREES 2019 S-2019-02-04**

The Senate **approved** the four nominations recommended by the Honorary Degrees Committee for the award of an Honorary Degree in 2019.

**9 APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES FOR HEADS OF SCHOOLS S-2019-02-08**

- 9.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) introduced the paper and explained that following the last meeting of the Senate, extensive consultation had taken place in Faculties and Schools on the appointment procedures for Heads of Schools. Several changes had been subsequently made to the procedures and role. The DVC hoped that the paper and work carried out addressed the concerns raised at the last meeting of the Senate.
- 9.2 Members of the Senate welcomed the consultation that had taken place and the revised procedures. Some members of the Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS) expressed concern that there appeared to have been limited opportunities for discussion of the revised proposals.
- 9.3 Members of the Senate welcomed the amendment of the term of office to 3 years, with the option of extending the term by up to 2 years on up to two occasions. Concern was expressed that the reference to obtaining feedback from the School on appointments via a rapporteur to the Appointment Panel appeared to have been removed from the procedures. The Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) confirmed that such a reference should have been included and seemed to have been removed in error although it was acknowledged that an implicit reference to obtaining the views of the School was referred to in paragraph 6 of the procedures. The Vice-Chancellor suggested that this wording be checked for clarity.

**Action: Deputy Vice-Chancellor**

- 9.4 An AL representative was concerned that ALs had not been consulted in two Faculties and that the paper referred to the inclusion of ALs in the selection exercises but not as members of the Appointment Panel itself.

- 9.5 Members reflected on the importance of paragraph 18(iv) and the removal of unintended gender, racial or other forms of bias in appointments. Wording of job descriptions could infer bias by poor drafting and it was essential this issue was addressed. It would also be important to develop capabilities in staff for senior roles. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that such work was underway through the Talent and Development Programme within People Services.
- 9.6 The Senate **recommended to the Council for approval**, the procedures for the appointment of Heads of Schools, to be approved in line with the Council's authority under Statute 13(11) of the Charter and Statutes of the University, subject to clarification of the point identified in minute 8.3 in relation to feedback from the School to the Appointment Panel.

*Tea Interval*

**10 ACADEMIC STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING S-2019-02-05**

- 10.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced the report and explained that following the Council's approval of the refreshed University Strategy and strategic success measures in March 2019, work has been undertaken to align reporting between the Council and the Senate to improve openness and transparency and provide greater coherence in strategic discussion and decision-making. The Senate would receive the same Institutional Performance Update as the Council and this would enable the Senate to focus upon key relevant academic issues.
- 10.2 Members of the Senate welcomed the new approach to academic performance reporting and agreed that the Senate had a key role in examining and challenging the data. To help with interpreting the data presented in the report, it was suggested that the methodology of the data collection should also be provided. The Vice-Chancellor explained that providing this background information would make the report much longer however if any members wished to obtain further information then they should contact the Strategy Office.
- 10.3 A representative of the OU Students Association requested that information on attainment gaps for disabled students and black, Asian and ethnic minority (BAME) students be reported to the Senate. A request was also made for student representatives to have access to the Institutional Performance SharePoint site. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor agreed to these requests.
- Action: Deputy Vice-Chancellor**
- 10.4 Clarification was sought on the accountability for student success and to what level this was devolved within the University. The PVC (Students) explained that the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) had collective overall responsibility but all staff were responsible for helping students to achieve success. Concern was expressed that despite significant resources being devoted to the improvement of student outcomes, several measures such as TMA submissions and module completion rates were still showing as red in the analysis. The Vice-Chancellor explained that several initiatives to help students succeed in their studies were relatively new so may take time to embed and thus show improvements in the measures.
- 10.5 In examining performance in relation to the *Student Success* objective, it was noted that the scale showing the ambition to increase ranking by 20 places appeared incorrect. A member queried why the proportion of students who declared that OU study helped them develop five of the seven Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) skills had decreased by 11%. The PVC (Students) agreed to provide further information on this point.

**Action: PVC (Students)**

- 10.6 A representative of ALs noted that the University had ranked very highly in the National Student Survey (NSS) in relation to assessment and feedback. She considered that this was due to the dedication and hard work by ALs and urged the University not to lose sight of this during changes such as the CSR, the new AL contract and the new eTMA system.
- 10.7 Attention was also drawn to the study engagement project conducted to support the planned introduction of part-time maintenance loans which would deliver an underpinning student success metric. This project was on schedule to complete its work in the summer 2019 and the new study engagement metric would be available from 2019J presentations. It was suggested that this could provide a more robust measure than simply engagement with the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) including engagement with the Library.
- 10.8 It was noted that the measure for major incidents within the *Technology that enables success* Strategic Objective, showed an increase. It was acknowledged that the University was embarking upon a major Core Systems Replacement (CSR) programme, but concern was expressed that some systems were unreliable, and students and staff could not always obtain assistance when problems arose. It was also suggested that to develop the digital fluency of students and equip them appropriately for the workplace, University staff needed to be digitally capable and confident. The *Technology* objective should therefore include metrics around capabilities in using technology.
- 10.9 It was also suggested that the *Dynamic and Inclusive Culture* Strategic Objective should include measures relating to staff wellbeing and to job sharing as this would be an important step in increasing diversity.
- 10.10 In the *Excellent Teaching and Research* objective, the percentage of teaching staff with a teaching qualification (HEA Fellowship) was listed as a measure of success. A member queried whether Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) was the only qualification being measured or whether others would be taken into account. The PVC RES assured the Senate that Fellowship of the HEA was an indicative example of a teaching qualification and others would be recognised. A representative of ALs enquired whether the percentage of teaching staff with a teaching qualification measure included AL staff. The PVC RES agreed to ascertain this information and report back.

**Action: PVC (RES)**

- 10.11 It was also noted that the University's Research and Enterprise Plan indicated an intent, as far as possible, to make research data and findings freely available. This could be an excellent way for the University to promote itself and its work. It was proposed therefore that a measure should be included to indicate the percentage of research which was classified as Open Access.
- 10.12 A representative of the OU Students Association commented that UK Postgraduate student numbers (FTE) had decreased and wondered whether the requirement to provide full payment at the start of the qualification might be problematic for some students. It was suggested that the University consider introducing a means to pay via instalments.
- 10.13 The Vice-Chancellor thanked members of the Senate for their valuable and insightful comments on the report.

**11 ASSOCIATE LECTURER CONTRACT: UPDATE S-2019-02-06**

- 11.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) introduced the paper and explained that it summarised the work progressed so far, the activities planned and an indicative timeline for this future work.
- 11.2 The President, OU Student Association drew attention to the risk register appended to the paper and expressed her concern that risks to the student experience and students' success were not recorded anywhere in the register. She also requested that students were represented in the work implementing the new contract. Another student representative noted the reference to a voluntary severance scheme being offered to ALs ahead of implementation of the new contract and hoped that tutoring would not suffer if many ALs accepted offers. An AL representative emphasised the importance of clarifying and communicating the voluntary severance scheme to ALs as a matter of urgency to establish stability across the AL workforce. The DVC assured the Senate that students would be included on the groups overseeing implementation. She also confirmed that the voluntary severance scheme would operate in accordance with standard University procedures with workloads being considered before any severance requests were accepted.
- 11.3 The Chair, Associate Lecturers' Executive (ALE) requested further information on the equality impact assessment referred to in paragraph 9. Another member commented that the numbers of BAME ALs was low and could potentially decrease further. Concern was also expressed that it might not be possible to recruit enough ALs under the new arrangements. The current methods were not considered effective and the University should look to launch a campaign to recruit ALs. The DVC explained that equality assessments would be carried out as the implementation progressed and pilot schemes would also assist in identifying any issues in relation to equality. The DVC also assured the Senate that the impact on staff tutors of implementing the new arrangements was being examined.
- 11.4 The Senate **noted** the update report on the AL contract.

**12 REVIEW OF ACADEMIC STAFF PROMOTIONS SCHEME: REPORT S-2019-02-07**

- 12.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Enterprise and Scholarship) introduced the report and invited Professor Jan Draper, Chair of the Review to identify key findings from the review. Professor Draper explained that the purpose of the Review had been to consider the operation of the current scheme and the outcomes of recent promotion rounds however the breadth of the Review's remit reflected an open-minded approach to the range of factors that influenced these issues. The report aimed to be an honest and open reflection of the views of those who contributed. Professor Draper acknowledged the assistance of all who had contributed and to the Project Steering Group and Alison Betts and Michael Flack who had supported the project.
- 12.2 An online participant welcomed the review but considered that further work was required. The recommendation to embed the promotions process in Career Development and Appraisal (CDSA) was acknowledged but it was essential that appropriate academic expertise was available to the People Hub to support this. Concern was expressed that the criteria were disproportionately disadvantaging women candidates and required review. In relation to professorial promotions, the scheme had been designed to allow academics to follow diverse career pathways however the evidence suggested promotion was becoming more difficult.

- 12.3 Other members welcomed the review and strongly supported the recommendation that the current promotions criteria were reviewed. Concern was expressed that the University was losing talented staff as they preferred to apply for external positions than engage with the promotion process. The system needed to be simpler and redesigned as the current method of writing individual statements deterred some staff from applying. The system was very time consuming and confidence and morale of staff who were not successful was seriously affected if they had spent significant time and effort working on their cases.
- 12.4 Attention was also drawn to the position of staff tutors, many of whom considered their work was currently not recognised in the promotion process. They would be heavily involved in the process of implementing the new AL contract over the next two years so feared being disadvantaged further.
- 12.5 A member reflected that the observation in section 5 (d) that the gap between Senior Lecturer and Professorial level was large was due to the abolition of the grade of reader following the last review of the promotion scheme. Professor Draper confirmed that benchmarking with other institutions had demonstrated that the grade of reader was declining in the sector, but the point could be taken forward in a review of the criteria.
- 12.6 In response to a question, the PVC RES informed the Senate that if the recommendations were approved by the Senate, an implementation plan would be drawn up. VCE (Academic), People Services and the Academic Staff Promotions Committee would be responsible for taking forward the recommendations.
- 12.7 The Senate:
- a) **noted** the findings of the Review in sections 4 and 5 of the report.
  - b) **approved** Recommendations 6.1 (Process) and 6.3 (Criteria).

### **13 ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW: REPORT**

- 13.1 The Vice-Chancellor reminded members that they had recently completed an online survey as part of the Annual Effectiveness Review process. The survey reports, which were completely anonymous, would be shared with Advance HE to inform the Academic Governance Review reporting to Senate in June 2019. The surveys had only recently closed and a fuller report on the Senate's survey would be circulated to members, but some key results were available to report at the meeting.
- 13.2 The survey of Senate members had a 60% response rate. The satisfaction rate of Senate members was 93% compared to 98% satisfaction across all academic governance
- 13.3 The Vice-Chancellor thanked Senate members for their engagement and contributions to the effectiveness process.

### **14 EMERITUS PROFESSORS**

**S-2019-02-09**

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

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Professor John Allen  
Professor Gwilym Beckerlegge  
Professor Ole Grell

Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

Professor Iain Gilmour  
Professor Chris Jones  
Professor Marian Petre  
Professor Michael Wilkinson  
Professor Zdenek Zdrahal

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies

Professor Teresa Lillis  
Professor Patrick McAndrew

**15 THE COUNCIL S-2019-02-10**

The Senate **noted**:

- (a) the confirmed minutes of the meeting held by correspondence between 18 – 25 February 2019
- (b) the unconfirmed minutes of the last meeting of the Council held on 5 March 2019
- (c) that the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2019 had not been made available as they contained commercially sensitive information that the University was legally obliged to keep confidential at this time.

**16 CHAIRS ACTION S-2019-02-11**

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

**17 FUTURE ITEMS OF BUSINESS S-2019-02-12**

The Senate **noted** the provisional items for the agenda for the meeting of the Senate on 26 June 2019.

**18 DECLASSIFICATION OF PAPERS**

To remain confidential:

S-2019-02-04 Honorary Degrees - Appendix

To be declassified:

S-2019-02-09 Emeritus Professors

**19 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Meetings would be held on the following dates:

Wednesday 26 June 2019  
Wednesday 16 October 2019  
Wednesday 22 January 2020  
Wednesday 1 April 2020 (Council members in attendance)  
Wednesday 17 June 2020

Jonathan Nicholls  
University Secretary

Sue Thomas  
Working Secretary to the Committee  
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