



**MEETING OF SENATE
MINUTES
Monday 22 April 2024
14.00, virtual Microsoft Teams meeting**

Present:

Professors: Allen, Birdi, Bond, Browne, Butts, Craddock, Clark, Dermott, Edwards, Faul, Glynn, George, Hemani, Jessop, Juncos, Kelly, Linthorst, Manly, McGirr, McManus, Malik, Munafo, Mundell, Nassehi, O'Toole, Piggins, Pamunuwa, Pantazis, Parkin, Powell, Raven, Robbins, Rust, Sandvoss, Savery, Smart, Spear, Squires, Tahko, Taylor, Tether, Thirlwell, Timpson, Welch, Whittington, Williamson, Wylie

Dr M Allison, Miss N Antoine, Mr M Byakatonda, Dr R Chitchyan, Dr T Cogan, Dr J Collins, Mr E Fay, Dr C Fricker, Dr F Ginn, Dr M Gillway, Dr L Goodhead, Dr D Hill, Ms T Hill, Dr J Howarth, Dr C Kent, Dr Z Leinhardt, Mrs A Lythgoe, Dr S Montgomery, Ms L Parr, Dr A Papadaki, Mr A Pearce, Dr B Pohl, Dr S Proud, Dr M Werner, Dr M Wang, Dr L-F Wong

In attendance: J Bigwood (Interim Chief People Officer for item 7), J Boyer (Chair of the Board of Trustees for entire meeting), H Cole (Senior Governance Officer **and minutes** for entire meeting), V Jones Parry (Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Transformation for item 4), J Parr (Director of Health and Safety for Item 7), H Quinn (Chief of Staff to the Vice-Chancellor for the entire meeting), P Vermeulen (Chief Financial Officer for the entire meeting), M Millard (Executive Director of Faculty Operations for items 5 and 7)

Apologies: Prof M Barbour, Mr M Banissy, Mr J Barrie, Mr J Beaverstock, Dr A Clayton, Dr P Coonerty Prof T Ellson, Prof V Hope-Hailey, Mr B Mac Ruairi, Prof P Manzini, Dr B Main, Prof R Martin, Mr M Munafo Prof N Roberts, Prof J Tavare, Prof K West, Prof E Welch, Prof K Whittington

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 5 FEBRUARY 2024 (on file)

1.1 APPROVED.

2. CHAIR'S REPORT

2.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED:** paper ref: **(SN/23-24/026)** (on file).

2.2 The Report was taken as read, there were no follow up questions from Senate members.

2.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor advised that the Vice-Chancellor would attend a summit of Vice-Chancellors from leading Universities with the Deputy Prime Minister on Thursday 25 April.

3. REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC TRUSTEES ON BOARD-RELATED BUSINESS

3.1 Professor Natalie Edwards and Professor Ian Craddock provided a verbal update respectively on the business undertaken by the Board of Trustees at its away day on 21 March and its meeting on 22 March 2024.

3.2 The following was **NOTED** and/or **DISCUSSED** by the Board of Trustees:

Board of Trustees Away Day 21 March

- 3.2.1 The Board received a presentation from the Chief Executive of the National Composites Centre (NCC), together with the Chief Financial Officer on the achievements and the future of NCC.
- 3.2.2 The Board took part in a Risk Appetite Development Workshop facilitated by Matthew Humphreys, a partner RSM.
- 3.2.3 The Board took part in a workshop on International Student Experience facilitated by the following members of University staff: the Executive Director of Education and Students, the Director of Student Opportunity and the Executive Director of Global Engagement. This included the changing nature of undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research student community; the differences in progression and outcome data for international students compared with home students; the insights that the University already had into the international student experience and; any planned interventions in response.
- 3.2.4 The Board took part in a session entitled “2030 Strategy Headwinds and Tailwinds” that also included presentations from and discussion with Dr. Hollie Chandler (Director of Policy at the Russell Group) and Stephanie Harris (Director of Strategy, Insight and Member Engagement at Universities UK).

Board of Trustees meeting 22 March

- 3.2.5 At this meeting the Board considered the following:
 - Finance Report
 - University Secretary’s Report: Amendments to Ordinance 4
 - Academic Appeal: recommendations
 - Report from Nominations Committee
 - Report from Finance & Infrastructure Committee
 - Report from Audit & Risk Committee
 - Staff and Student Mental Health & Wellbeing Annual Report
 - Health & Safety Annual Report

4. SECTOR TRENDS: PWC REPORT AND SUMMARY OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES DISCUSSION

- 4.1 RECEIVED and **APPROVED**: paper ref (**SN/23-24/027**) (*on file*).
- 4.2 The Provost and the Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Transformation delivered a presentation to Senate.
- 4.3 The following was **DISCUSSED**:
 - The establishment and implementation of the University’s Strategy helped the organisation align and respond to the trends identified.
 - A curriculum portfolio that was flexible and sensitive to markets needs would help the University respond and develop in innovative ways to the evolving trends. New areas to explore included: active learning, hybrid learning, variation in the demography of the student body, wider societal challenges, short course learning based on research strengths and achieving positive sustainability for internationalisation. It was noted that with many potentially competing priorities there would inevitably be both bandwidth issues and financial constraints, therefore the University would need to decide what to do well in a fast moving environment.

5. CUBANE: UPDATE ON THE LATEST REPORT

- 5.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref (**PRESENTATION**) (*on file*).
- 5.2 The Executive Director of Faculty Operations delivered the presentation to Senate

5.3 A concern was raised that changes to Professional Services provision might result in work moving to Academic Staff. In response it was noted that the aim was for the University as a whole to be more effective on process and systems redesign, use existing resources better, and not to move jobs around the organisation. Alignment to the Digital Strategy that aims to provide a better experience for students and staff was also cited.

6. US2030 ACADEMIC STRUCTURES UPDATE

6.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED**: paper ref: (**PRESENTATION**) (*on file*).

6.2 The Executive Director of Faculty Operations delivered the presentation to Senate.

6.3 **NOTED** that the length of term of office for the Associate Pro Vice Chancellors had been set to achieve rolling continuity across the roles and all could be renewed once if mutually agreed to further facilitate this.

6.4 **NOTED** that the external-facing web pages still reflected the previous faculty structure: the timeline to update this would mean it would be completed for August 2024.

6.5 **NOTED** that input from the Heads of Schools on the next stages would be sought, including via the Heads of School forum in due course. **NOTED** that the aim had been to establish the core faculty level roles initially before moving onto the Schools.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

7.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref (**SN/23-24/028**) (*on file*)).

7.2 The Director of Health and Safety and the Interim Chief People Officer joined Senate for this item.

7.3 **NOTED** that take up of the Safe Zone App (rolled out in September 2023) had been strong, given a “soft” launch amongst staff and post graduate students for international travel. It had been downloaded 3.5 thousand times and anecdotally the app had given confidence for those who had used it. The app provided a level of reassurance that University Security Services were just the touch of a button away and could respond quickly and effectively with an understanding of an individual’s location.

8. RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT INCLUDING THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

8.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (**SN/23-24/029**) (*on file*)).

8.2 **NOTED**: The report from URC on activity since the last report in February 2024.

8.2 **NOTED**: The REF Oversight Board Terms of Reference and UOA lead role descriptor.

8.3 **APPROVED**: The University Ethics of Research Committee Annual Report.

8.4 **NOTED** that the membership of the REF Oversight Board would include the REF lead from each faculty. The Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor from each faculty would continue as members of Research Cttee and not join the REF Oversight Board. This was intentional so work in these different areas can continue in parallel.

9. EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

9.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED**: paper ref (**SN/23-24/030**) (*on file*)).

- 9.2 **APPROVED:** an update to the policy for staff participation in the CREATE Scheme, subject to a minor amendment relating to the definition of engagement to be actioned by Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Students.
- 9.3 **DISCUSSED** and **NOTED** : the Annual Quality Assurance Report covering 2022/23 and the other items for report from the March 2024 meeting of University Education Committee.
- 9.4 **DISCUSSED** the reference to the impact on staff morale in paragraph 25 of Annex B: Quality Assurance Report to Board of Trustees: 2022/23 Academic Year. **NOTED** that continuously seeking feedback or comment and opinion from the staff and student body ran the risk of survey fatigue in both groups, with a concern that staff responded to surveys but were not sighted on outcomes or next steps and that this in itself was damaging for morale. In response, the following link was shared during the meeting that summarised outcomes from the recent Teaching Bureaucracy Review.
<https://researchculture.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/2024/04/19/teaching-bureaucracy-review-listening-learning-and-acting/>.
- 9.5 **DISCUSSED** the comparatively low response rate to the Bristol Live Unit Evaluation (Blue), the University-wide tool for capturing and responding to student feedback at both the mid- and end-point of taught units. **AGREED** that further work was required to improve response rates for example by changing the precise point in time when students were asked to complete the survey. The Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Students to share Senate members' comments on this topic with relevant staff via University Academic Quality and Standards Committee (UAQSC).
- 10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 10.1 There was none.
- 10.2 Next meeting 17 June 2024, 2pm.