THE SENATE

Minutes

This paper presents the confirmed Minutes of the last meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 10 June 2015 at The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes.

The Senate **approved** these Minutes as a correct record of the meeting on Wednesday 14 October 2015.

Fraser Woodburn
University Secretary

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THE SENATE

Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 10 June 2015 at 2.00pm
in the Hub Theatre, The Open University, Walton Hall

PRESENT:

1) Ex officio

Mr Peter Horrocks, Vice-Chancellor
Professor Alan Bassindale, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Scholarship and Quality)
(Acting)
Professor Belinda Tynan, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
Professor Anne De Roeck, Dean, Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology
Professor Kevin Hetherington, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
Professor Mary Kellett, Dean, Faculty of Education and Language Studies
Dr Richard Brown, Dean, Faculty of Arts
Mr Jeremy Roche, Dean, Faculty of Health and Social Care
Professor Hazel Rymer, Dean, Faculty of Science
Professor Rebecca Taylor, Dean, Faculty of Business and Law
Mr Keith Zimmerman, Director, Students
Professor Patrick McAndrew, Director of the Institute of Educational Technology
Mrs Nicky Whitsed, Director, Library Services
Mr Chris Rooke, Director, Learning and Teaching Solutions

Appointed

2) Central Academic Units

Faculty of Arts

Dr Cristina Chimisso	Professor John Wolffe
Dr Ole Grell	Dr Naoko Yamagata
Dr Lynda Prescott	Professor Graham Harvey

Faculty of Business & Law

Mr Mike Phillips	Dr Kristen Reid

Faculty of Education and Language Studies

Dr Uwe Baumann	Professor Regine Hampel
Dr Jane Cullen	Dr Tim Lewis
Mrs Annie Eardley	Mr Pete Smith

Faculty of Health and Social Care

Mrs Sue Cole	Miss Christine Taylor
Professor Jan Draper	Dr Mary Twomey
Mr Mick McCormick	

Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology

Dr David Bowers	Dr Toby O'Neil
Dr Tony Nixon	Mr Brendan Quinn
Dr Shirley Northover	Dr Magnus Ramage
Dr Rachel Hilliam	Dr Hayley Ryder
Ms Maggie Holland	Professor Andy Lane

Faculty of Science

Dr John Baxter

Professor Monica Grady

Dr Janet Haresnape

Dr Arlëne Hunter

Professor Hilary MacQueen

Professor David Rothery

Dr Claire Turner

Faculty of Social Sciences

Dr Troy Cooper

Dr Anastasia Economou

Mr Matt Staples

Dr Deborah Drake

Dr Catriona Havard

Institute of Educational Technology

Dr Anne Adams

Professor Eileen Scanlon

Mr Chris Edwards

Other Central Units

Dr Liz Marr

3) Associate Lecturers

Dr Fiona Aiken (alternate)

Mr Bruce Heil

Ms Janet Dyke

Mr Stephen Pattinson

Dr Walter Pisarski

Dr Clare Spencer

4) Students Appointed by Open University Students Association

Ms Claire Smith (Alternate)

Mr Josh Brumpton

Ms Alison Kingan

Mr David Humble

Mr John Murphy

Dr Barbara Tarling (Alternate)

5) Academic-related Staff

Dr Donna Smith

Mr Jake Yeo

Ms Pat Atkins

Ms Clare Riding

Mr Phil Berry

Dr Victoria Crowe

Mr Mike Innes

Mr Michael Street

Dr Christina Lloyd

Mrs Joanne Smythe

Mr Simon Horrocks

Mr Billy Khokhar

Miss Barbara Poniatowska

Mrs Gill Smith

6) Co-opted members

Mr John D'Arcy

Mr Rob Humphreys

Dr David Knight

Dr James Miller

In attendance

Mr Fraser Woodburn, University Secretary

Mrs Dawn Turpin, Head of Governance

Ms Sue Thomas, Senior Manager, Governance

Miss Teresa Coyle, Manager, Governance

Mr Guy Mallison, Strategy Office (for Minute 14)

Ms Louise Mccourt, Strategy Office (for Minute 14)

Mrs Caroline Abbott, Senior Manager, Governance (for Minute 15)

Mrs Nicola Terry, Senior Project Manager, Locations Analysis (for Minute 16)

Ms Kathryn Baldwin, VCO

Observing

Mr Lucian Hudson, Director of Communications

APOLOGIES:

1) Ex officio

Professor Musa Mihsein, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Appointed

2) Central Academic Units

Faculty of Business and Law

Miss Carol Howells   Ms Carmel McMahon
Dr Sharon Slade

Faculty of Education and Language Studies

Dr Indra Sinka

Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology

Dr Leonor Barroca   Dr Peter Robbins

Faculty of Social Sciences

Dr Jacqueline Baxter   Dr Helen Kaye

3) Associate Lecturers

Mrs Frances Chetwynd

4) Students Appointed by Open University Students Association

Miss Ruth Tudor   Mr Jeferson de Oliveira

6) Co-opted members

Professor Peter Scott   Mr Christopher Goscomb

In attendance

Mr Andrew Law

1   WELCOME AND THANKS

The Vice-Chancellor, Mr Peter Horrocks, welcomed Dr Shirley Northover, and Ms Gill Smith as members of the Senate.

On behalf of the Senate, the Vice-Chancellor thanked all those whose Senate membership ended on 31 August 2015 for their service and dedication. He expressed particular thanks to the long serving Associate Lecturer representatives whose terms of office had been completed.

2   MINUTES   **S-2015-02-M**

The Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 22 April 2015 subject to the correction of a typographical error:

Minute 9.7: Locations Analysis
Page 9, second line, "though" to read "through".

3   MATTERS ARISING   **S-2015-03-01**

The Senate **noted** the response to the matter arising from the last minutes.

4   REPORT FROM AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR

4.1   The Vice-Chancellor opened his remarks by paying tribute to Sir John Horlock, former Vice-Chancellor of the University, who died last month.

4.2   The Vice-Chancellor reported on the following successes for the University and members of its staff and congratulated all those involved:

a)   opening of the OpenScience Laboratories funded by the Wolfson Foundation to provide the Science Faculty with an increased capacity to provide live, interactive and recorded lectures to students;

b)   launch of the Faculty of Business and Law's (FBL) second MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) *Managing My Investments* launched on FutureLearn;

c)   the hosting by FutureLearn of the largest MOOC, with over 450,000 learners from more than 150 countries enrolled on the British Council's *Introduction to English* language learning course.   The Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) and the University Council would continue to keep FutureLearn under regular review, and colleagues were urged to assist FutureLearn to flourish and drive innovation in online learning even further, opening up access to more learners worldwide;

d)   launch of *Digital Photography: creating and sharing better images,* by the Faculty of Maths, Computing and Technology (MCT) in partnership with the Royal Photographic Society;

e)   the doubling in the Northern Ireland Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety places on the OU's pre-registration nursing programme in 2016 demonstrating collaboration between the Faculty of Health and Social Care and The Open University in Ireland, working with government, funders and the nursing profession in Northern Ireland;

f)   two awards at the Excellence in Diversity Awards, for Diverse Education Company, and to Acting Head of Equality and Diversity, Jiten Patel the award for Diversity Champion for the Education Sector;

g)   the Teacher Education through School-based Support in India programme, (TESS-India) won the prestigious Innovation Award at the BOND International Development Awards.

h)   other prestigious awards and grants included:

   i)   The Bernal Prize awarded to Emeritus Professor John Law for his work in the field of science and social studies;

   ii)   The 2015 Joanna M. Resig award to postgraduate student Kate Salmon by the Cushman Foundation for a mineral research;

   iii)   The Literacy Practitioner of the Year 2015 award given to Acting Library Services Manager, Katharine Reedy;

   iv)   The Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Software Engineering 2015 Distinguished Service Award given to Professor Bashar Nuseibeh, Professor of Computing;

   v)   Professor Rongshan Qin, MCT has been awarded £178,000 from the Materials Ageing Institute to study electropulse-induced microstructure regeneration of stainless steels;

   vi)   Funding from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to the Faculty of Maths, Compouting and Technology to translate the successful Introduction to Cyber Security MOOC into Arabic;

   vii)   The award of a Kennedy Scholarship for an LLM at Harvard Law School, to Amy Woolfson, the first OU graduate to achieve such an award.

4.3   The Vice-Chancellor also reported that a recent benchmarking exercise showed that the University had the highest number of pledgers of legacies of any participating institution, demonstrating a clear indication of the passion and esteem that they have for the OU and the life-changing learning delivered.

4.4   The Vice-Chancellor concluded by thanking Dr James Miller, Director of the Open University in Scotland (OUiS) for his significant contributions to the OUiS, Student Services, and the Open University as a whole. On behalf of the Senate, Mr Horrocks wished Dr Miller well in his new role as Pro-Vice-Chancellor External Relations and Vice-Principal at Glasgow Caledonian University.

5   STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE   S-2015-03-02

The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed Minutes from the meeting held on 23 April 2015.

6   QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE   S-2014-03-03

The Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) held on 2 March 2015.

| 7 | **RESEARCH COMMITTEE** | **S-2015-03-04** |

7.1 A member asked for an update on the provision of access to IT systems and facilities part-time postgraduate research students. The Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Scholarship and Quality) confirmed that detailed work was underway to set up the required access but this had proved more complex than originally anticipated. Professor Bassindale agreed to report back to the next meeting of the Senate with further information.

Action: PVC (RSQ)

7.2 The Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Research Committee held on 11 March 2015.

| 8 | **CURRICULUM AND VALIDATION COMMITTEE** | **S-2015-03-05** |

8.1 A representative of OUSA commented that Turnitin was raised very regularly and he hoped that approval of its introduction would be forthcoming.   The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) explained that issues still remained with Turnitin in relation to its accessibility for all students. The University would not approve it for use until it met all of its requirements. The developers of Turnitin were now investigating accessibility issues and the University was monitoring the situation.   A member commented that if rolled out in a controlled way, Turnitin had potential to work very well to assist students develop good academic practice in their studies. Support for Associate Lecturers to be able to help students would need to be factored into any future roll out of the software.

8.2 The Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences agreed that accessibility to all students was a very important issue. He also drew attention to the significant additional work such systems can create due to large numbers of false positive results. Such results all required checking and initial investigation to ascertain whether they were genuine cases. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching agreed to raise these points with the team overseeing the pilot.

8.3 The Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Curriculum and Validation Committee held on 18 March 2015.

| 9 | **LEARNING, TEACHING AND STUDENT SUPPORT COMMITTEE** | **S-2015-03-06** |

9.1 An Associate Lecturer member commented that discipline-based staff development for Associate Lecturers was inconsistent across Faculties (paragraph 21).   He encouraged Deans of Faculties to address this issue.

9.2 Another member commented that she strongly supported the referencing principles referred to in paragraph 17 for undergraduate level studies to assist students develop a coherent understanding of referencing. She urged caution, however, that such an approach should not be applicable for studies at post graduate level. She felt these students needed to recognise and understand discipline specific variances in referencing styles and approaches. A representative of OUSA also commented that in certain subjects specific referencing systems are used and students would be expected to follow these systems. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) explained that the principles were a review of referencing standards and she would take on board the points raised.

9.3 Another Associate Lecturer member drew attention to the summary of the feedback received on the process of running the meeting virtually. He commented that his impression of the feedback received was not as positive as indicated, with members expressing reservations about considering business virtually and the resulting lack of networking opportunities. He was concerned if this method of considering business was promoted as a future way forward.

9.4   The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) explained that significant feedback had been received from members of LTSSC expressing very positive reactions to the virtual meeting process which she would be prepared to share. The virtual meeting of the Committee was a trial and she would consider all views expressed. The intention was not to convene virtual meetings regularly but use them in instances when business was light.

9.5   The Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee that took place virtually between 20-25 April 2015.

10   SENATE MEMBERSHIP PANEL   S-2015-03-07

The Senate:

a)   **approved** the following new appointments to the Academic Staff Promotions Committee with immediate effect:

Category 4
Professor Teresa Cremin, Professor (Literacy), Faculty of Educational and Language Studies, until 31 December 2016;

Category 5
Dr Deborah Drake, Senior Lecturer in Criminology, Faculty of Social Sciences, until 31 December 2018;

Category 6
Dr Troy Cooper, Associate Dean (SEQ), Faculty of Social Sciences, until 31 December 2016;
Ms Annette Duensing, Staff Tutor (Languages), Faculty of Education and Language Studies until 31 December 2018.

b)   **noted** the matters for report since the last meeting of the Senate.

11   CENTRAL DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE   S-2015-03-08

11.1   An OUSA representative commented that contrary to the information presented in paragraph 7 of the report, OUSA representatives had been able to participate in meetings of the Central Disciplinary Committee but had not been contacted. The Director, Students agreed to investigate further.

Action: Director, Students

11.2   The Senate **noted** the Annual Report of the Central Disciplinary Committee for 2014/15.

12   SPECIAL APPEALS COMMITTEE   S-2015-03-09

The Senate **noted** the Annual Report of the Special Appeals Committee of the Senate.

13   HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE

Honorary Awards 2015 & Honorary Degrees 2016   S-2015-03-10

13.1   The Senate:

a)   **noted** the arrangements for conferment of awards at degree ceremonies being held in 2015;

b)   **approved** the list of nominations recommended by the Honorary Degrees Committee for the award of honorary degrees in 2016.

Award of Fellowship   **S-2015-03-11**

13.2   The Senate **approved** a recommendation from the Honorary Degrees Committee for
the award of Fellowship of the University.

14   VICE-CHANCELLOR'S PROPOSALS

14.1   The Vice-Chancellor, in introducing his proposals, acknowledged that the Senate would
have preferred to have had sight of them before the meeting. He explained that elements
of the changes had impacts on individuals and it was important that they were explained
with appropriate sensitivity when presented to the Senate. Mr Horrocks assured the Senate
that he would reflect on members' comments and perspectives on his proposals as he
developed them.

14.2   During the last five years the University had undergone significant change as a result of
external pressures and significantly as a result of the change of fees and funding regime in
England. Mr Horrocks believed that the next five years were likely to be as challenging as a
result of further austerity and reduced Government funding for higher education, continued
divergence and localism, greater competition for students and research funding and also
from alternative qualifications such as apprenticeships and low cost or free providers such
as MOOCs.   He emphasised that the University was committed and motivated but it had to
be in the best possible position to respond to the challenges and his proposals aimed to
improve the University's adaptive capability.

14.3   During his first weeks at the University, Mr Horrocks explained that a number of themes had
become apparent to him. These included valuable knowledge about the University's
students, the need to increase income to invest in the future and challenge costs to
maximise student value, the move to become digital by default and the need to challenge
and change working practices. He believed these could be grouped into three main areas,
Innovate Fast, Simplify and *Focus on Value*. The Vice-Chancellor saw his role as enabling
colleagues to respond to opportunities and not to feel frustrated in tackling challenges. A
number of changes were therefore proposed. The emphasis was not on financial decisions
or improving processes but on developing a greater sense of purpose across the University.

14.4   In respect of *Innovation*, subject to approval of the budget by the Council, resources would
be made available for rapid curriculum creation enabling the University to respond quickly
to market opportunities. Substantial investment would be made in research, including but
also broader than the Strategic Research Areas. Access to Moodle would be opened so
course content can be edited, updated and improved more easily. There would be
substantial investment in OU MOOCs for FutureLearn and OpenLearn and a dedicated
reserve would be created to support further strategic innovation across the University.

14.5   In order to *Simplify* and *Focus on Value* Faculties would have greater academic autonomy,
responsibility for budgets, decision making and performance. The current post pause
would end and so would the requirement for multiple signatories for headcount changes.
Academic governance committees would be restructured through the current review. The
University would be transparent with students about how their fees were spent and
students' views would contribute to decisions on resources.

14.6   The Vice-Chancellor informed the Senate that he had read the responses to the latest Staff
Survey. The results had both inspired and shocked him. He saw evidence of great
commitment to the institution and its students from the staff but also saw very different
perspectives between the various groups of staff.   He urged staff not to focus on those
differences but to value all colleagues equally, irrespective of their role. Other key issues
he had identified included insufficient input from Faculties into decision making,
inconsistency between Faculties, confused accountability for decisions, overlap of Pro-Vice-

Chancellor (PVC) roles and challenges for Deans and PVCs in managing multiple portfolio relationships.

14.7   Mr Horrocks explained that his proposals for change would give greater priority to the academic voice within management decision making at the highest level within the University. They included the creation of three larger Faculties from the seven existing ones which would be led by Executive Deans. The three Executive Deans would become members of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) and there would no longer be an Extended Leadership Team (ELT). It was envisaged that the Executive Deans would lead the academic endeavour of the University and ensure students received the highest quality experience.   Two Pro-Vice-Chancellor roles would be established, PVC Learning and Innovation and PVC Research and Academic Strategy and initial portfolios had been drafted.   The PVC Learning and Innovation would have responsibility for ensuring that the University continued to innovate and lead the world in its approach to teaching and learning.   Professor Belinda Tynan would assume this portfolio.   The PVC Research and Academic Strategy would lead the development of the University's research strategy and coordinate academic strategy and quality in partnership with the Executive Deans.

14.8   It was envisaged that Interim Executive Deans would be in post by 1 August 2015 and would work towards the establishment of the three new faculties led by Executive Deans by August 2016. Various options for the configuration of the three proposed Faculties were being considered and views were sought.

14.9   A Senate member asked for an explanation as to why a configuration of three Faculties was considered more appropriate than seven. The Vice-Chancellor explained that a decision making body (VCE) which included seven Faculty representatives would be unwieldy and its ability to make decisions could be diminished as a result.

14.10   Another Senate member emphasised the importance of the nations' perspective in University business and enquired if the Nation's Directors would be represented on VCE. Another member commented that he could equate the academic voice of the University with the Deans' role but feared if Deans were reduced in number to three, then there was a risk that the academic voice was diminished.   He was also concerned that academics at the University had less input as a result of the review of academic governance. Another member commented that he believed there was an insufficient level of academic input into decision making within Faculties.

14.11   The Director, Institute of Educational Technology (IET) welcomed the proposals for the University to be able to respond to opportunities quickly.   He hoped that the process of change would be evaluative and reflective and include reviews to ensure that the changes had clear purpose.

14.12   The Vice-Chancellor responded that responsibility for the Nation Directors was within the Director, Students remit. Further work would follow in respect of the non-academic roles on VCE. Mr Horrocks acknowledged that the new Faculties would be large bodies and he would pursue issues in relation to their operation with the Executive Deans when appointed. He believed that the academic voice within strategic decision making at the University would be significantly strengthened through the appointment of the three Executive Deans alongside two PVCs on VCE.

14.13   A member welcomed the proposals but asked for clarification as to how the configuration of three Faculties was arrived upon. He also feared that the very large Faculties could become very bureaucratic. Another member asked how the Vice-Chancellor envisaged the new configuration working in respect of the Research Excellence Framework (REF). Another member was concerned that dysfunctions occurred between academic and non-academic areas such as information technology (IT), which impacted upon experiences for

students.   He enquired whether there would be an exercise to change the responsiveness and flexibility of the central administrative structure of the University.

14.14   The Director, Open University in Wales welcomed the broad thrust of the proposals. He was concerned however that the new structure replicated weaknesses of the previous one by not including representation of the Nation Directors. He supported the devolution of budgets and enquired whether this would apply only to Faculties or to other units as well.

14.15   The Vice-Chancellor commented that support would be required to ensure processes within large Faculties were simplified and did not become bureaucratic. This would be examined further. He drew attention to the injection of strategic funding to facilitate research and hoped research across Faculties would become easier. The PVC (Research, Strategy and Quality (RSQ)) expressed his support for the facilitation of research and reiterated the value of the strengthening of the academic voice in the University's management.   Mr Horrocks commented that restructuring the academic elements of the University was not the sole remedy to the issues it faced. He reiterated that his proposals were not a criticism of academic staff but should be viewed as a means to entrust them with strategic decisions. He hoped that by including academics on VCE they would have the determination to resolve the issues academics raised. The devolution of other units' budgets was still to be determined.

14.16   A member of Senate welcomed the introduction of academics into the membership of VCE but was concerned that the large Faculty structures could become very hierarchical. He believed that the addition of three Executive Deans on to VCE did not necessarily equate to the creation of three large Faculties. An Associate Lecturer member hoped that the Vice-Chancellor would read the results of the forthcoming Associate Lecturer's survey. He also informed the Senate of technical as well as pedagogical problems experienced when using Moodle through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Another member welcomed the closer integration of academic staff and VCE. She hoped that the Executive Deans would be able to capture the diversity of their large Faculties and not become distant from those whom they represented. She also commented that once in post, Executive Deans would be unlikely to be able to continue with academic duties.   Another member remarked that the initial portfolios for the PVCs were very large and diverse particularly that for the PVC Research and Academic Strategy.

14.17   The Vice-Chancellor reiterated that the intention was to improve the academic voice within the University. He acknowledged the observations of Senate members on the role of Executive Deans and agreed that they would need careful consideration. He confirmed that he would read through the results of the Associate Lecturers survey and noted the comments in respect of Moodle.

14.18   Another member welcomed the proposed changes and felt that the wider university would value the time the Vice-Chancellor had taken to read the results of the Staff Survey. She enquired whether there would be sufficient resources to support the process of change as, if not, it may be reflected in responses to future surveys. Another member commented that the discussion had centred so far on the proposed changes to University structures. There had been many such changes in recent years and whilst discussion of this was important, he hoped that colleagues did not become too focussed on the structures alone. A member also queried whether there were plans to restructure Student Support Teams (SSTs).

14.19   The Vice-Chancellor commented that change was inevitable for the University and agreed that too much focus on structures could inhibit it from seizing opportunities. He did not consider that SSTs would be directly impacted upon by the proposals.

14.20   Another member commented that from a personal perspective her Faculty had undergone significant change recently and she was concerned about it being subsumed into a larger structure. There were many differences, operational and cultural, between Faculties of the

University and she feared that the proposed bringing together of Faculties would not be easy nor would it improve the academic voice within the University. Another member emphasised that relationships were more important than structures and that attention should be given to facilitating communications between support units and the proposed larger Faculties.

14.21 A member expressed her support for the proposals especially the focus on students first. She believed that the establishment of SSTs had improved relations between academic and academic support staff and this should be considered during this proposed reorganisation. A member drew attention to the valuable work of SSTs in providing seamless support for students.

14.22 The Dean, Faculty of Maths, Computing and Technology (MCT) reminded the Senate of the creation in 2007 of her own Faculty. She explained that the process of configuring Faculties required great care and would mean new ways of working for many staff but the focus had to be on the gains. She emphasised the need for the academic voice to be at the centre of the University's activities and felt that the proposals were a very positive development.

14.23 The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged that configuring the Faculties in different ways would be challenging but nowadays staff worked in a variety of ways with different associations and networks across Faculty boundaries. It was essential to take a mature approach to decision making and relate to students more strongly.

14.24 A member drew attention to the Vice-Chancellor's comment that the University should aspire to be digital by default. He agreed that digital materials had many advantages but felt that many students still preferred books. He expressed caution over moving entirely to digital course materials. Another member commented that it would be challenging for the University to deliver its social justice mission in the new funding environment and such views may be expressed in future surveys of staff. The Vice-Chancellor clarified that digital would not be the only medium used but digital methods needed to be employed in decision making.

14.25 The Dean, Faculty of Science, urged the University to seize the current opportunities to improve its position in the REF. She believed it was very empowering to have the opportunity to consider the proposals for the future but felt further details were required. Another member welcomed the proposed strategic investment in research beyond the Strategic Research Areas (SRAs) and felt that well targeted investment across a range of areas would bring dividends in the REF. He acknowledged that opportunities for research collaboration would exist in the new Faculties but it was important that staff were not diverted from research as a result of the restructuring process. Another member noted that many other institutions in the higher education sector had configured their academic faculties in similar ways to those proposed and suggested there may be lessons to be learnt from their experiences. A member also urged caution when describing the current situation for fear it might result in less positive engagement with the new structures.

14.26 The Vice-Chancellor thanked Senate members for their informative comments. In response to a question he confirmed that his proposals should remain confidential until an announcement was issued to staff the following day. Mr Horrocks reiterated that references to dysfunction in his presentation referred to his perceptions of a cultural dysfunction and not dysfunctional practice within the University.

14.27 Mr Horrocks concluded that the most appropriate way to proceed was for proposals on the configuration of Faculties to be brought back to a Special Meeting of the Senate. The University Secretary confirmed that in accordance with the Standing Orders the Chair was entitled to call such a meeting with 15 working days' notice. A suggested date for the Special Meeting was 16 July 2015 and a formal notice would be sent to members shortly.

14.28   The Senate **noted** the report from the Vice-Chancellor.

15   ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE REVIEW: IMPLEMENTATION REPORT   S-2015-03-12

15.1   The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching introduced the report and explained that
        The Academic Governance Review (AGR), which took place in 2013/2014, found the
        existing Academic Governance arrangements to be complex and inefficient, and made 13
        recommendations to simplify the Senate sub-committee structure, improve the efficiency of
        governance processes and strengthen assurance on academic governance. In addition the
        Review suggested exploring further devolution of academic governance to faculties.

15.2   In proposing the revised academic governance structure, Professor Tynan acknowledged
        the contributions and dedication of staff in supporting the existing structure and its
        operation. She emphasised that the changes were not intended to indicate a critique of
        those contributions but reflected a modernising of the University's structures in response to
        both internal and external drivers. The work implementing the recommendations of the
        Review had been divided into four work streams which were summarised in the paper.
        The Project Team had carried out extensive consultation across the University and used
        surveys and had organised an information session for all members of the Senate and
        committees within the academic governance structure.

15.3   Referring specifically to work stream 1, the simplification of the academic governance
        structure, Professor Tynan explained that the terms of reference for the new committees
        had been drafted in simpler and broader language. Memberships were smaller and
        expertise based and Chairs would have discretion to establish short-life working groups for
        specific issues if required. Benchmarking with other institutions had shown a variety of
        approaches to the inclusion of members directly elected by the Senate onto governance
        committees. The decision had been taken not to include them, enabling the Senate to
        operate independently.   Professor Tynan drew attention to the other recommendations in
        relation to existing committees and explained that further work was ongoing in relation to
        final proposals for a faculty governance model and terms of reference and membership.

15.4   A member of the Senate supported the structure proposed but expressed his concern that
        the memberships proposed for the new committees within the academic governance
        structure did not include any members elected by the Senate. He considered it essential
        that members of the Senate were included in the proposed memberships to ensure the
        academic voice of the University was adequately represented. He requested that the
        composition of the Committees be reconsidered.   Another member endorsed this view and
        also expressed concern that with the disestablishment of the Senate Membership Panel,
        the filling of casual vacancies on Committees should not rest solely on perceived patronage
        from the Chair.

15.5   Another member supported the motivation to improve business practices. She suggested
        that other working practices should also be considered to improve efficiency such as a
        timed agenda for meetings. Another member welcomed the inclusion of members with
        expertise in equality issues on the Academic Staff Promotions Committee and suggested
        other committees should follow that example.   Another member, although welcoming
        smaller memberships of Committees expressed caution that the reductions may be too
        severe.

15.6   A member welcomed the simplified constitutions and the involvement of the wider
        University in consultation on the proposals. She suggested that the Education Committee's
        term of reference 3 should be revised to read "To promote innovation *and inclusiveness* in
        curriculum, learning and teaching, assessment and examinations and the student
        experience, and to disseminate good practice". She also queried the differences in the

grounds for appeal in terms of reference 1 and 2 of the Academic Staff Promotions Appeals Committee.

15.7 A Senate member stated that he had been a Senate-elected member of the Academic Governance Review Group and felt it was appropriate that he and others elected by Senate to the Group should explain the thinking of the Group.   The Review Group had thought long and hard about the position of elected Senate members on committees, and that it was an 'on balance' view that had been agreed.   There were, he said, legitimate arguments either way.   However his view was that if Senate was to be a vibrant, deliberative, reviewing, scrutinising and revising body it needed fewer, not more, members who had been involved in reports and recommendations coming before it.   This was in his view a persuasive argument in favour of the recommendations made by the Review Group on the membership of committees and he urged Senate to accept the recommendations as they stood.

15.8 The University Secretary explained that careful consideration had been given to the proposal to disestablish the Senate Membership Panel.   A number of mitigating actions would be introduced which he hoped would provide assurance to the Senate over the proposed new process.   These included appointments by the Chair to fill casual vacancies being only for a limited period until the next election, office procedures being established to ensure the Chair considered a list of possible appointees for a casual vacancy and equal opportunities monitoring would be introduced for all committees.   Mr Woodburn also confirmed that the terms of reference for the Academic Staff Promotions Appeals Committee reflected current practice and any changes to those procedures would require a proposal with an appropriate rationale.   The terms of reference would be reviewed and the outcome reported back to the Senate.

15.9 A Senate member commented that the current presentation of the MRes award was not the last one as stated in paragraph 27 of the paper and there would be a presentation for 2015-16. He emphasised that there was a need to provide training for research methods. Another member welcomed the simplified structures but believed it could be difficult to predict the appropriate expertise that Committees may require to operate effectively.

15.10 The Dean, Faculty of Maths, Computing and Technology urged Senate members to support the proposals for the new governance structure. She considered there to be numerous opportunities for academic debate within the University and not just within the governance structure.   A representative of OUSA sought clarification as to whether the recommendations of the Academic Governance Review referred to Senate Reference Groups. It was confirmed that they did not.

15.11 A member (J. Baxter) proposed the following motion which was seconded (A. Eardley):

That the Senate **accepts** the broad recommendations of the Academic Governance Review Group as set out in its Implementation Report, including the amendment to term of reference 3 of the Education Committee (see minute 15.6) but **rejects** the memberships of the Committees proposed within the academic governance structure and **requests** that that they be revised to include members elected by the Senate.

15.12 Following a vote, the motion was **carried**.

Action: PVC (L&T)

15.13 The Senate therefore **agreed**:

a) the terms of reference for the new Committees in the academic governance structure including an amendment to term of reference 3 of the Education Committee (as set out in minute 15.6);

b) the revised terms of reference of the Research Committee and the revised terms of reference and membership of the Academic Staff Promotions Committee, the Chair and Readership Subcommittee and the terms of reference of the Academic Staff Promotions Appeals Committee;

c) that the membership of the committees in the sub-structure be revised to include members elected by the Senate;

d) the revised terms of reference of the Senate;

e) the terms of reference and membership of the Academic Quality and Governance Committee;

f) the recommendation that the Senate Membership Panel be disestablished;

g) the recommendation that the membership of the honorary degrees committee remain as currently constituted.

16   LOCATIONS ANALYSIS   S-2015-03-13

16.1   Dr James Miller, Director, the OU in Scotland and Senior Accountable Executive for the Locations Analysis project introduced the paper and explained that the process of consultation and engagement was continuing. A number of open meetings had been held with staff in Faculties, Regions and Nations and an open session had been arranged for members of the Senate. An online survey and questionnaire was also available.

16.2   A number of emerging themes had been identified and these included the organisational capacity for further change and the need to manage the inherent risks and realise the expected benefits at a time of other change, a desire to engage further with more detailed options before any recommendations are taken to governance, the ability to foster a community of learning for students and staff from across all areas of the University and concern about what the process would mean for individuals. Views had also been expressed over the need to articulate the level of knowledge and expertise in current staff within Student Support Teams (SSTs) and the risks of losing these staff through the changes. There was a broadly balanced mix of views about the pace of the project.

16.3   Dr Miller explained that a number of opportunities were being examined as part of the analysis. A list of key features had been proposed for future configuration and this included the co-location of individual faculty SSTs (i.e. under and postgraduate SST for the same faculty hosted in a single location), provision available for differentiated presence for proven academic and business needs beyond hosting a SST, an embedded academic presence across each nation, alignment and closer integration of the Student Recruitment and Fees (SRF) function with SST responsibilities and agility to respond to emerging regionalisation proposals for England and further devolution of powers across Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Detailed options appraisal work was being progressed in parallel with the consultation. Four options were under consideration. Option 1 proposed retention of the status quo, continuing with the current configuration and redesign as opportunities arose. Options 2, 3 and 4 proposed different configurations for the hosting of SSTs and functions. The options would be appraised through quantitative and qualitative analyses of key data sets including student numbers, demand on SSTs, cost, space utilisation, the external environment and the skills and experience of existing staff.   Dr Miller confirmed the aim of the project steering group was to present final recommendations to the autumn round of governance meetings.

16.4   An Associate Lecturer member commented that he was uncertain over Associate Lecturers' future position. He believed it was essential that structural changes proposed by the

Locations Analysis project were integrated into the configurations proposed earlier by the Vice-Chancellor. Another member commented that the proposed timeline for final recommendations from the project to be submitted for governance approval in the autumn was very ambitious in the light of the Vice-Chancellor's proposals for configuring Faculties. He felt that this was a period of considerable uncertainty for staff.   Another member expressed concern that large SSTs might be unable to react quickly to issues with modules. Dr Miller assured members that the project had recognised that risk. He also acknowledged that SSTs would still maintain their dual affiliation. Another member enquired what data had been used to measure the efficacy of SSTs. Dr Miller replied that data on workloads had been used. SSTs would be the basis for the model for moving in all the options being appraised. The Vice-Chancellor commented his proposals for high-level restructuring would not automatically have an impact on SSTs but there might be implications for them, however, the key focus must be on the service provided to students.

16.5   A member commented that the University's regional centres offered much more to students than bases for SSTs and she urged caution over making changes to locations in the light of the Vice-Chancellor's proposals for configuring Faculties. She also commented that the questionnaire for submitting views was not well structured and it was not possible to see all the questions together. Another member viewed the paper presented to Senate as being focussed on costs savings when previous aims had been stated as improving support to students. The Dean, Faculty of Maths, Computing and Technology urged caution against damaging the integrity of SSTs and their key student facing role.

16.6   Dr Miller responded that the questionnaire for staff was available to download in its entirety on the Locations Analysis Project website. He explained that the terms of reference of the project included reference to cost effectiveness. The project would not be suggesting configuring SSTS into large groups or interrupting their functions.   The Director Students explained that the iterative process would continue with further consultation. He would be leading the project supported by Ms J Stewart after Dr Miller had left the University.

16.7   The Senate **noted** the report.

17   ANNUAL REPORT ON STUDENT NUMBERS   **S-2015-03-14**

17.1   A representative of OUSA sought clarification of the information presented in paragraph 13. Another member requested an update on the work of the Taught Postgraduate Strategy project. The University Secretary explained that the data upon which the percentages in paragraph 13 were based was available in the appendix to the paper. Mr Woodburn reported that a new website would be live next month for postgraduate (PG) students with a dedicated telephone line and specialist advisors. Qualification registration would operate at PG level when registrations opened in March and work was ongoing on induction. A proposal for changing pass marks and standardising higher classifications (Merit, Distinction) would be presented to Senate in October 2015.

17.2   The Senate **noted** the provisional student recruitment outturn performance for the 2014/15 academic year, and student recruitment planning assumptions for 2015/16 and 2016/17.

18   ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURES   **S-2015-03-15**

18.1   A representative of OUSA expressed concern over the complexity of the proposed appeals process. He explained that OUSA did not consider the proposed process to be fair and believed it to be contradictory in places. He also drew attention to a number of typographical errors in the drafting.   Another OUSA representative queried the information currently under preparation on supporting students (paragraph 15) and enquired when this would be available and whether the President, OUSA would have an opportunity to review

it. Clarity was also sought in section 3.4 of the procedure as to whether the representative accompanying a student to a hearing can question witnesses.

18.2   Another member queried the reference in the mode of operation of the Academic Misconduct Appeals Committee (AMAC) to the Committee considering both the academic judgement of the Academic Conduct Officer (ACO) and any academic penalty. She believed that the Committee should not be considering the academic judgement of the ACO but the appropriateness, transparency or fairness of the academic judgement made. A member also commented that staff tutors had received training on the new procedures but she felt this should have been provided once the procedure was agreed.

18.3   In view of the comments the Vice-Chancellor withdrew the paper. The Director, Students apologised for the drafting errors. He explained that it was essential that the procedure was comprehensive which had contributed to its complexity. The Project Team had consulted widely on the procedures and would reflect on the comments raised and work with OUSA representatives. Mr Zimmerman requested that further comments be submitted to him.

Action: Director, Students

19   STUDENT CHARTER: ANNUAL REVIEW   S-2015-03-16

The Senate **approved** the changes to the Student Charter and the plans for communication, dissemination, annual monitoring and review.

20   ACADEMIC REGULATIONS   S-2015-03-17

The Senate:

a)   **noted** the revised schedule for restructuring

b)   **approved** the proposed amendments, effective from 1 August 2015 to;

   i) The General Qualification Regulations (Registered Qualifications); and
   ii) The General Qualification Regulations (Declared Qualifications).

21   THE COUNCIL   S-2015-03-18

The Senate **noted** the report on matters discussed at the meeting of the Council held on 12 May 2015.

22   FUTURE ITEMS OF BUSINESS   S-2015-03-19

The Senate **noted** the potential items for the agenda for the Senate meeting in October 2015.

23   DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Meetings of the Senate will be held on the following dates:

Thursday 16 July 2015 (Special Meeting)
Wednesday 14 October 2015
Wednesday 27 January 2016

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University Secretary

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