



## THE SENATE

### Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 13 October 2010 in the Hub Theatre

#### Present:

##### 1) Ex officio

Mr Martin Bean, Vice-Chancellor  
 Professor Brigid Heywood, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)  
 Professor Denise Kirkpatrick, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality)  
 Professor Alan Tait, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications)  
 Professor Anne De Roeck, Dean, Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology  
 Dr Sharon Ding, Dean, Faculty of Education and Language Studies  
 Professor James Fleck, Dean, Open University Business School  
 Professor Phil Potts, Dean, Faculty of Science  
 Mr Jeremy Roche, Dean, Faculty of Health and Social Care  
 Mr Will Swann, Director, Students  
 Mrs Nicky Whitsed, Director, Library Services

#### Appointed

##### 2) Central Academic Units

###### Faculty of Arts

Professor Richard Allen	Dr Lynda Prescott
Professor Suman Gupta	Professor John R Wolffe
Dr Graham Harvey	

###### Faculty of Education and Language Studies

Dr Jane Cullen	Dr Steven Hutchinson
Dr Regine Hampel	Professor Karen Littleton
Ms Felicity Harper	

###### Faculty of Health and Social Care

Mrs Sue Cole	Dr Sarah Earle
Professor Jan Draper	Dr Verina Waights

###### Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology

Dr David Bowers	Professor Andy Lane
Dr Judy Ekins	Dr Nicholas Moss
Professor Joyce Fortune	Dr Shirley Northover
Mr Derek Goldrei	Dr Toby O'Neil
Professor Uwe Grimm	Dr Sally Organ

**Faculty of Social Sciences**

Dr Troy Cooper  
 Dr Bob Kelly  
 Dr Hugh Mackay

Dr Raia Prokhovnik  
 Professor Michael Saward  
 Dr Jason Toynbee

**Faculty of Science**

Dr John Baxter  
 Dr Payam Rezaie  
 Dr Nick Rogers  
 Dr David Rothery

Dr Robert Saunders  
 Dr Terry Whatson  
 Professor Ian Wright

**Open University Business School**

Mrs Keren Bright  
 Dr Jacky Holloway  
 Ms Carmel McMahon

Mr Mike Phillips  
 Mr Alessandro Saroli

**Institute of Educational Technology**

Dr Agnes Kukulska-Hulme

Professor Eileen Scanlon

**Regional/National Centres**

Mrs Lynda Brady  
 Dr Liz Manning

Ms Barbara Stephens

**Other Central Units**

Dr Rebecca Ferguson

**3) Associate Lecturers**

Mr Paddy Alton  
 Dr Isobel Falconer  
 Mr Bruce Heil

Mr John James  
 Dr Roma Oakes  
 Dr Walter Pisarski

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

Mr Josh Brumpton (alternate)  
 Mrs Roz Evans  
 Ms Laura Murphy

Mr David Reed  
 Mr Carey Shaw  
 Mrs Sandra Summers

**5) Academic-related Staff**

Mrs Liz Armitage  
 Mrs Carole Baume  
 Ms Fiona Carey  
 Mrs Lynda Juma  
 Mr Martin Kenward  
 Mr Billy Khokhar  
 Dr Christina Lloyd

Mrs Bethan Norfor  
 Mr Tony O'Shea-Poon  
 Ms Hilary Robertson  
 Mr Ian Roddis  
 Ms Gill Smith  
 Mr Michael Street  
 Ms Elaine Walker

**6) Co-opted members**

Mr Rob Humphreys  
 Dr James Miller

Dr Petrina Stevens

**In attendance**

Dr Kate Clarke, Open University Validation Services  
 Ms Catherine Colohan, Assistant Head, Vice-Chancellor's Office  
 Dr Malcolm Cross, Director of Research and Enterprise  
 Mr David Matthewman, Chief Information Officer

Mr Niall Sclater, Director Learning Innovation  
Dr Tony Walton, Deputy Director of Strategy and Secretary for the Academic Units (Minute 9)

**Apologies:**

**1) Ex officio**

Dr Simon Bromley, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences  
Professor David Rowland, Dean, Faculty of Arts  
Professor Josie Taylor, Director, Institute of Educational Technology  
Ms Anne Howells, Director, Learning and Teaching Solutions

**Appointed**

**2) Central Academic Units**

**Faculty of Arts**

Dr Bob Wilkinson

**Faculty of Education and Language Studies**

Mr Pete Smith

Dr Peter Twining

**Faculty of Health and Social Care**

Professor Monica Dowling

**Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology**

Mr Anthony Meehan

Dr Helen Yanacopulos

**Faculty of Social Sciences**

Dr Helen Kaye

**Institute of Educational Technology**

Dr Robin Goodfellow

**Regional/National Centres**

Mrs Celia Cohen

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

Mrs Marianne Cantieri

**6) Co-opted members**

Mr John D'Arcy

Dr Peter Scott

**In attendance**

Dr Sally Crompton, Head of Broadcasting Commissioning

**1 MINUTES**

S/10/3/M

The Senate **approved** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16 June 2010.

**2 MATTERS ARISING**

Referring to minute 10.14 of the last minutes, which dealt with recommendation 19 of the Student Support Review, a member noted that the terms and conditions of service for central academics (Paragraph 44. Appendix 2(A): Central Academic Staff, item (d)) currently stated that their duties included teaching at residential courses organised by the University. However, it also said that “in special circumstances a Head of Unit may agree to part or all of this commitment being fulfilled by alternative means of unpaid direct teaching”. In her opinion, if recommendation 19 was to be put into practice, then the terms and conditions would have to be changed.

**3 REPORT FROM AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR**

- 3.1 The Chair urged those who had not already heard his Vice-Chancellor’s Address during the Council Residential Weekend to view the recording available on Stadium for a full update on news from across the University.

**National Student Survey Results**

- 3.2 For the sixth consecutive year, the OU had maintained its position in the top three higher education institutions (HEIs) in the National Student Survey. The University’s overall satisfaction rating in 2010 stood at 93%. In addition to these outstanding results, the number of OU students responding to this year’s survey had trebled to over 30,000, which was more than four times the number of respondents for the University of Manchester, the next largest institution participating.

**Sunday Times University Guide**

- 3.3 The Open University had been listed in *The Sunday Times University Guide* published on 12 September. The review had said: ‘For student satisfaction it leaves most institutions in the shade, outstripping all other multi-faculty state-funded universities bar Oxford in the annual National Student Survey. The 2008 research ratings had also been a success with the OU ranking 41st in the UK under a Sunday Times analysis of the results.’

**Northern Ireland Education and Training Inspectorate’s report on OU Flexible Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Programme**

- 3.4 On 3 September, the Northern Ireland Education and Training Inspectorate’s report on the OU’s Flexible PGCE Programme, with a focus on Literacy and Numeracy, had been published. It had rated the overall quality of the OU’s teacher education (and self-evaluation) as outstanding and it was now known that the OU’s PGCE course was the only one in Northern Ireland to have been awarded the highest grade.

**OU / Unison Partnership**

- 3.5 The OU had received another nomination for the OU/UNISON partnership, which had been shortlisted as a finalist in the Times Higher Education Awards Widening Participation

Initiative of the Year category. This project which reached out to UNISON members in the workplace had been selected from more than 500 entries. The Award Ceremony would be held at the Grosvenor House Hotel on Park Lane in London on Thursday 25 November 2010 and, on behalf of the Senate, the Chair wished the team good luck.

### Research News

- 3.6 There had been some excellent news in the research quarter with the award of £176,600 from the Leverhulme International Network to Dr Angeliki Lymberopoulou in the Faculty of Arts for her project: 'Damned in hell in the frescoes of Venetian-dominated Crete between the 13th and 17th centuries'.
- 3.7 A project proposed by Dr Elton Barker, Lecturer in Classical Studies, together with two colleagues from Southampton and Berkeley, had been awarded a grant from Google to discover data relating to ancient locations and to find interesting ways of representing that information.
- 3.8 A team from the Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology (MCT) and The Open University Business School (OUBS) had become part of a new international Local Government consortium.

### Independent Review of Higher Education (HE) Funding and Student Finance (The Browne Review)

- 3.9 The previous day had been a landmark moment in the development of the part-time higher education sector. The Browne Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance had recommended that all part-time students in England studying 40 credits or more should have the same support for the cost of learning as full-time students for the first time. The sixth principle set out in the report stated that, "There should be better support for part-time students", and the report went on to recommend that "the same upfront support for the costs of learning is extended to part-time students as well. Higher education will be free at the point of entry for all students, regardless of the mode of study, giving them more choice about how they choose to study – and where". This should signal the end of the two tier system which until now had disadvantaged part-time students and mark the start of a new, modern era of higher education which promoted the crucial role of part-time in delivering future economic growth and social mobility.
- 3.10 The report also made clear that "it is likely to be through part-time rather than full-time study that people already in the workforce would be able to retrain and prepare themselves for work in new industries". The report's proposals created "the potential for government to review the restrictions on access to funding who are studying for a second degree." This directly addressed the Equivalent and Lower Qualifications (ELQ) funding issue and could restore a route to re-skilling for many people.
- 3.11 Lord Browne and his colleagues had not only listened to the arguments put forward by the OU, Universities UK (UUK), the National Union of Students (NUS), the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and others, they had had the vision and the courage to act.
- 3.12 The Vice-Chancellor had spent the previous day in London, and The Open University had had good coverage on BBC, ITV and Sky as well as in the print media. The OU's case had been getting a wide and sympathetic hearing and it had been good to hear the vocal support in Parliament from all parties for the part-time cause. Mr Vince Cable, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, had stated during the Parliamentary debate on the Review that part-time learners had been discriminated against in the past, and the

Shadow Secretary, Mr John Denham, had also welcomed “the equitable treatment of part-time students”.

- 3.13 However, this was just stage one of a multi-stage process. The future of UK higher education would become clearer in the following week when the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) was announced and as it moved through the parliamentary process. Far-reaching cuts in teaching and research funding, however, were a certainty.
- 3.14 Whilst the Browne report was welcomed, it was important to guard against complacency. The Government now had the opportunity to accept Lord Browne's recommendations and level the playing field between part-time and full-time, and it was hoped that they would seize the moment. The task ahead was to continue to press the OU's case as powerfully as possible with the Westminster Government, whilst also promoting the interests of part-time students to the devolved administrations. Ultimately, it was the legislative and financial agreements reached in the coming months that would matter. These were critical moments in the OU's history, but the Vice-Chancellor was confident that the University could rise to meet the challenges and deliver on the mission. Updates would be provided as the debate unfolded.
- 3.15 A student member observed that whilst part-time students had been given parity, there had been a proviso that students should reach a minimum entry standard in order to access University places and student finance. The Chair agreed that entry level qualifications would pose a challenge to open entry and the implications had not been thought through. The Browne Review was also looking at an eligibility threshold of 40 credit points or 33% of a full-time equivalent (FTE) to access student finance, whereas the OU considered that 30 credit points or 25% FTE would be more appropriate, as many undergraduate modules were of this size. The University's future discussions with the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) would focus on these issues. Another member observed that the tariff would apply to students coming in and going out of the OU, for example on the 2+2 schemes, where students studied at the OU before going on to another university.
- 3.16 An Associate lecturer (AL) member asked where the review of the teaching (T) funding method sat in relation to the Browne Review. The Chair responded that this was unresolved. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) had some funds, but it was unclear how these would be used. The University's discussions with HEFCE were on hold until after the Browne Review and the CSR. HEFCE would publish some guidance at the end of the year.
- 3.17 A member commented on the plan to merge four HE organisations, HEFCE, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) into a single Higher Education Council (HEC). Whilst QAA was a UK institution, and the OIA covered England and Wales, the others were English. The Chair observed that this had been proposed in the belief that it would bring about greater efficiency and lower costs. The responsible minister in Wales had been put on notice to raise the issue that UK wide institutions could not unilaterally be merged with an English organisation.
- 3.18 The Director, The Open University in Wales, congratulated the Vice-Chancellor, the Government Relations Office and other senior staff on the success of their lobbying for The Open University. However, this was just the beginning of an on-going debate. The Browne Report applied to England, and the UK Nations had still to deal with this highly charged matter. If the Browne recommendations were implemented, one result could be an increase in private competition, and the University should be mindful of this.

- 3.19 The member also remarked that the OU should keep to its mission, not just in the context of raising skills, but also of social justice. The Chair replied that the Browne Review acknowledged the need to protect widening participation and proposed a consolidation and streamlining of the current fund. However, in breaking down the barriers between full-time and part-time it was necessary to ensure that the new Access and Success fund continued to support part-time and OU students at appropriate levels. The report stated that University education should be free at the point of entry and that graduates should only begin to pay back their loans once they were earning £21,000 or above. If graduates then suffered a change in life circumstances, their payments could stop. However, there was still a philosophical debate around the extent to which students would be averse to debt.
- 3.20 A member remarked that the Browne Review assumed that Universities would be able to meet any increase in demand and asked if the OU systems could cope. The Chair commented that the report suggested an increase of 10% in student places and observed that the University had been experiencing, and dealing with, that level of growth for several years.

#### 4 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE S/10/4/1

The Senate **noted** the unconfirmed minutes from the meeting of the Strategic Planning and Resources Committee (SPRC) held on 30 June 2010.

#### 5 CURRICULUM AND VALIDATION COMMITTEE S/10/4/2

- 5.1 The Director, Open University Validation Services (OUVS), Dr Kate Clarke, commented that there was an error in paragraph 19 (a) of the paper. It stated that there had been a recommendation to make changes to the committee's terms of reference *to align with OUVS' new terminology from "accredited" and "associate" to "approved" or "partner" where relevant*. However, whilst the term accredited was to be replaced with partner, the term associated remained in use.
- 5.2 The Senate **noted** the report from the meeting of the Curriculum, Awards and Validation Committee (now the Curriculum and Validation Committee) held on 6 July 2010 and the subsequent Chair's action taken on 13 September 2010 on behalf of the committee.

#### 6 RESEARCH COMMITTEE S/10/4/3

The Senate **noted** the report from the meeting of the Research Committee held on 9 June 2010.

#### 7 SENATE MEMBERSHIP PANEL S/10/4/4

The Senate:

- a) **approved** the following appointments to the Academic Staff Promotions Committee:
- |                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Dr Richard Holti   | OUBS             |
| Dr Graham Pike     | Social Sciences  |
| Dr Robert Saunders | Science          |
| Dr Arlène Hunter   | Science, Ireland |

- b) **approved** the following appointments to the Special Appeals Committee of the Senate:
- |                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Dr Toby O'Neil      | MCT                    |
| Mr Tony O'Shea-Poon | Equality and Diversity |
| Dr John Baxter      | Science                |
- c) **noted** the matters for report from the meeting of the Senate Membership Panel held on 7 July 2010.

## 8 STUDENT SERVICES OPERATING MODEL

S/10/4/5

- 8.1 The Director, Students, Mr Will Swann, presented the paper and commented that the forthcoming year would be a time of unprecedented change, during which the OU would have to face financial challenges unlike anything it had faced before. It was essential to take actions to ensure that the students of the future had the same excellent service and support as the students of today. This was the most important aim for Student Services and radical change might need to be considered in order to achieve it.
- 8.2 Student Services was responsible for one quarter of the University's expenditure. In the current year, it would spend £117 million, £54 million of which covered associate lecturers' (AL) salaries, with the remaining £63 million covering everything else across the OU's 14 locations. When Student Services had begun work to find its contribution to the savings necessary to cope with the loss of grant for ELQ students, its priority was to protect the student experience. It achieved this by minimising the impact on the AL tuition budget, for which it set a target of just over a 1% reduction. For all other services provided from Milton Keynes and from the regional and national centres, plans were in place for a reduction of £6 million (10%) by 2013/14. There was confidence that these savings would be achieved without damage to the student experience through further drives for efficiency and streamlining many business processes.
- 8.3 However, it then became clear that further savings would be necessary and, as a consequence, the Student Services Operating Model project had begun in November 2009. Student Services aimed to find another £6 million in savings. It only managed to find a further £3 million (5%) in total from the areas covered in paragraph 8 of the paper.
- 8.4 The changes proposed in the management of Student Services required difficult choices and it was therefore appropriate to seek comment from the Senate. Protecting front line services had been and would remain a fundamental principle. Consequently, the management structure had been reviewed to see if the University could continue to provide all of the services that it currently offered, to the standards expected, with lower management costs. Currently some 43% of staff costs were at grades 8, 9 and 10.
- 8.5 Student Services not only believed that savings could be made in this way, but that the change in management structure would afford an opportunity to make the following improvements:
- The regional voice would be clearer and stronger in Student Services at Walton Hall;
  - The management arrangements for regional faculty staff would be clearer and more effective
  - Collaboration between faculties and Student Services would be easier and more productive.



- 8.6 The conclusion that the University should retain all 13 regional and national centres asserted their continued role in the life of the University and signalled that the OU was a UK wide institution. It also protected the future by retaining the flexibility that the OU's 14 locations provided in the event of further change.
- 8.7 The proposals were the right step for the world into which the University was moving and were no reflection on what had gone before. The regional directors had served the University and its students with distinction and it was right to pay tribute to the professionalism with which they had acted over the period in which the changes had been considered, and to the outstanding way in which they had approached the task of sharing the plans with their staff. Whilst the changes would be difficult, they were the right action to take. The Senate would understand the difficult choices to be faced now and in the forthcoming months, and members' comments were welcomed.
- 8.8 A member commented that Theme 1: service entitlement had not been pursued in terms of cost reduction, but clearer statements of student entitlements would still be necessary.
- 8.9 The President of OU Students (OUSA), Mrs Roz Evans, thanked the Director, Students for allowing the dissemination of the paper to the whole student body in advance of the Senate meeting. The students' main concerns had been about the level of support available to them. If this remained the same, then the students had little say in how this was achieved. Another student member added that these concerns were primarily about Theme 2: Reservation and Registration, and Theme 3: Information, Advice and Guidance, particularly with regard to the statement that seeking information, advice and guidance by "email, letter/paper and telephone" would be the exception rather than the rule. It was worth noting that the Middle States accreditation report had commended the University on its guidance systems and the fact that students were able to contact the OU easily. Mr Swann responded that the ability for students to access information, advice and guidance was fundamental to the OU's operation and the intention was to maintain that. However, the University would endeavour to make it easier for students who would prefer to find information on line.
- 8.10 With reference to Theme 3: Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), a member commented that the detail of implementation was crucial and was concerned that the solution was not as simple as it appeared. If there was another £1 million to be saved, then redundancy must be implicit in these proposals. This would inevitably affect the student experience. It was important to listen to students and find answers and solutions. Mr Swann replied that there were no plans for compulsory redundancy in Student Services and that the savings could be achieved without recourse to compulsion if managed properly over time.
- 8.11 The Head of Teaching and Learner Support (TLS), Dr Christina Lloyd, responded that TLS had been reviewing the provision of information, advice and guidance for over 2 years by consulting with students and practitioners. Theme 3 was about finding ways to tailor the OU's services to suit different students, to make effective use of valuable resources and to use technology and self-serve facilities appropriately.
- 8.12 Referring to paragraph 9, a member said that he was unaware that the outcomes of Theme 4: Associate Lecturer Services had been published and that little was known about what was being proposed. Mr Swann responded that there had been intense interest from ALs in Theme 4. Discussion with the Staff Tutor Liaison Group (STLG) had generated a new set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that had been put on the website. Another member said that a consistent approach to managing ALs in different regions was one good outcome of the proposals and would lead to better and fairer approach.

- 8.13 A member commented that whilst the loss of senior posts was regrettable, protecting front line services was most important. Another member welcomed the protection of front line staff, but noted that the English regions had taken a bigger hit than others in terms of the loss of Grade 10 staff. Mr Swann explained that the G10 staff had been left in the nations, not because of their link to Student Services, but because the UK was a country with 4 governments and the OU was a university with 3 funding councils. It was important that the national directors remained in place, as they represented the University to the governments and were accountable to the funding councils. Student Services had actively avoided taking a salami slicing approach: the proposals did not seek to make all areas suffer equally, but aimed to do what would best protect students.
- 8.14 A member said that the OU would become more centralized if this proposal were to go through. The University would have a smaller national and regional presence, despite previous discussions about extending its range. Mr Swann responded that he did not think that this would be the case. The new Student Services Executive (SSE) would give a greater voice to the regions and the role of the national directors was also being strengthened.
- 8.15 A member commented that each region had different characteristics. This distinctiveness would be lost or diminished with the loss of regional directors and greater standardisation was a risky strategy. Mr Swann agreed that it was important to take account of local circumstances. Differences in financial support for HE across the nations were set to become greater. In England, local knowledge of venues, of resources for disabled students and of access to careers support would continue to be important. Consequently, the 13 regions had been retained. Differences in the economic climate between different regions of the UK were also likely to increase, and the OU would have to decide how to respond as this became clearer. However, where there was no good reason to do things differently, then they should be standardised.
- 8.16 With regard to the standardisation of the regions, the President of OUSA, Mrs Roz Evans, said that OUSA wanted to use this opportunity to remove the anomalies between regions and nations, for example extending the provision of comb-bound materials, and ensuring best practice throughout.
- 8.17 A member asked who would speak for the University at a strategic level in the regional context, for example about the loss of Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). Moreover, would the region be able to respond if other institutions decided to move more emphatically into the part-time market. Mr Swann said that there was significant capability amongst regional staff in respect of representing the University to the media. He agreed that the University would have to be focussed and professional about collaborations and partnerships. A more strategic approach would be achieved by focussing resources where they were most needed. There was now an opportunity to do this through the new Director, Business Development.
- 8.18 Some members commented that maintaining visibility and presence in the regions was crucial to external engagement. Whilst some partnerships could be pursued nationally, local collaboration was important and raised income. Mr Swann replied that the Employer Engagement Strategy was premised on the intention to increase sponsored students. Health was one of the key sectors to be targeted. There was an opportunity to focus resources and expertise in a way that would best serve this purpose, and exploit opportunities in a way that best produced results.
- 8.19 A regional director member remarked that regional directors had in the past argued the distinctiveness of the regions with regard to the need for responsiveness to different demographics. It was now necessary to focus on different markets, which might provide a

better opportunity to influence other areas of the University by collecting information to develop services, for example for younger students in the light of the Browne Review.

- 8.20 Another member added that with central academics working alongside regional colleagues, and with the addition of the recently appointed Director, Development, the OU would be well placed in a difficult market place. It was important to be clear about the University's priorities.
- 8.21 Another member said that the regional directors played an important part as the academic face of the OU in the regions, which might be lost under the proposed model. Mr Swann agreed that the proposal would result in the loss of some networks and that the University would be less able to take advantage of opportunities to make the OU's academic presence felt in the regions. However, the choice was between this and the risk to the student experience.
- 8.22 Referring to paragraph 19, a student member observed the statement that the changes to the management structure had "been designed to minimise adverse impact on the student experience". This was welcomed, but it did imply that there would be an impact. It was important to know what this would be and, once qualified, to inform the students. Mr Swann responded that the University hoped to make the changes in a way that was not noticed by students. This was a primary objective, although it could not be guaranteed, and the impact on students would be monitored very closely.
- 8.23 With reference to paragraph 23, a member commented that there were potential issues about transfer of responsibility for complaints and disciplinary matters, where not only evidence but also judgement was required. A student member added that the responsibility for student discipline should be clear and consistent. There had previously been issues with students being passed between the region, the hub, the faculty and the AL. Mr Swann endorsed this concern and said that students would be dealt with consistently. It was a necessary part of the implementation that there would be no risk to the effectiveness of these processes for ALs or students.
- 8.24 A member commented that the disciplinary processes and academic presence aspects of the regional director role was bound up in the individual. It was important to identify the critical activities necessary for the academic and student experience, and who should be accountable for the relationship between the CAUs and Student Services.
- 8.25 Several members remarked that the paper was presented as one about management structures, but that it was crucial to academic outcomes and the student experience. If the Senate's responsibility was for teaching and deciding how academic activities should be managed, then these issues were not sufficiently explored. It was a general paper and more detail was required on the AL experience, the organisation of AL workload and tutor-student allocation. The role of the Staff tutor and faculty managers, and where they would fit into the new structures, was also unclear. Members also said that the roles and responsibilities of Student Services and the CAUs should be clarified, and that the Senate should ask for further reports from the CAUs, as well as Student Services, as implementation was rolled out.
- 8.26 Mr Swann responded that the AL role and management was unchanged. Student Services had actively sought to protect the AL budget. In the savings required as a result of the ELQ policy, all costs had been reduced by 10%, with the exception of expenditure on ALs, which had been reduced by just 1%. There had been no further reductions as a result of these additional changes. There was also no change to the role or number of regional faculty staff: the changes were to their line management arrangements as set out in the paper. Mr

Swann said that he would be happy to update the Senate on the implementation of the new structure.

- 8.27 A member said that regional faculty staff had always welcomed the opportunity to discuss ideas and policy with Student Services, and would appreciate this avenue being left open in the new structure. Mr Swann agreed that this was vital.
- 8.28 An associate lecturer member thanked the Director, Students for including in the paper some of the issues previously raised by the Associate Lecturer Executive (ALE).
- 8.29 A member said that the design of courses was the starting point for considering AL workload, so there should be a stronger element in the report about the role of the faculties. With reference to paragraph 31b, another member observed that faculty staff appointed ALs and were responsible for their appraisal and development, so to exclude them from the management of AL workload would be a mistake. It must be in consultation with staff tutors, with a collegiate attitude. Mr Swann agreed and said that if the University succeeded in negotiating new AL contracts there would be three drivers to the management of AL workload: first, CAU decisions about the Learning and Teaching Strategy; second, the University's responsibilities under its contracts of employment with ALs; and third, the performance of individual ALs. Workload management would stay with staff tutors, but a more systematic appraisal system would lead to an improved process. There would be procedural changes, but no change to the fundamental principles.
- 8.30 A member was concerned that academic leadership may become less obvious in the regions. Staff tutors that reported to regional directors would now report to deans. Would the Grade 9 Heads of Student Services have anything included in their terms and conditions about academic leadership? With reference to paragraph 31b, many staff tutors would disagree with the idea that Student Services should be accountable for the management of the AL workload. Staff tutors managed the workload, whilst Student Services administered the contracts. Mr Swann agreed that academic leadership had a great deal to do with teaching and learning. Student Services would remain at the heart of this. Regions were not academic units: the CAUs had the resources and expertise to provide academic leadership. Staff tutors were the line managers and the people primarily responsible for managing ALs. They should not have to spend their time on non-academic tasks.
- 8.31 The Chair of the Deans' Group, Dr Sharon Ding, reported that the deans would be centrally involved with future work on the management and leadership of staff tutors. It was appropriate that academic leadership should be provided by the CAUs and the voice of the staff tutors would be even more important. Colleagues would have to take full account of the regional voice through the staff tutors.
- 8.32 A member welcomed the opportunity for the deans to have a clearer insight into the work of regional colleagues. They would have an incentive to take a closer interest in regional matters and would be keen to help with the detail of implementation. The proposals provided opportunities for the University as a whole to be more collegial and united. Another member agreed that the opportunity for the CAUs and Student Services to work holistically was a major benefit of the restructuring. Mr Swann supported this view.
- 8.33 Mr Swann commented that the management of staff tutors in the nations had caused some confusion. The line management arrangements for staff tutors would be the same in the nations as in the regions, but there would be differences with regard to the staff tutors' external liaison role. A national director and a dean were currently conducting some work in this area.

- 8.34 Members commended the work of the Director, Students and others in Student Services for leading in the vanguard of the difficult decisions and changes that would have to be made in all areas, for trying to protect the student experience, and for proposing a neat solution to a difficult situation. The partnership of faculties, staff tutors and regions was welcomed, and it was important to ensure that the regional contributions were recognised. It was acceptable to take advantage of opportunities and work out the detail in the implementation. Organisations tended to move between centralisation and decentralisation. When looking at centralisation, there were great opportunities to improve processes and procedures, and to be innovative in using technology to bring people together.
- 8.35 An associate lecturer member asked whether a risk analysis had been done regarding the implementation of the proposed structure. Mr Swann said that everything would be scrutinised and there was a huge amount of work necessary to develop the detail with Student Services, faculty staff and ALs. The original operating model project team had evaluated 5 different models, all of which had been subject to a detailed risk analysis before being presented to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE). On this basis, this particular model had been advanced. The visibility of any issues that arose would be ensured during implementation.
- 8.36 A member observed that an evaluation strategy was needed to consider the outcomes in terms of financial savings and the student experience. Mr Swann said that a trial cluster was being run and that Human Resources (HR) were engaged in its evaluation. This was proving helpful in providing evidence to support this work. The trial would be watched closely, its impact monitored and the University would react accordingly.
- 8.37 A member welcomed the attempts to introduce a more consistent experience for both students and ALs, but observed that this could be difficult to achieve. The trials should take account of the model hub work carried out by Student Services and OUBS. Mr Swann said that such evaluation would be welcomed.
- 8.38 A student member said that OUSA welcomed their continued representation on the regional committees and hoped that the representatives from these committees would also stay on the Central Consultative Committee (CCC). Mr Swann confirmed that there were no implications for the consultative structure in this paper and that student representation within it would continue until such time as it was reviewed. Student representation in the governance structure was crucial.
- 8.39 A member commented that there had been an excellent debate, but was concerned by the self-denying ordinance of the current regional directors and sought reassurance that they supported the proposals was required. The Chair, noted the concern, but said that it would be inappropriate to discuss this matter at the meeting.
- 8.40 A member said that it was important to ensure that there was joined up thinking with regard to the Student Support Review. Changes in structures must not be inconsistent with the aims of the review. Mr Swann responded that the outcomes of the proposed restructuring were neutral in respect of the Student Support Review.
- 8.41 Another member suggested that these proposals should also be proofed against the University's international activity, particularly with regard to their impact on the academic and student experience.
- 8.42 A member enquired about the timescale for a decision by VCE on these proposals. Mr Swann responded that this depended upon the outcome of this meeting of the Senate and of the Council meeting in November. Consultation with University and College Union

(UCU) would move ahead as soon as possible. Another member commented that the proposals would require changes to the terms and conditions of staff and the need to negotiate with the union would require more time. Mr Swann agreed that the timescales were demanding, but discussions with UCU had already commenced and it was hoped that the new Grade 10 structure (Student Services Executive) would be in place by Easter, and the regional structure by 1 August 2011.

## 9 SCHOLARSHIP

S/10/4/6

- 9.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications) Professor Alan Tait introduced the paper on behalf of all three Pro-Vice-Chancellors. It followed on from the paper discussed at the Senate meeting in October 2009 (S/09/4/10). The Senate had approved the overall approach to scholarship, which was summarised in paragraph 1 of this paper and which recognised that there were different types of scholarly activity that should be valued by the University. The Research Strategy, the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the Curriculum Strategy were all informed by this approach, and it underpinned the work of the Extended Leadership Team (ELT).
- 9.2 The paper represented a significant statement of the scholarship identity for the OU, and it was hoped that it would act as an anchor in times of significant external change. As the external environment changed with regard to available resources, this statement represented an essential commitment to scholarship of 5 types as essential for the effective and distinctive academic functioning of the OU and the career development of academics.
- 9.3 An AL member said that the ALs welcomed the paper. It set out criteria that could be applied to all staff and would enable individuals to identify whether their activity could be recognised as scholarship. The opportunity to work with the OU to explore how ALs could contribute to scholarship was welcomed. With reference to paragraph 4, an additional point could be added regarding the potential to articulate the value to the nations of scholarship supported centrally. Although Scottish and Welsh funding councils did not fund the OU for research, their view of an HE institution was that it should undertake scholarship. The teaching funding that they provided the OU as a HE institution in Scotland or Wales would depend on their perception that the OU was adding to the scholarly debate in those nations. Professor Tait said that this was a helpful point.
- Action: AT**
- 9.4 Another member thought that regional and national considerations should be taken into account, as they would bring regional issues closer to the CAUs.
- 9.5 With reference to paragraph 5, a member said that it was a little more than a statement of where the University had been, rather than where it wanted to be. The openness of all academic endeavours was what constituted the OU's distinctiveness, not just its open and distance learning. Professor Tait agreed that more work could be done to improve the phrasing of this statement.
- Action: AT**
- 9.6 The Dean, OUBS, Professor James Fleck, said that whilst paragraph 5 referred to the past, it also looked forward to the power and effectiveness of teaching in the future. The distinctiveness of the OU should not be underestimated. It was recognised externally, but the University could take a greater lead by investing more. All 5 types of scholarship were relevant, some institutional and some focussed on practice, such as that being carried on in HSC and OUBS. The point of the overall strategy was to give a shape and distinctiveness to the OU's scholarship when compared against that of other institutions.

- 9.7 A member thought that the paper contained some excellent points, but an additional layer of complexity was added when considering other institutional regimes. Individuals would be required to support the OU's goals, but many researchers also had to comply with the requirements of other organisations. Such bodies might set out different requirements for distinctiveness that contradicted those of the OU. Referring to paragraph 5, Professor Tait said that whilst not all scholarship would be aligned with the distinctiveness of the OU, there was a need to reflect the wider ranging institutional focus. This was applicable to many other institutions. Scholarship could to a greater extent add to the distinctiveness of the OU. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), Professor Brigid Heywood, commented that different Research Councils articulated different research needs and there was an element of competitiveness. It was important to amplify the unique contribution of the OU to the wider agenda.
- 9.8 Some members welcomed the idea that all types of scholarship should be held to be of value and one member said that the comparison of REF-able scholarship and other types of scholarship referred to in paragraph 8 was particularly valuable. However, more work was necessary to explain the 5 types of scholarship set out in paragraph 10. Clarification was sought as to the difference between type 2: Scholarship of Teaching, and type 3: Scholarship for Teaching. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Professor Denise Kirkpatrick, responded that there was a distinction: scholarship of teaching was an investigation of one's own and others' teaching, including the effectiveness of a pedagogical approach; whilst the output of scholarship for teaching informed decisions about how to develop course modules and materials.
- 9.9 Referring to type 4: Scholarship in support of Professional Practice, a member commented that this was phrased in an unhelpfully narrow way and made a plea for it to be broadened to a wider scholarship of application involving knowledge transfer. The proposed rewording was "the scholarship and support of professional practice and social and cultural engagement. Professor Kirkpatrick said that this was helpful.
- Action: DK**
- 9.10 Another member commented that type 5: Discipline based scholarship, was too limited if one wanted to do inter-disciplinary work.
- 9.11 A member was concerned that the 5 types of scholarship were not broad enough and did not embrace the full range of scholarly activity, such as writing a book or video-blogging, and might therefore act as a constraint. Professor Tait responded that the paper did not propose that colleagues should be constrained by the examples given under each of the 5 types, although it would be important to negotiate the types of scholarship undertaken around institutional priorities and personal development needs. Professor Kirkpatrick said that the definitions of the five types of scholarship came from the literature and were intended to provide guidance, rather than to suggest that a piece of work should fit exactly into one of the categories. The appendix gave examples of the outputs of various types of scholarship, some of which could contribute to a number of different categories. They were intended to indicate the breadth of engagement and of outcomes. Professor Heywood added that the examples were not exhaustive or prescriptive. The University valued any form of scholarship that added to the distinctiveness of the OU. It would not wish to specify outputs, but it would want to see evidence of evaluation and outcomes that reflected on the distinctiveness of the OU.
- 9.12 Another member observed that the paper did not mention 'blue sky' scholarship. Whilst it was right to have some accountability, the University should not be limited to work with a predetermined outcome. Professor Heywood replied that the paper presented an outcomes based model. Blue sky work was fine, but it was important to disseminate the

outcomes. The particular activities were not an issue, but the value should be more explicit in terms of outcomes that were grounded and accepted in the community.

9.13 Other members found the 5 categories helpful, being clear and holistic, without being restrictive, and being focussed on professional practice across learning and teaching. One member commented that the University needed a framework in order to protect the freedom to build academic careers, whilst ensuring that scholarly activity led to outputs that were in support of the OU during a time of external pressure. Several members said that the emphasis on measurable outcomes would be useful for line managers, and that the framework of categories and examples would be helpful in developing individual portfolios for the purpose of the Career Development and Staff Appraisal (CDSA) process.

9.14 Another member said that the paper did not recognise the opportunity for academics to diversify and to have this recognised as scholarship in difficult times. Professor Tait said that this was implicit, but that it could be made clearer. Professor Heywood added that, historically, the University had acknowledged the constantly evolving challenges and opportunities for academic and research staff, and the value of different forms and outcomes of scholarship that could be referred to in terms of career development. This was evidenced in changes to the senior promotions criteria and guidance that had been approved by the Senate in January 2010.

**Action: AT**

9.15 A member observed that it would also be useful to refresh the guidance on study leave, particularly with regard to the appropriate uses of study leave, to encourage colleagues (especially regional academics and staff tutors) to take it. Professor Tait said that this was helpful and acknowledged that there was an extraordinary capacity for scholarship among staff tutors.

**Action: AT**

9.16 A member commended the fact that the approach to scholarship raised the status of teaching and acknowledged the ALs potential contribution, as their professional practice was enriched by collaboration.

9.17 Another member remarked that scholarly activity engaged staff outside the CAUs, in areas such as the Library, Learning and Teaching Solutions and Student Services, and wondered if this might be acknowledged. Professor Tait agreed.

**Action: AT**

9.18 Referring to paragraph 13, which focussed on peer review as the main criteria for scholarship, a member suggested that the last two bullets were redundant. If excellence is identified by peer review, then the use, elaboration and impact of outcomes would also be contained within peer review. If peer review could work differently across each of the 5 types of scholarship, there might also be different levels, such as internal and external, formal and informal. As external funding also valued peer review, it seemed unnecessary to separate the role of external funding from the evaluation of scholarship. Another member thought that the emphasis on evaluation was just right and expressed in a helpful way.

9.19 A member was pleased that institutional research was recognised in the paper, as it demonstrated the University's commitment to being a learning institution and to self scrutiny. However, external funding was not likely to be realistic in terms of institutional research, so perhaps this category required a different status. There was the potential for misunderstanding in the expression of the second bullet of paragraph 16, which stated that external funding should not be established as a requirement, but that faculties may wish to set targets at the unit level. It was not clear whether a consistent measure should be used.



Professor Tait accepted that gaining external funding would be different for different types (of scholarship) and it was true that the measure would vary. Professor Heywood added that one of the proxies of excellence in research was external funding, so faculties would have different targets. Professor Tait said that if the University wanted to move and seek more external funding, then it would need to set a target.

9.20 A member said that it might be helpful to have a target (for external funding) at institutional level, but there were issues with this approach. It was not possible to have 'one size fits all' and the deans thought it important to note the different faculty requirements. The types and funding (of scholarship) would vary across CAUs, and this reflected diversity at faculty level. However, a framework was needed in which institutional priorities and individual needs could be matched when producing a portfolio. Academics were diverse, so it was inappropriate to be prescriptive, but the framework proposed had flexibility.

9.21 The Senate **approved**:

a) the approach proposed in paragraph 5 of the paper to the distinctiveness of scholarship in The Open University;

b) the five types of scholarship identified in the paper set out in paragraphs 6 - 10

## **10 AUDIT IN PREPARATION OF THE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK S/10/4/7**

10.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), Professor Brigid Heywood, introduced the paper. An audit of research was required to ensure the effective delivery of *OU Futures*, Focus Area 5 (Developing Research), and the key underpinning institutional strategies for Research, Curriculum, and Learning and Teaching; to contribute to the further development of interdisciplinary thematic research networks; and to assist the University in managing the use of resources to inform forward investment in research. It would also inform the University's preparations for the HEFCE Research Excellence Framework (REF).

10.2 The audit would be open and inclusive. An invitation for voluntary submission would be directed to all academic staff with 'research' in their terms and conditions. It would include all appropriate forms of scholarship, where the outcomes were defined by their originality and supported by evidence of robust and appropriate peer review. The Senate paper on Scholarship (S/10/4/6) and the HEFCE REF guidelines provided further information.

10.3 The audit would align with, and follow on directly from, the end of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2008 assessment periods: research publications and other outputs from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2010 (calendar years); and other outcomes from 1 August 2007 to 31 July 2010 (academic years).

10.4 An on-line portal was currently being stress tested, which would allow all research active academics to complete and submit an online profile of the outputs and outcomes of their research activities over the last three years during a three month period from 1 November 2010 to 31 January 2011. The online form could be completed incrementally over any number of separate sessions within the audit period.

10.5 The process would be informed and guided by the Code of Practice for the Management of Research. The data would be assessed at CAU level and by an Institutional Research Audit Review Team. Each group would be tasked with reviewing the aggregated outcomes and using the analysis to support individual researchers, to inform unit planning and to direct the University Research Strategy.

- 10.6 The benefits of the audit would be a various levels: for the individual, it would provide a valuable personal record of research outcomes and outputs to inform the planning of future activity to ensure a balanced portfolio and feed into personal CDSA preparations; the unit would be able to build a stronger picture of discipline strengths and weaknesses and to map excellence; and at the institutional level, the data would be used to nurture, build and grow research excellence, to inform institutional management of and investment in research, and to develop the HEFCE REF submission.
- 10.7 A member remarked that research and scholarship were being used interchangeably in this paper, yet the Senate had just endorsed 5 types of scholarship in the previous paper (S/10/4/6). The scholarship framework would help with workload management and CDSA, but how could an individual identify what he or she should report for the research audit? Professor Heywood responded that the guiding principle behind the audit was to support the research strategy. Research was a subset of the scholarship carried out in the University. Guidelines on the work that should be reported would be available on the audit portal. The audit could have looked at the range of scholarly activity, but it had focussed on that which could be submitted to the REF.
- 10.8 With reference to the institutional research strategy, a member said that it was hard work to ensure that all research activity was focussed towards the REF. If this audit had not been done, it would have been necessary for the CAUs to indicate how they were positioned, so they could start to look at how they were placed for the REF.
- 10.9 A member agreed that the audit was necessary and would be helpful, but queried the approach. There was a tactical element in the approach to the REF, which positioned individual research and presented the optimal situation in terms of income stream. However, this would be decided after the audit had been done. The paper stopped at faculty scrutiny. Professor Heywood responded that it was the job of the Institutional Review Panel to take a tactical view of the way in which the OU could play strongly across different subject areas. The Review Team would work closely with the Deans to consider possible submission options.
- 10.10 A member enquired, if the outcomes of the audit were to be used for strategic planning for the REF, whether it would capture firm plans and prospects for 2011-12 to inform that process. Professor Heywood said that the intention of the audit was to ensure that the University was lean, agile and ready. Its focus would be on outputs and outcomes, not research activity, and would provide a data warehouse of work already done. This audit was a pilot of a model that was likely to become an annual process. At the end of this audit period the data would be locked down in case of an early REF.
- 10.11 The Senate **noted** the timetable for the development of the proposed audit.

## 11 ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW – THE SENATE

S/10/4/8

- 11.1 Referring to Term of Reference 2 (page 11), a member said that, based on the evidence, the Senate had not reviewed “the academic performance of the University during the preceding year”. The University Secretary, Mr Fraser Woodburn responded that the Senate had considered academic performance through the reports of:
- a) the QAA and Middle States Audits, both of which had considered academic performance. The Senate and its members had contributed to these audits.
  - b) the Student Support Review, which had involved a significant review of academic performance
  - c) the work of the middle tier committees and substructure.

- 11.2 Another member remarked that the cover sheet asked the Senate to note the Annual Effectiveness Review, whereas paragraphs 3 – 5 suggested that the Senate might wish to comment. Mr Woodburn responded that, in view of the length of the agenda and the fact that there would be a deeper academic governance review in the forthcoming year, it had been considered unnecessary for the Senate to comment on the AER in any detail. The cover sheet reflected this, but unfortunately the later paragraphs had not been amended accordingly.
- 11.3 With reference to Appendix 2: The Role of the Senate, an associate lecturer member commented that since the AL representative structure had changed, the AL Executive (Senate Reference Group) was able to be more flexible and would be able to accommodate an earlier start if required.
- 11.4 The Senate **noted** the report on its effectiveness for the period September 2009 until July 2010.

**12 ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW – THE SENATE SUBSTRUCTURE S/10/4/9**

The Senate **noted** the report on the effectiveness of the Senate sub-structure and Central Academic Unit (CAU) committees for the period September 2009 until July 2010.

**13 COMMITTEE MATTERS S/10/4/10**

The Senate **approved** the following recommendations:

- a) the re-structuring of one of the programme committees in the Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology (MCT), with effect from 1 January 2011;
- b) the constitutional changes arising from the annual effectiveness reviews and subsequent changes for the following committees, subject to the amendments arising from the correction noted in Minute 5.1:
  - i) Strategic, Planning and Resources Committee (Appendix 1)
  - ii) Curriculum and Validation Committee (Appendix 2);
  - iii) Curriculum Partnerships Committee (Appendix 3);
  - iv) Qualifications Committee (Appendix 4);
  - v) Validation Committee (Appendix 5)
  - vi) Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee (Appendix 6);
  - vii) Research Committee (Appendix 7);
  - viii) Central Academic Unit – Institute of Educational Technology Committee (Appendix 8).

The revised constitutions are attached as appendices to these minutes.

**14 EMERITUS PROFESSORS**

S/10/4/11

The Senate **approved** the recommendations from the Chair and Readership Subcommittee that the title Emeritus Professor was awarded to:

- a) Professor Nigel Bennett
- b) Professor Caroline Pond
- c) Professor Frederick Toates
- d) Professor Graeme Thompson

**15 QAA COLLABORATIVE PROVISION AUDIT**

S/10/4/12

The Senate **noted** the report on the preparations for the 2011 Quality Assurance Agency Collaborative Provision Audit of the OU and on involvement in the 2010/11 QAA Audit of UK Higher Education Institution provision in Singapore, including the invitation to comment on drafts of the Briefing Paper for the Audit.

**16 MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ACCREDITATION**

S/10/4/13

- 16.1 In response to a question from a member, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality), Professor Kirkpatrick, said that the Middle States Commission had raised no concerns about the extent to which the University could ensure that students were able to develop their oral skills through study at the OU. However, they had said that the University could improve the way in which it informed students about what to expect.
- 16.2 The Senate **noted** the main findings of the report and in particular the one recommendation made by the review panel to the University.

**17 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY**

S/10/4/14

- 17.1 A member asked what the University would do with the data in the National Student Survey (NSS). There was much to celebrate, but some areas were disappointing and required further analysis. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality), Professor Kirkpatrick, responded that the results of the NSS were closely examined every year. All faculties were asked to report on both the good and bad outcomes and to produce a performance plan for consideration by the Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee (LTSSC) and other areas of the University. Both broad and specific issues were reviewed and an active programme of work produced that was followed up at discipline and faculty level. The Student Experience Advisory Group (SEAG) also scrutinised the outcomes and provided extensive analysis of the information for quality enhancement purposes.
- 17.2 A student member commented that it was right to applaud the figures, but that there were areas for concern, particularly with those disciplines where there had been some decline at all levels. The Open University was not a campus based institution and consequently appeared to have an issue with students being able to access learning resources such as the library, information technology and specialised equipment. This resulted in some concern about on-line provision. Another member commented that the Institute of Education Technology (IET) 2009 Survey had also indicated low student satisfaction with regard to on-line teaching, which suggested that the University should reflect on the increased use of information technology.

- 17.3 The student member observed that those students who were not successful and did not return to study were not surveyed. It was vital to find out why they did not continue with their studies at the OU. Professor Kirkpatrick said that a proactive approach was being taken with regard to such students and that a project was underway to discover more about their experiences.
- 17.4 The Director, The Open University in Wales, observed that if the results were disaggregated by nation, Wales did particularly well. Referring to paragraph 3, the ranking for overall satisfaction should be given for England, as well as for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The figures gave cause for celebration, being both good and based on a high response rate. The issue of retention in the post-Browne era could be the difference between success and failure.
- 17.5 The Senate **noted** the report.

## 18 THE COUNCIL

S/10/4/15

- 18.1 In response to a question about item 4: European Fees and the University's response to the Reason Opinion (RO), in particular the possibility of setting up a subsidiary, the University Secretary, Mr Fraser Woodburn, confirmed that this would not require the University to change the way it functioned internally.
- 18.2 With reference to paragraphs 1.7 and 2.13, the Director, OUVS, Dr Clarke, offered some clarification. There had been some suggestion that "the University should seek to become a validating body". The OU was already the largest validating university in the UK, with 100,000 graduates having achieved validated awards in 2009, and more than 46,000 students currently registered on validated programmes. The OU already validated programmes internationally and the models for doing so included that successfully deployed with the Arab OU, which involved the licensing of OU materials that the partner then used in its own HE programmes validated by the University. The benefits of this model included the ability to provide more flexible and responsive approaches to issues such as local needs and regulation. The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) Millennium Institute was no longer a partner, since it had achieved its own degree awarding powers. Validation had a significant role to play in the University's international strategy.
- 18.3 Dr Clarke commented that private providers were not simply competitors. In many places a diverse HE sector, which included both for-profit and not for-profit private providers, was now encouraged and supported. The key issue was to assure quality for stakeholders and this provided a business opportunity as well as a challenge to the OU. Through its validation function, the OU had made a significant contribution to supporting this diversity over the past 20 years. Dr Clarke also remarked that internationalisation was not cited as an objective of an international strategy. There must be other benefits to working internationally for the OU and its curriculum. Internationalism was not all about income generation. The Chair reported that the Council did discuss the dual strand.
- 18.4 The Senate **noted** the report on the Council's discussions at the meeting of the Council held on 20 July 2010.

**19 ACTION BY THE CHAIR**

S/10/4/16

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

**20 FUTURE ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

S/10/4/17

The Senate **noted** the list of potential items for discussion at the meeting of the Senate in January 2011.

**21 FAREWELL AND THANKS**

The Chair reported to the Senate that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), Professor Brigid Heywood, was attending her final meeting of the Senate. Professor Heywood had been offered, and had accepted, a position as Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Research) at Massey University, New Zealand from February 2011. On behalf of the Senate, the Vice-Chancellor thanked Professor Brigid Heywood for her contribution to The Open University and wished her all the best in her new life.

**22 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Meetings would be held on the following dates:

Wednesday 26 January 2011

Wednesday 6 April 2011

Wednesday 8 June 2011

Julie Tayler  
Assistant Secretary  
Central Secretariat  
j.d.tayler@open.ac.uk  
October 2010

**Attachments:**

- Appendix 1 Strategic, Planning and Resources Committee constitution
- Appendix 2 Curriculum and Validation Committee constitution
- Appendix 3 Curriculum Partnerships Committee constitution
- Appendix 4 Qualifications Committee constitution
- Appendix 5 Validation Committee constitution
- Appendix 6 Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee constitution
- Appendix 7 Research Committee constitution
- Appendix 8 Central Academic Unit – Institute of Educational Technology Committee constitution

## STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~14.10.2009~~13.10.2010

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### Terms of Reference

1. To recommend, for approval by the Council, the broad strategy and priorities for the University having, where appropriate, taken account of the view of the Senate.
2. To approve planning proposals for strategically significant developments and business opportunities and to ensure that the proposals are viable in terms of the staff and non-staff resource available to support them.
3. To advise the Senate of the financial and planning assumptions influencing the academic plans and priorities of the University.
4. To recommend, for approval by the Council, the allocation of resources.
5. To recommend for approval by the Council University Fee and Financial Support Policy and guidelines, having taken account of the comments of the Senate, and subsequently to approve the University fees on behalf of the Senate and the Council.
6. To review progress~~monitor performance~~ against strategic priorities~~agreed plans and budgets~~.
- ~~7. To set the strategic framework and priorities for the University's broadcasting activity, to make recommendations as appropriate for approval by the Senate and broadcasting strategy for the University, and to maintain oversight of the Broadcasting strategy.~~
- 8~~7~~. To recommend, for approval by the Council, the redundancy of:
  - a) academic-related staff, where the recommendation is agreed by SPRC;
  - b) academic staff, where the recommendation is agreed by a redundancy subcommittee of SPRC (Mode of Operation 6 sets out the membership for this academic staff redundancy committee).
- 9~~8~~. To exercise such powers as may be delegated to the Committee by the Council or the Senate.

### Membership

1. The Vice~~Pro~~-Chancellor, Chair, *ex officio*.
2. The Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Chair, *ex officio*.
- ~~3. The other Pro Vice-Chancellors, *ex officio*.~~
- ~~4. The Secretary, *ex officio*.~~
- ~~5. The Director, Students, *ex officio*.~~
- ~~6. The Pro-Chancellor, *ex officio*.~~

- ~~73.~~ The Treasurer, *ex officio*.
- ~~84.~~ A dean, to be nominated by the deans.
- ~~95.~~ Two members of the Council, who shall not be members of staff or students of the University, appointed by the Council.
- ~~106.~~ Three members of the Senate, elected by the Senate.

#### **In Attendance**

- ~~7.~~ [The Pro-Vice-Chancellors](#)
- ~~8.~~ [The University Secretary](#)
- ~~9.~~ [The Director, Students](#)
- ~~10.~~ [The Chief Information Officer](#)
- ~~11.~~ [The Director of Business Development](#)
- ~~12.~~ The Finance Director.
- ~~13.~~ The Director of Strategy

#### **Mode of Operation**

1. The Committee is a joint committee of the Council and the Senate and will report to the Council and the Senate as appropriate. Where issues being considered by the Committee require the approval of the Council, the Committee will, where appropriate, take account of the views of the Senate in making its recommendations.
2. Subject to the University's rules on the confidentiality of committee business, the Committee shall take appropriate steps to keep members of the University informed about its work.
3. The Committee shall normally meet ~~three~~ [four](#) times a year.
4. The Committee shall be quorate if ~~five~~ [four](#) members, of whom at least one from categories [1, 3 or 5](#), ~~7 and 9~~ are present.
5. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee shall have executive authority to act on its behalf in consultation (as appropriate) with other university officers and with the Secretary of the Committee.
6. The academic staff redundancy committee is a Council-appointed subcommittee of SPRC and will meet when necessary. Its membership consists of the Vice-Chancellor or nominee from ~~SPRC~~ [the University Executive](#) as Chair, two lay members of the Council and two members of academic staff from Senate, ~~all~~ [drawn](#) from [the membership of, or those in attendance at](#), SPRC.

Secretary: A member of the [Futures University Secretary's](#) Office



## CURRICULUM AND VALIDATION COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~20.08.2010~~13.10.2010

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### Purpose

The Curriculum and Validation Committee is responsible to the Senate for strategy, policy and standards relating to curriculum and qualifications, including collaborative offerings, and associated and [accredited-partner](#) institutions; in collaboration with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, where appropriate, to recommend policy in respect of qualifications based on occupational standards; and to monitor the framework for the approval of qualifications of this type. It has delegated powers to approve assessment policy.

### Terms of Reference

#### ***Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities***

1. To promote the strategic objectives and priorities relating to the University's curriculum in consultation with central academic unit committees, and to recommend the strategy to the Senate for approval.
2. To determine frameworks and guidelines to achieve the agreed strategic objectives and priorities, for the examination assessment and classification of qualifications which involve taught modules (with the exception of research degrees and higher doctorates) acting on advice from the Learning Teaching and Student Support Committee where necessary, and for the approval of new modules and packs, recommending the frameworks and guidelines to the Senate for approval.
3. To monitor and review of the curriculum aspects of central academic unit plans, encouraging collaboration between central academic units and sub-units in their curriculum planning and development activities and setting the overarching terms of reference for the programme committees reporting to the central academic unit committees.
4. To delegate to the Qualifications Committee the approval of the introduction of all standard qualifications and their regulations, the approval of the withdrawal of all qualifications and their associated amended regulations, and the approval of amendments to existing qualifications and their regulations, where these conform with the University's Qualifications Framework and other existing policies, and to make recommendations to the Senate in cases which fall outside these limits.
5. To approve the introduction of new modules and packs and on the advice of Qualifications Committee to approve the introduction of new qualifications and their regulations, where these are referred to it by Qualifications Committee, where these conform with the University's Qualifications Framework and other existing policies, and to make recommendations to the Senate in cases which fall outside these limits.
6. To approve, on the advice of the Curriculum Partnerships Committee, the introduction of partnerships, leading to an award of the University, and their quality and contractual frameworks and the closure of existing partnerships, and to make recommendations to the Senate in cases which fall outside these limits.

7. To approve, on the advice of the Validation Committee, [accredited partner](#) or associate status for institutions, the terms of their [accredited or associate status approval](#), and where appropriate, the termination of their [accredited or associate status approval](#) and to make recommendations to the Senate in cases which fall outside these limits.
8. To approve, on the advice of the Vocational Qualifications Committee, proposals for any new types of qualifications based on occupational standards and any new curriculum areas in which vocational qualifications might be developed.
9. To interpret and approve exceptions to the policies and regulations relating to examinations and assessment and qualifications.

***Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance***

10. To monitor the implementation of policy on all matters within the Committee's remit, including collaborative arrangements, and to ensure that activities are monitored against the standards set.
11. To monitor the annual review of qualifications, and the annual review of curriculum partnerships and [institutional](#) partnerships ~~with accredited or associate status~~ to identify areas of the University's curriculum and qualifications structure requiring attention or development, and to draw these to the notice of appropriate officers and committees for review or development activities as appropriate.
12. To contribute to the Senate's annual academic review of the University.

***Assuring Quality and Standards, including approving regulations***

13. To ensure that standards are set for the qualifications, modules and assessment offered by the University, that they are consistent in standard and are compatible with those offered by other UK HEIs, that they support recognition by other organisations, and that they are in alignment with national and international qualification frameworks.
14. To approve recommendations for the recognition and inclusion in the qualifications of the University of modules and periods of study undertaken under the auspices both of the University and of other institutions.
15. To maintain and monitor the University's procedures for the approval of proposals for University qualifications based on occupational standards, ensuring that they are consistent and comparable to those awarded by other awarding bodies throughout the United Kingdom.

***Advising other governance bodies or management***

16. To advise relevant areas of the University of significant market opportunities which the market may present, in order to inform University strategy.
17. To advise the Senate on the introduction or withdrawal of specific categories of qualification.
18. To report to the Senate of new partnerships and new approved institutions (including refusal to approve) or any changes in the status of [accreditation approval](#).

***Making governance arrangements e.g. appointing to other committees***

None

***Matters of public record e.g. ratifying appointments of staff or external examiners***

None

***Judicial: deciding individual cases***

None

**Membership**

1. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications), Chair, *ex officio*.
2. The deans of faculties and schools or their nominees, and the Director of the Institute of Educational Technology or his/her nominee, *ex officio*.
3. The chairs of any committees reporting to the Committee.
4. The Director, OUVS, *ex officio*.
5. The Head of Assessment Credit and Qualifications or nominee, *ex officio*.
6. The Director of the Centre for Professional Learning and Development, *ex officio*.
7. The Director of the Centre for Centre for Inclusion and Curriculum, or nominee, *ex officio*.
8. One nominee of the Director, Students.
9. One nominee of the Director of Marketing.
10. Four members of staff, elected by the Senate, of whom at least two shall be members of the central academic staff.
11. Two associate lecturers appointed by the Associate Lecturers Executive.
12. Two registered students appointed by the Open University Students' Association.
13. Four external members. These may be drawn from the following bodies: the University's [accredited partner](#) institutions, external members of the Validation Committee, employers who are University partners, or external assessors. Members in this category are to be appointed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications) on the recommendation of University officers.
14. Such others as the Committee may co-opt up to a maximum of three, to include members with expertise as necessary in HE issues in Scotland, Ireland and Wales, if not otherwise elected or nominated.

**Mode of Operation**

1. The Committee shall meet in accordance with the University's Committee Timetable, not less than three times a year, and on such other occasions in the year as have been approved by the Senate. It shall report to each meeting of the Senate.

2. It shall be permitted to delegate tasks to a duly constituted executive committee or committees of itself; or to specific individuals; and may make rules relating to its own procedure, but should not further delegate powers delegated by the Senate without the Senate's agreement.
  3. The Committee should designate a Deputy Chair. The Chair shall have executive authority to act on behalf of the Committee and any of its executive committees, in consultation with any body designated to assist in this capacity by the Committee.
  4. The Committee shall review each year according to agreed University criteria how efficiently, effectively and economically it is working in respect of participation, the conduct of business and production of high quality decisions, the schedule of the review to allow for implementation of improvements from the beginning of the next committee year.
  5. The Committee shall ensure that strategies, policies plans and priorities within its remit are compliant with relevant University-wide policies implemented or being developed, particularly those relating to equal opportunities, environmental management and health and safety.
  6. The Chair shall have executive authority to act on the Committee's behalf, in consultation with the Secretary, in particular for the approval of courses and packs.
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## CURRICULUM PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED [14.0413.10.2010](#)

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### Purpose

On behalf of the Curriculum and Validation Committee (CVC), to provide detailed scrutiny of proposals relating to curriculum partnerships, to approve amendments to existing partnership arrangements, to approve joint curriculum development partnerships and to make recommendations to the CVC on the approval of the introduction or closure of curriculum partnerships leading to ~~a qualification~~ an award of the University.

### Terms of Reference

#### ***Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities***

1. To approve amendments and extensions to existing curriculum partnerships, where they lead to a direct qualification of the University.
2. To approve, in consultation as appropriate with the Qualifications Committee, the introduction and closure of collaborative credit agreements with other institutions.
3. To approve the introduction and closure of joint curriculum development partnerships.

#### ***Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance***

4. To monitor and review established curriculum partnerships under regular review, particularly through the annual monitoring process, working in consultation as appropriate with the Open University Worldwide Board of Directors, Validation Committee, and referring any major issues arising from the reports to the CVC.
5. To monitor the use of Open University modules by other organisations, especially those involving 'licensing' arrangements, in programmes leading to the qualifications-awards of other institutions, both in the United Kingdom and elsewhere.
6. To monitor the demand for collaborative credit schemes with other institutions and to receive an annual report on the number of qualifications-awards of credit made under each arrangement.
7. To monitor and review the effective operation of credit rating arrangements.

#### ***Assuring quality and standards, including approving regulations***

8. To maintain and monitor the University's procedures and processes for curriculum partnerships, with reference to the current guidance from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).
9. To ensure, in consultation as appropriate with the Qualifications Committee and the Assessment Policy Committee, that the curriculum and qualifications-related aspects of collaborative provision satisfy the University's own quality assurance requirements and those of appropriate national and international agencies.

10. To ensure that proposals for new collaborative partnerships involving the use of the University's curriculum have been properly appraised, and that they carry the endorsement of the relevant faculty or school boards and (in the case of international partnerships) of the OU Worldwide Board of Directors.
11. To determine the institutional policy guidelines and good practice within which areas of the University should operate when embarking upon new curriculum partnerships, managing existing partnerships, or terminating partnerships.

#### ***Advising other governance bodies or management***

12. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the introduction of new curriculum partnerships leading to a qualificationan award of the University, taking into account the QAA requirements relating to collaborative provision, and to make recommendations to the CVC on the approval of such partnerships and their quality and contractual frameworks.
13. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the closure of a curriculum partnership leading to a qualificationan award of the University, ensuring that commitments to continuing students are protected by the partners to the completion of their studies, and to make recommendations to CVC on the closure of the partnership.

#### ***Making governance arrangements e.g. appointing to other committees***

14. To nominate a member of the Committee to serve on the Validation Committee.

#### **Membership**

1. A Chair appointed by the Curriculum and Validation Committee.
2. One associate dean or equivalent with a relevant portfolio from each central academic unit (or the dean/director's nominee if no suitable portfolio exists).
3. The Director, OU Validation Services or nominee.
4. The Managing Director, OU Worldwide or nominee.
5. The Director of Curriculum and Qualifications Office or nominee.
6. The Head of Planning and Development, Student Services or nominee.
7. The ~~Secretary for Quality Assurance~~Head of Quality.
8. The Head of Assessment, Credit and Qualifications, or nominee.
9. One registered student appointed by the Open University Students' Association.
10. One associate lecturer appointed by the Associate Lecturers Executive.
11. One member of the Validation Committee, nominated by that Committee.
12. One member of the Research Degrees Committee who is a members of the Affiliated Research Centre Management Group, nominated by the Research Degrees Committee.

13. Up to two members co-opted by the Committee, to include external expertise in collaborative provision.

Secretary

### Mode of Operation

1. The Committee shall meet as and when required, and shall report at least annually to the Curriculum and Validation Committee.
2. The Chair of the Committee shall have executive authority to act on its behalf in consultation with its Secretary to recommend proposals for approval by the Curriculum and Validation Committee, where a scheme fits identically with an existing model.
3. The Chair of the Committee shall have executive authority to act on its behalf in consultation with a sub group of Committee members, to recommend new schemes of collaboration for approval by the Curriculum and Validation Committee.





## QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED [20-0813.10.2010](#)

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### **Purpose**

On behalf of the Curriculum and Validation Committee (CVC), to provide detailed scrutiny of proposals relating to individual qualifications, to approve the introduction of standard qualification proposals, and their regulations, to approve proposals to withdraw qualifications, and their amended regulations, to approve amendments to existing qualifications, to approve credit transfer schemes and to make recommendations to the CVC on the approval of non-standard qualifications, including where such qualifications involve a partnership dimension; where any aspect of the qualification is being funded from strategic/central funds; where the qualification is the first example of a new type of qualification; where the qualification has non-standard elements, or where the qualification is in a subject or sub-subject that is new to the University.

### **Terms of Reference**

#### ***Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities***

1. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the introduction of individual taught qualifications, and their regulations, taking into account the QAA requirements relating to programme specifications, learning outcomes and subject benchmarking, the balance of such awards between Open University originated credit and credit originated outside the University, and taking into account of the University's validated programmes and qualifications; where appropriate, to refer proposals for classification schemes to the Assessment Policy Committee.
2. Following scrutiny, to approve new qualifications and their associated regulations where the proposals are standard.
3. To approve proposals for the withdrawal of individual taught qualifications, and amended regulations, ensuring that students are given reasonable notice of any changes.
4. To approve amendments to existing qualifications and their regulations.
5. To approve the award of general and specific credit, specific credit transfer schemes and, in consultation as appropriate with the Curriculum Partnerships Committee, collaborative credit agreements with other institutions, for the University's taught qualifications, which do not require regulatory changes.

#### ***Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance***

6. To monitor the demand for the University's taught qualifications and to receive an annual report on the number of qualifications made of each type.
7. To monitor the process for the annual review of qualifications.
8. To have oversight (on behalf of the Senate) of the award of credit to applicants and students towards the University's taught qualifications based on study undertaken outside the University in accordance with established regulations.

9. To receive annual-regular reports on the approval of awards of general and specific credit and to monitor the annual review process for such awards.

### **Assuring quality and standards, including approving regulations**

10. To monitor the University's procedures for the approval and review of its qualifications, ensuring that they are in accordance with the current guidance from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).
11. To keep under review the credit structures and requirements for the University's taught qualifications, having regard to the relationships between such qualifications, their comparability with the University's validated qualifications and the relevant national qualifications frameworks.
12. To make recommendations to the Curriculum and Validation Committee for new or revised general regulations, including credit transfer regulations, for the University's taught qualifications.

### **Advising other governance bodies or management**

13. To make recommendations to the CVC on the approval of proposals for the introduction of individual taught qualifications, and their regulations, particularly where such qualifications involve a partnership dimension, where any aspect of the qualification is being funded from strategic/central funds; where the qualification is the first example of a new type of qualification; where the qualification has a non-standard element; or where the qualification is in a subject or sub-subject that is new to the University.
14. To identify and consider credit accumulation and transfer issues particularly those involving the status and recognition of the University's modules and qualifications arising from discussions with other institutions and from national and international developments, to co-ordinate the University's response to consultative documents and reports on such issues, and where appropriate to propose the introduction of new types of qualification or changes to existing curriculum policy to the CVC.

### **Membership**

1. A Chair appointed by the Curriculum and Validation Committee.
2. One associate dean or equivalent with a relevant portfolio from each central academic unit (or the dean/director's nominee if no suitable portfolio exists).
3. The Director, OU Validation Services, or nominee.
4. The Director, Centre for Inclusion and Curriculum (CIC) or nominee, *ex officio*.
5. The Head of Assessment, Credit and Qualifications or nominee.
6. The Head of Product and Service Development, or nominee
7. Two members of Student Services support staff, nominated by the Director, Students.
8. One member of staff based in Scotland, nominated by the Director, Scotland.

9. Two registered students, one of whom should be a postgraduate student, appointed by the Open University Students' Association.
10. One associate lecturer appointed by the Associate Lecturers Executive.
11. Two [external](#) members of the Validation Committee, nominated by that Committee.
12. The Chair of the Credit Rating Panel, *ex officio*.

Secretary

### **Mode of Operation**

1. The Committee shall meet as and when required, and shall report at least annually to the Curriculum and Validation Committee.
2. The Chair of the Committee shall have executive authority to act on its behalf in consultation with its Secretary.
3. The Committee shall delegate to the Credit Rating Panel the authority to approve and review awards of general and specific credit.



## VALIDATION COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~14.04.13.10~~ 2010

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### **Purpose**

On behalf of the Curriculum and Validation Committee (CVC), to recommend policy on the approval of institutions and the validation and review of programmes, to propose the terms for the approval and review of specific institutions, and to validate and re-validate specific qualifications offered by such institutions.

### **Terms of Reference**

#### ***Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities***

1. To approve the validation and re-validation of qualifications offered by associated and [accredited-partner](#) institutions, taking into account the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) requirements relating to programme specifications, learning outcomes and subject benchmarking, and taking account of the University's taught qualifications.
2. To approve the imposition of sanctions on associated and [accredited-partner](#) institutions where the quality and standards of a qualification are at risk, including the approval of the close of entry to a validated qualification.

#### ***Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance***

3. To monitor the number of associated and [accredited-partner](#) institutions, the number of [accreditationsapprovals](#), the number of validated qualifications and applications for re-validation, and student numbers on the University's validated qualifications and to receive an annual report on these items.
4. To monitor, in consultation with the Curriculum Partnerships Committee, the process for the annual review of validated qualifications, requiring evidence from associated and [accredited-partner](#) institutions of effective management of the quality of provision and of the academic standards, reporting to the CVC on the overall progression and completion statistics and referring any major issues arising from the reports to the CVC.
5. To monitor compliance with any conditions arising from the [accreditation-approval](#) or [re-accreditationre-approval](#) of institutions, and the validation, re-validation or review of individual qualifications.

#### ***Assuring quality and standards, including approving regulations***

6. To maintain and monitor the University's procedures for the approval of institutions as suitable for the conduct of programmes leading to Open University qualifications by validation or other means of approval, ensuring that the quality of learning opportunities and student support provided by the institution meet the University's standards.
7. To maintain and monitor the University's procedures for the validation and review of programmes, with reference to the current guidance from the QAA.

8. To maintain and monitor the procedures for the external examination of validated qualifications.
9. To keep under review the handbook for the University's ~~accredited institutions and~~ validated qualifications, having regard to the relationships between such qualifications, their comparability with the University's taught qualifications and the relevant national qualifications frameworks.
10. To make recommendations to the Curriculum and Validation Committee for new or revised regulations for the University's validated qualifications.

#### ***Advising other governance bodies or management***

11. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the approval of institutions, their ~~re-accreditation~~ re-approval and the terms of their ~~accredited~~ approved status and to make recommendations to the CVC on their approval.
12. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the termination of the approval of an institution, ensuring that commitments to continuing students are protected to the completion of their studies, and to make recommendations to CVC on the termination of the ~~accreditation~~ approval.

#### ***Making governance arrangements e.g. appointing to other committees***

13. To appoint one member of VALC to serve as a member of Curriculum Partnerships Committee.

#### ***Matters of public record e.g. ratifying appointments of staff or external examiners***

14. To formally approve the appointment of external examiners at associated and ~~accredited~~ partner institutions.

#### ***Judicial: deciding individual cases***

15. To delegate to the Director of OUVS the responsibility for resolving complaints and appeals, where ~~an accredited~~ a partner institution's own procedures have been exhausted, on matters relating to programmes of study, qualifications, and validation and review processes, in accordance with procedures approved by the Senate.

#### ***Membership***

1. A Chair appointed by the Curriculum and Validation Committee.
2. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications).
3. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality) or nominee.
4. The Director, Open University Validation Services.
5. The Director, Open University Worldwide.
6. The Head of Quality

7. Two members having experience in appropriate branches of industry or commerce or in appropriate professions, including members with experience in the field of occupational standards.
8. Three members from [accredited partner](#) institutions of the Open University.
9. One representative of each of the central academic units of the University, normally at associate dean level.
10. At least one regional/national director.
11. Three members from other higher education establishments having suitable experience, for example of ensuring standards and quality assurance through peer validation.
12. One representative appointed by the Curriculum Partnerships Committee who is a member of that Committee.
13. Such other members as may be appointed by the Curriculum and Validation Committee up to a maximum of three.
14. Such others as the Committee may co-opt up to a maximum of three, to include members with expertise in HE issues including foundation degrees.

Members in Categories [8-7](#) to 11 to be appointed by the Chair of the Curriculum and Validation Committee on the advice of officers.

Secretary

### **Mode of Operation**

1. The Committee shall meet as and when required, and shall report at least annually to the Curriculum and Validation Committee.
  2. The Chair of the Committee shall have executive authority to act on its behalf in consultation with its Secretary.
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## LEARNING, TEACHING AND STUDENT SUPPORT COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED 14.04.2010

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### **Purpose**

Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee is responsible to the Senate for strategy, policy and standards relating to the student experience in the University, including learning, teaching, and student support. The Committee's remit covers enquirers, clients, sponsors and alumni as well as registered students. Its responsibility for teaching spans centrally-produced resources and regional/national activities including the work of associate lecturers.

### **Terms of Reference**

#### ***Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities***

1. To promote the strategic objectives and priorities relating to learning teaching and student support.
2. To determine policies and guidelines within the agreed strategic objectives and priorities relating to learning teaching and student support.
3. To approve proposals for new methods and forms of teaching delivery and student support, having assessed their impact on all stakeholders.
4. To formulate and interpret contractual and other non-academic policies, regulations, and practices relating to the admission and progress of students, including the consideration of exceptions to policies.

#### ***Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance***

5. To monitor the quality of students' experience of the University in comparison with the experiences offered by other providers, to identify areas of the student experience requiring attention or development, and to refer these to the appropriate officers and committees.
6. To contribute to the Senate's annual academic review of the University.

#### ***Assuring Quality and Standards, including approving regulations***

7. [To monitor and advise on the mechanisms by which the experience of enquirers, students and clients is evaluated. To ensure that standards are set for services provided to enquirers, students and clients within the Committee's remit, to ensure that performance of such services is monitored against the standards set, and to consider reports on performance against those standards.](#)

#### ***Advising other governance bodies or management***

8. To advise relevant areas of the University on the collection of evidence about the experiences of OU enquirers, students and alumni, about the student support potential of resources and networks beyond the University, and about the experiences offered by competitor institutions.

9. To advise the Senate and/or its other committees on new developments in the University, in particular assessment policy and strategy, and on developments in the external environment.

**Judicial: deciding individual cases**

10. The power to decide individual student exceptions to general policies has been delegated.

**Membership**

1. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality) and the Director, Students, *ex officio*. Joint Chairs: each shall take the Chair for a year, with the other as Deputy Chair.
2. The deans of faculties and schools or their nominees, and the Director of the Institute of Educational Technology or his/her nominee, *ex officio*.
3. The Chair of the Student Experience Advisory Group reporting to the Committee.
4. The Director of Learning and Teaching Solutions, *ex officio*.
5. The Director of Library Services, *ex officio*.
6. The Director, Learning Innovations Office, *ex officio*.
7. The Head of Teaching and Learner Support, *ex officio*.
- ~~8. The Head of Student Recruitment and Financial Support, *ex officio*.~~
- ~~98.~~ The Head of Assessment, Credit and Qualifications, *ex officio*.
- ~~109.~~ Two regional/national directors nominated by the regional/national directors.
- ~~110.~~ Four members of staff, elected by the Senate, of whom at least two shall be members of regional/national staff.
- ~~121.~~ Two associate lecturers appointed by the Associate Lecturers Executive.
- ~~1312.~~ Two registered students appointed by the Open University Students' Association.
- ~~1413.~~ Such others as the Committee may co-opt up to a maximum of three, to include members with expertise as necessary in HE issues in Scotland, Ireland and Wales if not otherwise elected or nominated.

Secretary

### **Mode of Operation**

1. The Committee shall meet in accordance with the University's Committee Timetable, not less than three times a year, and on such other occasions in the year as have been approved by the Senate. It shall report to each meeting of the Senate.
2. It shall be permitted to delegate tasks to a duly constituted executive committee or committees of itself; or to specific individuals; and may make rules relating to its own procedure, but should not further delegate powers delegated by the Senate without the Senate's agreement.
3. The Committee should designate a Deputy Chair. The Chair shall have executive authority to act on behalf of the Committee and any of its executive committees, in consultation with any body designated to assist in this capacity by the Committee.
4. The Committee shall review each year according to agreed University criteria how efficiently, effectively and economically it is working in respect of participation, the conduct of business and production of high quality decisions, the schedule of the review to allow for implementation of improvements from the beginning of the next committee year.
5. The Committee shall ensure that strategies, policies plans and priorities within its remit are compliant with relevant University-wide policies implemented or being developed, particularly those relating to equal opportunities, environmental management and health and safety.

Secretary



## RESEARCH COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED [08.04.2009](#)[13.10.2010](#)

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### **Purpose**

The Research Committee is responsible to the Senate for strategy, policy and standards relating to research, research degrees and higher doctorates in the University.

### **Terms of Reference**

#### ***Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities***

1. To maintain and promote the University's strategy on research, in consultation with central academic unit committees, and to recommend the strategy to the Senate for approval.
2. To determine policies and guidelines within the agreed strategy for research, research degrees and higher doctorates, making recommendations to the Senate in cases which fall outside these limits.
3. To oversee the processes for preparation approval and review of the research aspects of central academic unit plans, encouraging collaboration between central academic units and sub-units in their research activities.

#### ***Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance***

4. To monitor the implementation and operation of policy.
5. To monitor reports from Research Degrees Committee on research student and research degree matters.
6. To contribute to the Senate's annual academic review of the University.

#### ***Assuring Quality and Standards, including approving regulations***

7. To ensure that standards are set for research activities within the context of external research quality monitoring (~~currently the Research Assessment Exercise~~)[including the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework](#).
8. To be responsible, via the Research Degrees Committee, for the recruitment, admission, registration, supervision and progress of research students, and for research degree and higher doctorate examinations.
9. To be responsible, via the Research Degrees Committee, for the approval of recommendations of examiners for research degrees and higher doctorates and the award of research degrees and higher doctorates.
10. To approve applications from organisations wishing to become affiliated research centres after guidance and recommendation from the Research Degrees Committee.

**Advising other governance bodies or management**

11. To advise the Senate, the Strategic Planning and Resources Committee and Central Academic Unit (CAU) Committees on all aspects of the development of research, and research degree activities in the University, including resources and priorities for strategic development.

**Making governance arrangements e.g. appointing to other committees**

12. To appoint the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Research Degrees Committee.
13. To appoint the regionally/nationally-based Senate representative of the Research Committee to the Research Degrees Committee.
14. To co-opt up to two members of the Research Degrees Committee.

**Matters of public record e.g. ratifying appointments of staff or external**

**Membership**

1. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), Chair, *ex officio*.
2. The relevant associate deans or equivalent of faculties and schools, *ex officio*.
3. The Directors of the Research Centres, *ex officio*.
4. The Chairs of any committees reporting to the Committee.
5. Four representatives of the Senate, elected by the Senate, of whom at least one shall be a member of regionally/nationally-based staff.
6. One registered full-time research student and one registered part-time external student, appointed by the Open University Students Association.
7. Two members of the research staff elected by and from such staff.
8. A representative from an affiliated research centre.
9. The Research School Academic Co-ordinator, *ex officio*.
- [10. A Dean or Director, to be nominated by the Deans and Directors Group](#)
- ~~1011~~. Such others as the Committee may co-opt up to a maximum of four.

Secretary

## **Mode of Operation**

1. The Committee shall meet in accordance with the University's Committee Timetable, not less than three times a year, and on such other occasions in the year as have been approved by the Senate. It shall report to each meeting of the Senate.
2. It shall be permitted to delegate tasks to a duly constituted executive committee or committees of itself; or to specific individuals; and may make rules relating to its own procedure, but should not further delegate powers delegated by the Senate without the Senate's agreement.
3. The Committee should designate a Deputy Chair. The Chair shall have executive authority to act on behalf of the Committee and any of its executive committees, in consultation with any body designated to assist in this capacity by the Committee.
4. The Committee shall review each year according to agreed University criteria how efficiently, effectively and economically it is working in respect of participation, the conduct of business and production of high quality decisions, the schedule of the review to allow for implementation of improvements from the beginning of the next committee year.
5. The Committee shall ensure that strategies, policies plans and priorities within its remit are compliant with relevant University-wide policies implemented or being developed, particularly those relating to equal opportunities, environmental management and health and safety.





## CENTRAL ACADEMIC UNIT - INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED [44.0413.10.2010](#)

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This Constitution covers the Committee of the Institute of Educational Technology (IET).

### **Purpose**

Central Academic Unit (CAU) Committees are responsible to the Senate for recommending and implementing a plan covering academic activity including curricula and the general development of research, and for the maintenance of educational quality and standards, in the broad subject area covered by the central academic unit concerned.

### **Terms of Reference**

#### ***Legislation: setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities***

1. Within the context of the CAU's agreed aims and the Senate's decisions, to maintain and recommend to the appropriate University bodies each year a plan for curriculum, research, consultancy and contractual activities in the subject areas with which the CAU is concerned (additional wording for the Institute of Educational Technology only: and for the creation and dissemination across the University of knowledge about good practice in learning and teaching), together with associated staffing and resource requirements.

#### **Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance**

1. To monitor progress in key areas against the annual plan.
2. To receive regular reports from the Dean/Director and to guide him/her in the execution of his/her responsibilities as Head of Unit. To receive regular reports from those responsible for the Curriculum Decision-Making Process within the CAU and to guide them in their actions.
3. To monitor the CAU's relations with other CAUs and with other Units of the University on matters of common interest, and to review the inclusion of such matters in the annual plan.

#### ***Assuring quality and standards, including approving regulations***

4. To oversee the development of agreed activities within the Unit and to ensure the maintenance of educational quality and standards in subjects and areas within the Unit's remit.
5. To approve the establishment of Programme Committees for degrees in named subjects which are based in the CAU, to appoint their external advisors, and to consider their reports. To monitor reports from the committees of degrees in named subjects to which the CAU contributes compulsory and/or core modules, and from the external advisors to such committees.
6. For modules and packs which are included in the approved plans for the CAU, to approve in consultation with the appropriate policy bodies, and subject to any scrutiny of the resource, business or marketing plans required by the University, the details included in the module specification.

### **Advising other governance bodies or management**

7. To advise the Senate's subsidiary committees on draft academic strategies, to advise on draft policies via the CAU Committee's representatives on Senate's subsidiary committees, and more generally to comment to the Senate as it sees fit upon all matters of academic educational and strategic interest including the academic organisation of the University.

### **Making governance arrangements e.g. appointing to other committees**

8. To elect representatives to University bodies and other CAU Committees when requested to do so, and to receive reports from those representatives.

### **Matters of public record e.g. ratifying appointments of staff or external examiners**

9. To appoint Module Team Chairs, other Module Team members, external assessors, Examination and Assessment Board Chairs and internal examiners; and to nominate external examiners for the approval of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualification).

### **Membership**

1. The Dean and Associate Deans (or their equivalents in IET and OUBS) [and Senior Academic Related Managers in IET](#) of the CAU, *ex officio*.
2. All members of the University's central academic staff, including research fellows and senior research fellows, appointed to the CAU and all staff tutors appointed to the CAU.
3. The Chairs of Inter-CAU Named Degree Committees/Programme Committees for programmes and awards associated with the CAU during the development and presentation of such awards, if not already members under category 1 or 2 above.
4. Members of academic related staff appointed to the CAU (with the exception of the Secretary to the Committee) elected by and from their number as follows:

The formula below aims at a broad 80/20 balance between academic and other members, following the principles embodied in the Senate composition.

$$(A\&RS + 1)/2 = (ARP + 4)$$

The result should be rounded to the nearest 5. It should be noted that:

- A&RS is the total number of staff in Category 1 (deans and associate deans) and Category 2 (academic and research staff) combined
  - The number 2 in the left-hand side of the formula relates to the number of AL places in Category 8
  - The number 4 in the right-hand side of the formula relates to the number of student and support staff places in Categories 5, 6 and 7 combined
  - Category 3 (Inter-CAU chairs) and Category 9 (Co-options) have been ignored.
5. Two members of support staff appointed to the CAU, elected by and from their number
  6. One full-time internal research student registered to read for a higher degree and associated with the CAU, appointed by the Open University Students' Association.
  7. One registered student appointed by the Open University Students' Association.

8. Two associate lecturers appointed by the Associate Lecturers Executive.
9. Up to eight other persons with specific expertise, from inside or outside the University but from outside the CAU, as the CAU Committee wishes to co-opt as members.

Secretary

### **Mode of Operation**

1. The Committee shall meet in accordance with the University's Committee Timetable, not less than three times a year.
2. The Committee is a committee of the Senate but shall normally report in the first instance to the Senate's main subsidiary Committees except on such occasions as it shall choose to make representations direct to the Senate or to other bodies or is asked specifically to comment to other University bodies.
3. The Committee shall normally be chaired by the Dean/Director, though the Committee should additionally designate a Deputy Chair. The Chair shall have executive authority to act on behalf of the Committee.
4. The Committee shall review each year according to agreed University criteria how efficiently, effectively and economically it is working in respect of participation, the conduct of business and production of high quality decisions, the schedule of the review to allow for implementation of improvements from the beginning of the next Committee year.
5. The Committee shall ensure that strategies, policies plans and priorities within its remit have regard to relevant University-wide policies implemented or being developed, particularly those relating to Equal Opportunities, Environmental Management and Health and Safety.
6. Where relevant, CAU Committees should ensure consultation with designated industrial and professional advisors about the Unit's plans and programme, and receive reports on action taken in the light of advice.
7. The CAU's SFA and Senior Curriculum Manager should be in attendance, as a source of expert advice, in cases where they have not been elected as members.
8. The Committee may invite staff from Marketing, Finance and other relevant areas to attend regularly as observers, as an alternative to co-option.