



THE SENATE

Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on Wednesday 19 October 2011 in the Hub Theatre

Present:

1) Ex officio

Mr Martin Bean, Vice-Chancellor
 Professor Tim Blackman, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Scholarship)
 Professor Alan Tait, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications)
 Dr Simon Bromley, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
 Professor Anne De Roeck, Dean, Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology
 Dr Sharon Ding, Dean, Faculty of Education and Language Studies
 Mr Jeremy Roche, Dean, Faculty of Health and Social Care
 Professor David Rowland, Dean, Faculty of Arts
 Professor Hazel Rymer, Dean, Faculty of Science
 Mr Will Swann, Director, Students
 Professor Josie Taylor, Director of the Institute of Educational Technology
 Mrs Nicky Whitsed, Director, Library Services

Appointed

2) Central Academic Units

Faculty of Arts

Professor Suman Gupta
 Dr Graham Harvey
 Dr Lynda Prescott

Dr Bob Wilkinson
 Professor John Wolffe

Faculty of Business & Law

Mrs Keren Bright
 Dr Jacky Holloway
 Ms Carmel McMahon

Mr Mike Phillips
 Mr Alessandra Saroli

Faculty of Education and Language Studies

Dr Jane Cullen
 Dr Regine Hampel
 Ms Felicity Harper

Dr Steve Hutchinson
 Mr Pete Smith
 Dr Peter Twining

Faculty of Health and Social Care

Mrs Sue Cole
 Dr Sarah Earle

Dr Verina Waights

Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology

Dr Leonor Barroca
 Dr David Bowers
 Professor Joyce Fortune
 Mr Derek Goldrei
 Professor Andy Lane
 Dr Nicolas Moss

Dr Shirley Northover
 Dr Toby O'Neil
 Dr Sally Organ
 Dr Gareth Williams
 Dr Helen Yanacopulos

Faculty of Social Sciences

Dr Troy Cooper
 Dr Anastasia Economou
 Dr Helen Kaye

Dr Hugh Mackay
 Professor Michael Saward

Faculty of Science

Dr Nick Rogers
 Dr David Rothery
 Dr Robert Saunders

Dr Terry Whatson
 Professor Ian Wright

Institute of Educational Technology

Dr Robin Goodfellow

Professor Eileen Scanlon

Regional/National Centres

Dr Liz Manning

3) Associate Lecturers

Mr Bruce Heil
 Dr Meg Hopkins (alternate)
 Dr Roma Oakes

Mr Stephen Pattison
 Dr Walter Pisarski
 Mr John Robson (alternate)

4) Students Appointed by Open University Students Association

Mrs Marianne Cantieri
 Mr Sandy Garrity
 Mr David Reed

Mrs Tania Rogers
 Mr Carey Shaw
 Mrs Sandra Summers (alternate)

5) Academic-related Staff

Mrs Liz Armitage
 Ms Pat Atkins
 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 John D'Arcy
 Mr Rob Humphreys

Dr James Miller
 Dr Peter Scott

In attendance

Dr Kate Clarke, Director, Open University Validation Services
 Mr Andrew Law, Director, Open Media Unit
 Mr Guy Mallison, Director of Strategy
 Professor Rebecca Taylor, Professor of Economics

Apologies:**1) Ex officio**

Professor James Fleck, Dean, Faculty of Business and Law
 Ms Anne Howells, Director of Learning & Teaching Solutions
 Professor Denise Kirkpatrick, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality)

Appointed**2) Central Academic Units****Faculty of Arts**

Professor Anne Laurence

Faculty of Education and Language Studies

Professor Karen Littleton

Faculty of Health and Social Care

Professor Monica Dowling

Professor Jan Draper

Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology

Professor Uwe Grimm

Faculty of Social Sciences

Dr Raia Prokhovnik

Dr Jason Toynbee

Faculty of Science

Dr John Baxter

Dr Payam Rezaie

Institute of Educational Technology

Professor Agnes Kukulska-Hulme

Regional/National Centres

Ms Barbara Stephens

3) Associate Lecturers

Mr Paddy Alton

Dr Isobel Falconer

4) Students Appointed by Open University Students Association

Mrs Pippa Doran

5) Academic-Related Staff

Ms Fiona Carey

6) Co-opted Members

Dr Petrina Stevens

1 MINUTES

S/2011/03/M

The Senate **approved** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8 June 2011.

2 MATTERS ARISING**Examination and Assessment Boards**

- 2.1 Referring to Minute 2 and the composition of Examination and Assessment Boards (EABs), the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications), Professor Alan Tait, said that there was already a category within the constitution and membership that could be used to include associate lecturers (ALs), although few Boards did so. Rather than change the constitution, it was proposed that the guidance to EABs be amended to encourage the inclusion of ALs in the membership. There would be financial implications, but the input of ALs on EABs could be useful.

Insufficient Academic Progress

- 2.2 The Director, Students, Mr Will Swann, confirmed that the policy for Insufficient Academic Progress (IAP), referred to in Minute 5, had been reviewed in the light of Senate members' comments.

Student Employability

S/2011/04/01

- 2.3 With reference to Minute 10.11 b), Professor Tait presented a paper that illustrated how the definition of student employability had been changed to incorporate the suggestions made by Senate members regarding student capabilities and aspirations.

Central Disciplinary Committee

- 2.4 Referring to Minute 7, Mr Swann said that the briefing pack for student members of the Central Disciplinary Committee (CDC) was available and that the process had been reviewed in order to provide better support for students.

Student Support Review

- 2.5 Mr Swann informed members that, due to some outstanding issues that were yet to be resolved, the expected follow-up paper on curriculum support teams had not been presented to this meeting of the Senate. Significant progress had been made on the position of the nations in collaboration with the nation directors and their staff. All subject areas had been agreed, with one exception where further discussion was required. Professor Tait, as the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications), was currently in the process of resolving this issue. The question as to whether there should be separate teams for postgraduates, or whether they should be distributed by curriculum, was currently under discussion and would be dependent on the review, led by Dr Sharon Ding, Dean and Director of Studies, Faculty of Education and Language Studies (FELS), of postgraduate provision. It was hoped that a satisfactory conclusion would be reached on all of these matters by the end of November 2011, in order that work could be carried out on the number and location of the teams during December, with a view to bringing a report on the outcome to the Senate meeting in January 2012. This did not affect the original timescale, which aimed to have all curriculum support teams in place by 2013/14, with the possibility of an early adopter up and running in 2012/13.

Action: WS

- 2.6 A member commented that Minute 9.29 referred to a paper that would give the Senate an opportunity to indicate those issues on which it wished to have a vote, not one that would simply report back on progress. Mr Swann said that the issues referred to were much broader than that of the number and location of curriculum support teams, and were concerned with the implications of the creation of teams for the work of regional faculty staff, in particular ALs. A report would come back to the January 2012 meeting of the Senate that would give members the opportunity to comment on the way in which the University intended to progress these issues and to identify those issues in which the Senate might wish to take a particular interest.

Action: WS

- 2.7 An associate lecturer member observed that Minute 10.9 referred to the Associate Lecturers' Executive Learning Group, but that this should read ALE Learning Group. In response to a question, Mr Swann said that an update on e-portfolios was not currently available, but that he would be happy to discuss the matter outside of this meeting or to bring it back to the next meeting.

Action: WS

- 2.8 With reference to the involvement of the nations, a member asked whether the position of continental Europe had been discussed. Mr Swann responded that the University intended to distribute students in Europe by subject area across the curriculum support teams.

3 REPORT FROM AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR

- 3.1 The Vice-Chancellor extended a particular welcome to some new members attending their first meeting of the Senate:

- Professor Tim Blackman, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, (Research and Scholarship)
- Professor Rebecca Taylor, incoming Dean and Director of Studies, Faculty of Business and Law (in attendance)
- Mr Stephen Pattinson, appointed by the Associate Lecturer Executive
- Mr Sandy Garrity, appointed by the OU Students Association
- Ms Pat Atkins, Student Services
- Dr Leonor Barroka, Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology
- Dr Gareth Williams, Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology
- Dr Anastasia Economou, Faculty of Social Sciences.

National Student Survey

- 3.2 The Vice-Chancellor said it had been satisfying to do so well, once again, in the National Student Survey (NSS). An overall satisfaction rate of 93% was a credit to the University and a testament to the hard work of its entire staff. It was also gratifying to be referenced in the White Paper, which had stated "It is noteworthy that three very different types of institution do consistently well in the NSS: The Open University, Buckingham, and Oxford and Cambridge. What they share, in very different ways, is a commitment to close contact with students and focus on academic feedback."
- 3.3 The Vice-Chancellor's address to the University during the Council Residential Weekend at the end of September had outlined the University's achievements, priorities and strategy for the future and could be found at <http://stadium.open.ac.uk/berrill/>

External Environment

- 3.4 The University had had a strong presence at the recent Party Conferences. At the Conservative Party Conference, the Vice-Chancellor had held one-to-one meetings with key stakeholders and had also shared a platform with John Hayes, Further Education

Secretary, at the Policy Exchange fringe event. During this session, Mr Hayes had referred to the OU as his "favourite university". Rajay Naik had also chaired a ResPublica fringe event on growth, jobs and skills.

- 3.5 At the Labour Party Conference, the Vice-Chancellor had shared a platform with the Shadow Universities Minister, Gareth Thomas, at the Progress fringe event entitled 'Open to all: is part-time learning the best way to deliver Labour's ambition to widen participation?' At the same time, the new shadow cabinet had been announced: John Denham had stepped down as Shadow Business Secretary to be replaced by Chucka Oomunna. The University was currently working to schedule a meeting with Mr Oomunna.
- 3.6 At the Liberal- Democrat Conference, Nick Clegg had highlighted that the party were "working tirelessly to ensure anyone who wants to go to university can. Freeing part-time students from up-front fees for the first time."
- 3.7 Widening participation continued to feature significantly in the media. The Times Higher Education had quoted Higher Education Policy academic, Professor Claire Callender, saying that the widening participation premium provided by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) might be at risk following the changes to teaching funding. In response to this, HEFCE had said "The priority is to recognise that there are additional costs associated with this activity...We envisage that the allocation for widening access and improving provision for disabled students will continue along similar lines as at present."
- 3.8 The University was dealing with a number of consultations on the Higher Education (HE) White Paper. Responses to HEFCE T-funding and Repayment Mechanisms for Student Loans had been submitted. Work was in progress on Further Education (FE) Reforms; Informal Adult and Community Learning; Social Mobility and Child Poverty.
- 3.9 In mid-September, the Scottish Government had published a pre-legislative consultation paper, which had focused on post-16 education. Key issues included: commitments to introduce a statutory duty on fair access to higher education institutions (HEIs) and take forward a minimum income guarantee of £7,000 for students on low incomes; possible legislation on articulation between colleges and HEIs, and on university governance. Higher education had been prioritised within the Scottish Government's draft budget which had been published in September 2011. There was an 8.2% increase of £76m for the sector for 2012-13 and a planned increase of £135.5m over the Spending Review Period.
- 3.10 In Wales, the consultation on part-time HE finance had closed in early October. Following work to gain support for a delay in implementation to 2013/14, the University had had a follow-up meeting with Government officials. They had confirmed that a decision on a delay would be made in the next few weeks and that the Minister was 'willing to listen'. The Welsh Government draft budget had been published and the HE allocation remained as it had been in the indicative budget published last year.
- 3.11 The Open University in Wales, working with the Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology (MCT) and the Faculty of Science, had secured up to a maximum of £917k to collaboratively develop and deliver two NHS Wales shaped Foundation Degrees utilising MCT's G20 Combined Professional Studies framework.
- 3.12 In Ireland, the Director would be attending the forthcoming party conferences to build on the University's profile with individual Members of the Legislative Assembly, spokespersons and advisors across parties at Stormont. A briefing opportunity to the Employment and Learning Committee had been secured for 14 December 2011. This would facilitate a briefing to the Committee on the University's fee regime for Northern Ireland and a showcase event at Stormont was being scoped for early next year.
- 3.13 Referring to an article in the Times Higher Education Supplement, which had focussed on students aged 21, a member asked how this related to the findings of the University's own

market research. The Vice-Chancellor said that the University was fighting for widening participation in every possible forum. The University Secretary, Mr Fraser Woodburn, said that the market research did not indicate that the OU did not have any young students, but that it was unlikely to attract those in the A1 and A2 categories, who wanted a traditional university experience.

4 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE (SPRC) S/2011/04/02

- 4.1 With reference to Minute 3.3, regarding the clarification for Deans of the OU's role in FE, a member asked whether this clarity could be provided to the Senate. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications), Professor Alan Tait, responded that the University had been considering the possibility of bidding for some of the 20,000 additional places that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) had released through HEFCE for the delivery of HE in FE. The University had held discussions with a number of FE colleges and it was currently reviewing the bid timetable, which was extremely challenging. However, the University had not yet made a decision on how and when to go forward.
- 4.2 With reference to Minute 3.3, regarding the clarification for Deans of the OU's role in FE, a member asked whether this clarity could be provided to the Senate. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications), Professor Alan Tait, responded that the University had been considering the possibility of bidding for some of the 20,000 additional places that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) had released through HEFCE for the delivery of HE in FE. The University had held discussions with a number of FE colleges and it was currently reviewing the bid timetable, which was extremely challenging. However, the University had not yet made a decision on how and when to go forward.
- 4.3 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE - recorded separately as S-2011-04-CM.
- 4.4 The Senate **noted**:
- a) the unconfirmed minutes from the meeting (SPRC-2011-03-M)
 - b) the unconfirmed confidential and restricted minutes from the meeting (SPRC-2011-03-CM)

5 RESEARCH COMMITTEE S/2011/04/03

The Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Research Committee held on 22 June 2011.

6 CURRICULUM AND VALIDATION COMMITTEE S/2011/04/04

- 6.1 Referring to paragraph 17, regarding the implementation of the credit transfer principles, a member expressed concern that the Committee had approved a recommendation at this stage, since he had understood that there was to be a further discussion of those principles. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications), Professor Alan Tait, confirmed that the Qualifications Committee had looked at this again at its last meeting and the outcomes of this were reflected in Principle 8 of the paper on the Principles of Undergraduate Qualification and Modular Delivery (S-2011-04-08). The Committee had reviewed the recommendations of the Level 1 Coherence Review, which had said that all students should include 60-credits at Level 1 (L1) of their undergraduate degree, irrespective of whether they had gained credit from previous study at the OU or from outside. The way in which the OU had found it necessary to respond to the post-Browne

world, which had been reflected in many ways through paper S-2011-04-08, had meant that this recommendation had to be revisited. The University now thought that it should allow 'appropriate' credit to be counted down from study within the OU or elsewhere at Level 2 (L2), Level 3 (L3) or postgraduate. This was embodied in Principle 8 of paper S-2011-04-08, with the addition of the postgraduate element.

6.2 The Senate **noted**:

- a) the report of the meeting of the Curriculum and Validation Committee (CVC) held on 5 July 2011;
- b) the report of the joint meeting of the Curriculum and Validation Committee and the Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee (LTSSC) held on 8 September 2011

7 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE S/2011/04/05

The Senate **noted** the report on the meeting of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) held on 7 June 2011.

8 SENATE MEMBERSHIP PANEL S/2011/04/06

The Senate:

- a) **approved** the following appointments to:
 - i) the Chair and Readership Promotions Appeals Committee until 31 August 2014:
Professor Michael Steward, Neuroscience, Science
 - ii) the Special Appeals Committee of the Senate
Professor Joyce Fortune, Technology Management, MCT until 31 August 2012
Dr Helen Kaye, Psychology, Social Sciences until 31 August 2014
Professor Karen Littleton, Psychology in Education, FELS until 31 August 2014
- b) **noted** the matters for report.

9 OU STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2015: EMERGING PRIORITIES S/2011/04/07

CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE - recorded separately as S-2011-04-CM.

10 PRINCIPLES OF THE UNDERGRADUATE QUALIFICATION AND MODULAR DELIVERY MODELS S/2011/04/08

Overview

- 10.1 Dr Simon Bromley, Dean and Director of Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, introduced the paper, emphasising that it provided a set of principles to govern the delivery of the curriculum on both a modular and a qualification basis. Paragraphs 2, 4 and 7 were particularly important in this context.

- 10.2 Many of the fundamental features of OU provision would not change if the Senate agreed the principles in the paper. The Open University's commitment to open entry, which was a defining feature of the OU's offer, would not alter. However, it would be necessary to think carefully about the information, advice and guidance (IAG) given to students in the new higher education (HE) environment and to manage open entry responsibly. The University had a responsibility to be much clearer to students about what was involved in OU study than it had been in the past. Students would continue to be able to study on a modular basis. There would be no limits on modular study and, where appropriate, students will be able to transfer modular credits into a qualification. They would be able to vary the intensity of their study with the OU. Students would also be able to change their study goal. Although, in the new qualification delivery model, students would be registered for a single qualification, it did not mean that they would not be able to change their study goal at a subsequent time if their previous study made this appropriate. The principles and ethos of the Open Programme would also remain unchanged.
- 10.3 The principles that the Senate were being asked to approve would apply to new regime students enrolling at the OU from Autumn 2012; they would not apply to transition students. The principles were about the design and delivery of the curriculum overall; they were not regulations and policies that would govern individual student behaviour and conduct, although they would inform them. The University would continue to have policies of exceptions.
- 10.4 As the modular basis of the University's curriculum would remain intact, the effect of many of the principles was to order the curriculum to provide clarity of qualifications and pathways through qualifications that were simpler for students to navigate to their chosen study goal. Much of the thinking behind the principles was around how to provide more consistent pathways and intensities of study, in order to provide a more predictable study experience that was easier to plan. Many of the principles simply codified and formalised what was already good practice, and were already well established in some parts of the curriculum. Others were more innovative and would allow the University to do things that it did not do currently. For example, the principles concerning the permissibility of progression would allow the University to make decisions about a student's progress through a qualification with a view to moving them to a different pathway if appropriate. Some principles would turn what was currently provided as strong advice into requirements, such as starting at Level 1 (L1) and passing at one level before progressing to another.
- 10.5 The University was already giving careful thought to and consulting on the implementation of the principles. Some of the principles could not be implemented immediately in all areas of the curriculum; for example, the principle regarding 120 credits of mandatory study at each level, as the appropriate curriculum did not yet exist at L1. There was no intention to force changes to the curriculum that were inappropriate at this stage. The principles would be implemented in a phased manner.
- 10.6 The paper contained 23 principles, but the main changes to current practice would be as follows:
- a) qualification registration would become the primary way in which students were registered;
 - b) the University would aim to offer predictable, coherent and consistent intensities of study for students, although a student could change this intensity if desired;
 - c) the University would offer clear, simple pathways, with fewer decision points at which the student had to make choices;
 - d) it would become mandatory to achieve 120 credits at undergraduate Levels 1, 2 and 3;
 - e) there would be a requirement to gain 60 credits at a level before embarking on study at the next level;
 - f) the University would confer on students the qualification that they signed up for when they had achieved it.

Consultation and Communication

- 10.7 An associate lecturer member said that the AL's appreciated the changes that had been made to the paper since its first iteration, and congratulated the University on some good consultation in a very tight timeframe. The President of OUSA, Mrs Marianne Cantieri, agreed that the consultation process had been well managed. It was gratifying to see that comments and suggestions had been incorporated into the paper, particularly that the principles should not be applied retrospectively to transition students.
- 10.8 Mrs Cantieri said that these principles were an excellent example of something that needed to be carefully communicated to current OU students to ensure that they understood they would not be affected and to avoid the student support telephone lines being inundated with enquiries. The information should be in the view of the transitional student until the end of the transitional period. It should also be clear to those students who had not studied in recent years, but who might decide to return to study: they would not be transition students, but would have to be informed of the arrangements regarding the registration process.

Associate Lecturers

- 10.9 An associate lecturer member said that the way in which the University currently employed ALs did not sit comfortably with the structure of the new qualification world, but there was nothing in this paper, or the paper on the Strategic Plan (S-2011-04-07), about how this might need to change. The Director, Students, Mr Will Swann, said that he did not expect there to be any change to the way in which ALs were employed, nor to the role that had already been defined for ALs in the future, as a result of this paper. In the qualification world, students would register annually for the total number of credits that they wish to study in that year: this would be made up from one or more modules. ALs would continue to be contracted as at present and would be appointed to the modules that students select. In due course, the University might discover an expansion in programme-based tuition. This would have to await future contractual arrangements, although there were ways of doing this at present within existing structures.

Exceptions

- 10.10 A student member said that the acceptability of the paper was dependent on paragraph 13, which said that exceptions might be allowed on sound academic grounds. It was important to minute this if the University was to avoid management by tick-box. There might be occasions where students could not afford the modular route and were eligible for the loan system, for example foreign students who decide to settle in the UK, but whose prior experience in their home country was not thoroughly recognised by the OU. Such students might not have to do L1 study. There should be a system where appeals against the standard route could be considered not only for the modular route, but also for those taking the qualification or loan-based route; otherwise it implied that one size should fit all. Mr Swann responded that there was already provision for exceptions within the current system: several times each year there were examples of students who had a strong case for being eligible for a qualification, even if they had not met every single condition for that qualification. This was not new business, but the processes would have to be developed.

Implementation of Principles

- 10.11 A member asked for clarification of the process for implementing the principles, in particular with regard to assessment, which was currently modular-based rather than qualification-based. Would decisions about the assessment for a qualification, for example, whether students were able to fail the continuous assessment in a module, but still achieve the qualification, be taken within faculties or programme committees, or at University level? The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications) Professor Alan Tait, said that the

issue of assessment in the qualification world was one that was currently exercising the University, and it was not yet in a position to take any decisions. Some decisions would have to be taken as part of the Study Experience programme; other, larger issues were subject to a review that he was setting up with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality), Professor Denise Kirkpatrick, that was being led by Professor Anne de Roeck. Dean, Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology (MCT).

- 10.12 A member asked for clarification on the wording of paragraph 14, which appeared to suggest that the principles would only apply to qualifications that the University started to offer after September 2012, rather than to the qualifications embarked upon by students starting in 2012. The Vice-Chancellor said that this would be clarified.

Action: SB

- 10.13 The Director of OU Validation Services (OUVS), Dr Kate Clarke, welcomed the paper: the move to qualifications and modules was the right direction for the University. However, there would be implications for the OU's quality management in terms of monitoring and evaluating qualifications rather than modules, the way in which external examiners engaged with the University's curriculum, and student feedback and evaluation. Consequently, other work would need to be done alongside the implementation of these principles.

Principle 1

- 10.14 A member said that he had no issues with the general thrust of the document, but hoped it could be treated as a work in progress. Dr Bromley said that the Senate was being asked to approve the principles, but they were subject to on-going debate within the University and subsequent revision by the Senate if appropriate. The member was concerned about plans to converge into a single study year, which was not clear in this document, but had been raised elsewhere. In practical science, for example, some study depended on factors such as daylight hours, weather or growing season, which might require students to work over the summer even if the rest of the year had finished in May: it would not always be possible to converge into a single study period. Dr Bromley said that the Senate was being asked to approve Principle (P) 1, which proposed a standard academic year, but there were issues about the detail of implementation and cases where convergence might not be appropriate. The University would not be seeking to impose a pattern on areas of the curriculum where it was not suitable.
- 10.15 An associate lecturer member said that greater clarity was required regarding the academic year: it was important to understand how this would be translated consistently within and across faculties. Professor Tait responded that there would be a considerable amount of work for faculties in order to deliver the new academic year, but it was crucial that the University was able to deliver a consistent student experience through qualifications that had clear paths of study. The member enquired whether the explicit holiday arrangements for students would also apply to ALs. It was a common arrangement for Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs) to be set at the beginning of a holiday period, which would result in ALs having to mark for the entire period. Mr Swann confirmed that the holidays recorded in the study calendar were for students; not for internal or AL members of staff. Holidays for ALs were a contractual matter and were included in the negotiations on the new contract.
- 10.16 Referring to paragraph 12, which stated that different regulations might be defined for different markets and products, a member assumed that this would apply to the work-based learning in the Faculty of Health and Social Care (HSC), where the requirements were driven by professional bodies and external regulators. Would this clause apply to the principle of a standard academic year, so that the faculty would have the flexibility necessary to allow modules to fit within the pattern prescribed by the professional bodies? The faculty currently allowed theory and work-based learning to fit within these patterns, but as a consequence the patterns fluctuated between one module and another. Moreover, if the University were to have just two starting points in each year, this would result in fewer

conflation patterns. This would have implications for workload planning that would need to be addressed in order to ensure that the changes to the calendar year could be met. The Dean, Faculty of Health and Social Care, Mr Jeremy Roche, agreed that there would be pinch points with the introduction of P1 and there was much work to be done in this regard. In HSC, having work-based courses running alongside knowledge-based courses would be manageable, as there was very little free choice through the professional routes.

- 10.17 Referring to information available on the Ready for 2012 website, a member expressed concern at the changes to the pace of study that would result from the introduction of a standard academic year. The time required for a 60-credit course, taking into account the introduction of holidays and other time off, would increase from 16 hours per week to as much as 20 hours. For a 30-credit course, from 10 hours per week to 14 hours. Students tended to withdraw from study with the University because they did not have enough time, not because they were unsure of which course to do next. Getting the pace of study right was critical. Mr Swann said that the module would not change, the number of weeks over which it was studied would not change, and therefore the workload would not change.

Principle 2

- 10.18 A member was concerned with the proposal in P2 to force all modules into a minimum size of 30 credits, although there was a concession that allowed smaller credit sizes if they could be combined into a 30-credit block. There were some extremely valuable modules, particularly in Science, which came in smaller packages. The Vice-Chancellor had been rightly praised for his role in persuading the Government to reduce the threshold for loans from 45 credits to 30 credits, but this should not mean that students were only able to study at 30 or 60 credits per year. For many students, 60 credits would be too much to take on in a year, but they could manage more than 30. The availability of smaller modules provided students with the opportunity to vary the study pace to suit them, perhaps at 40 or 50 credits per year. This had to be good for progression and the rate at which a student completed. Science modules of 10 credits had been used as short-courses to introduce students to OU study and many then registered for further study with the University. Flexibility was espoused in P3 and paragraph 5e, and the principle of offering students a 'taster' was stated in paragraph 6. If the OU did not continue to offer stand-alone 10-credit modules, which could be fed into the qualification world, then it would lose a wonderful asset. Dr Bromley responded that 30-credit modules were the building blocks for qualifications, but did not preclude modules of a smaller credit size. The Dean, Faculty of Science, Professor Hazel Rymer, added that the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) were well aware of the short-course issue in Science, but there was a financial issue to be addressed and such modules would become very expensive. However, there were many other ways of offering the curriculum, so many of these short-courses would survive in some way. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Qualifications), Professor Alan Tait, said that this principle was a student centred one designed to support qualification completion. The aim of P2 was to create modules of a size that fitted together integrally across a number of years and that provided clear pathways to qualifications. The principle could not be enacted immediately: currently there were gaps in the curriculum, which meant that modules were not available for students to take within a programme, and module sizes had been developed differently across a range of faculties and qualifications. Mr Swann said that the point about 'tasters' was important. Students needed to be given the opportunity to discover whether long-term OU study was suitable for them at a relatively low cost to themselves. The Openings programme and some short-courses had played that role in the past. In the future, the Access and Success programme currently being developed, which would be supported by National Scholarship Programme funding, would do this job for those students who were lacking in confidence and were on low incomes. However, a solution also had to be found for those students lacking in confidence who were not on low incomes, which would have to be drawn from the modular world and would probably include modules of less than 30 credits. There was a long way to go before the future became clear.

- 10.19 Another member said that it was important not to forget students other than those in England. There would still be a demand for 10-credit modules from Scottish students as funding was less of an issue. Scottish students in the Young Applicants from Schools Scheme (YASS) might also wish to study such short-courses, and there might continue to be a market for YASS students in England. It was important that the OU continued to provide a flexible, attractive package in an increasingly competitive environment, which kept the student at the centre. Mr Swann said that there was no proposal within these principles to abandon short modules where there was an appropriate market for them. In preparing for the new world, the University had been mindful to ensure that the principles, policies and procedures would work across all four UK nations, and the nation directors and their staff had been consulted throughout.

Principle 4

- 10.20 Referring to P4, Dr Clarke observed that the University appeared to be closing the door to accelerated degree routes, although the BIS technical consultation indicated that the Government wished to encourage institutions to consider these. Unless a deliberate decision had been taken not to offer two-year degrees, the University should be careful not to close the door. Professor Tait replied that if the OU decided to offer such a degree then it would have to come back to the Senate in order to seek a waiver to P4. The principle was intended to protect students from taking on an unrealistic workload, which would cost them more than they could afford in the future.

Principles 5 – 8

- 10.21 A member welcomed the principles, but felt that some required clarification. P5 said that it would become mandatory to study 120 credits at each level, notwithstanding that this would not be possible in all areas at L1. Consequently, P7 seemed to be redundant, as it stated that a student had to do 120 credits at L2 and L3. Dr Bromley responded that this was not the case, as undergraduate included non-honours degrees. The member said that P5 then appeared to be contradicted by P8, regarding the use of credit by students transferring from the modular to the qualification delivery model. Dr Bromley said that P8 was about credit transfer, whether from the OU or another institution, and that P5 would still apply. The member suggested that P9, which was also concerned with the transfer of credit between delivery models, appeared to undermine P6, regarding the requirement to pass at least 60 credits at each level before proceeding to the next. Dr Bromley confirmed that students would be able to study in the modular world in ways that they would not be allowed to in the qualification world, and would be able to accumulate credit and transfer it in. P6 would apply if they transferred into the qualification delivery model. Mr Swann explained that if there was a qualification with modules numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4 and a student studied 2 and 3 in the modular world and then registered for the qualification, the student would then have to study module 1 followed by module 4: whatever was left of the credit required for the qualification would have to be accumulated in the order prescribed for the qualification. In response to a further query, Dr Bromley said that a student could study a L3 module in the modular world without having studied a module at L2.
- 10.22 Referring to P8, regarding students being able to count relevant additional credit at L2 and L3 in place of credit specified at L1 in the qualification delivery model, Professor Tait said that he also wished to include postgraduate study.

Principle 12

- 10.23 With reference to P12, which stated that no qualifications should be available in the modular delivery model, and to the definition of a qualification in paragraph 8, a member observed that the University currently awarded certificates linked to individual modules or pairs of modules, for example on public health promotion and mental health. This was very attractive to students who wanted to study on a modular basis, as it provided an OU awarded certificate that the student could include on their curriculum vitae (CV). Would the

University still be able to offer these, even though they may not be called qualifications? Professor Tait replied that the University had to be confident that its non-standard qualifications, or those which fell outside the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) framework, were recognised in the market in order that students were not sold short. Faculties would be asked to review non-standard qualifications to ensure that they would be viable in the qualification world.

Principle 17

- 10.24 A member asked whether there was a substantive difference between P17 and P9. Dr Bromley said that P9 referred to students who transferred into a qualification before they had gained all the credits required for it, whilst P17 concerned those who had accumulated all the specified credits needed for a qualification, having not registered for it, who then claimed the qualification. The member thought this would be covered by P9, but accepted that the rationale might be different. However, P17 implied that the OU was sitting on the fence in saying that “we assume that for the foreseeable future qualifications will be delivered through our existing modules”, as it undermined what the University was trying to achieve. Professor Tait said that the alternative, ie not awarding a qualification achieved in the modular world even though all the necessary credits had been achieved, would be neither student friendly nor sustainable. Mr Swann said that the distinction between these two principles was between the content and the ordering of the content: the fundamental point underpinning so many of the principles was greater structure for students and the order in which they did things. The member observed that the consequence of this was that students could still register on a modular basis, study for the number of credits required, and then convert these to a qualification, and this seemed to subvert the rest of what the University was trying to do. Professor Tait questioned why a student would choose this route if they knew that they wanted a qualification in the first place, as the student would not be eligible for a student loan unless they registered for a qualification.

Principles 19 - 21

- 10.25 With reference to P20, a member said that students often targeted a particular module at L3 and then considered how to get there. Whilst the description of the qualification should not solely be a list of modules, details of the modules making up the qualification should be included, or students would not know what qualification to register for. Dr Bromley said that the principle aimed to describe OU qualifications in terms of the pathways and stages that students go through, rather than simply presenting a list of modules; it did not say that the modules underlying the qualification could not be revealed.
- 10.26 Referring to P20 and P21, and possibly P19, and the information provided to potential applicants, a member asked for reassurance that there would be some co-ordinated thinking in advance of admitting new students to the qualification world in October 2012. In response a query from the member, Mr Swann confirmed that the academic decision as to whether to admit a student in receipt of a loan from the Student Loans Company was entirely for the OU; and that open entry would continue to apply for any module or any qualification in the undergraduate programme. The member observed that a student who took on a loan would be taking a substantial financial risk, but so would the institution: if not enough students completed a qualification, then the institution would suffer because it would not be allocated enough loans in the future. It was therefore crucial to ensure that students embarked upon the right qualification. Information was important, but advice had not yet been enshrined as a principle. How would the combination of information and advice be refined and boosted between now and October 2012? Mr Swann said that this was one of the most fundamental issues that the University had to address, as the consequences of wrong study choices for students would verge on the catastrophic. The OU had a responsibility to do everything possible to manage that situation, short of saying it would no longer be open entry, and was currently considering several mechanisms to support this. First, the University could provide faculties with the facility to specify assumed entry behaviour for each qualification: the University could tell students what it assumes

they already know before they register on any given qualification, take steps to ensure that students have read and thought about these assumptions, and ensure that it has a record that the students have done so. Second, the University could provide faculties with the facility to specify a on-line diagnostic experience, which students would be required to complete: the students' performance would not be measured, but they would not be allowed to register on a qualification until they had gone through the diagnostic. Third, the University could provide faculties with the facility to create a diagnostic assessment and to specify a performance threshold: not one that prevented a student from registering on a qualification, but one which, if the student fell below the threshold, required them to have a 1:1 advice session before being allowed to register. Such mechanisms would force both the student, and the University, to go through every possible measure to ensure that the consequences of that student's actions are understood, whilst ultimately leaving the final decision with the student. They would assure the University that it had done everything in its power to manage the situation, and provide a record of having done so.

Principle 23

- 10.27 A member proposed a change to P23 to make it more helpful to students finishing their qualifications: if a student was in a position to choose one of two qualification options, then it would be more user friendly to allow them to make their decision at the end of their study rather than at the beginning. Circumstances and fashion changed, and students became better informed about what their qualification would mean to them. Dr Bromley agreed that this amendment should be accepted. In practice, however, although a student would be registered for a specific qualification at the beginning of their study with the OU, they would be able to review this on an annual basis and, so long as the appropriate modules were available, they could continue to change their study goal.

Action: SB

Principle 0

- 10.28 A member commented that the changes were about making the OU fit into an external environment that had been designed around the conventional university structure. The paper should be prefaced with something that emphasised the uniqueness of the OU, and perhaps the principle of open entry should be included as P0.
- 10.29 The Senate **approved** the 23 principles set out in the paper.

11 ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW – SENATE

S/2011/04/09

- 11.1 A member commented that paragraph 2 set out the format that the Senate had agreed to review its own effectiveness. It was possible to get quantitative data on some categories, but for others qualitative data was required. There were 18 pages of information covering the assessment of the year's business against the terms of reference and the attendance of members, but just two lines on the focus of business handling and the clarity of presentation of issues for discussion. However, issues such as what topics were or were not included at particular Senate meetings, whether the papers that were scheduled for presentation had been ready, the way in which the agenda had been ordered and whether this encouraged good discussion, and the balance of time taken up in introducing a paper for discussion all played an important part in determining the effectiveness of the Senate. For example, it might be possible to provide an introduction on the cover note for each paper that was sufficiently self-explanatory that a three minute limit might be imposed on the introduction from the sponsors, thereby allowing more time for discussion. A short questionnaire to members of the Senate, using a facility such as Survey Monkey, that covered such topics, would provide an insight into the Senate's views of its effectiveness. The University Secretary, Mr Fraser Woodburn, said that this was a good idea that would be investigated.

Action: AFW/CenSec

- 11.2 With regard to the timing, length and number of meetings, and the observation that being in a position to enrol students on qualifications in October 2012 would 'present some challenges to the governance structure of the University', the member asked whether these challenges included the timings of Senate meetings. Mr Woodburn replied that the length of the Senate meetings was not an issue, but that the timing might be. As had been indicated in an earlier discussion, the University would have to carefully consider the timing of key decisions and map when the Senate would need to meet in order to make those decisions.

Action: CenSec

- 11.3 With reference to the paragraph in the Senate Standing Orders on the circulation and publication of papers (p30), which stated that the normal expectation was for papers to be circulated at least 10 days before the meeting, a member commented that this was a particular issue for those members who were not based in Milton Keynes. It was often some of the most important papers that were late, and this should be monitored for the next effectiveness review. Mr Woodburn agreed that this would be done.

Action: AFW/CenSec

- 11.4 The Senate **noted** the report on its effectiveness for the period September 2010 until July 2011.

12 ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW – SENATE SUBSTRUCTURE S/2011/04/10

The Senate **noted** the report on the effectiveness of the committees of the Senate for the period September 2010 until July 2011.

13 COMMITTEE MATTERS S/2011/04/11

- 13.1 A member raised an issue with the process in respect of changing the constitution of the Research Committee. Paragraph 15 of the paper on the Annual Effectiveness Review of the Senate substructure (S-2011-04-10) noted that changes had been proposed and that questions had been raised regarding the implications of those changes, the answers to which would be reported back to the Committee. The draft minutes of the Research Committee said that the changes to the constitution were subject to clarification on these matters. It was not clear how the Senate could approve changes to the constitution when this clarification had not been forthcoming to Research Committee. The member had no objections to the changes, but was concerned about the process. The Chair said that he and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Scholarship) would review the process and provide feedback to the next meeting of the Senate.

Action: MB/TB

- 13.2 The Senate **approved** the recommendations for constitutional changes arising from the annual effectiveness reviews for the following committees:

- c) Curriculum and Validation Committee (Appendix 1)
- d) Curriculum Partnerships Committee (Appendix 2)
- e) Validation Committee (Appendix 3)
- f) Research Committee (Appendix 4)
- g) Human Research Ethics Committee (Appendix 5)
- h) Research Degrees Examination Result Ratification Committee (Appendix 6)
- i) Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (Appendix 7)
- j) Open University Students Association Senate Reference Group (Appendix 8)

14 PLAGIARISM PROJECT FINAL REPORT

S/2011/04/12

- 14.1 Several members said that this was an excellent paper and there was much that was good in the policy, particularly the emphasis on education for students in relation to good academic practice. Referring to paragraphs 14 – 15, a student member said that whilst the Developing Good Academic Practice guide was welcome it was difficult to find, and suggested that there should be a link from every module page, as well as the home page, in order to give it a higher profile.
- 14.2 The student member said that OUSA welcomed the introduction of Turnitin for Students (paragraph 20), but suggested that a caveat be added to emphasise that it was a piece of software, the outputs from which were not always easy to interpret. Clear guidance should be provided for students about what the results were telling them: for example, Turnitin could match all references in a student's work to something on the web, but this did not mean that the student should take them all out.
- 14.3 The student member said that paragraph 39 had also raised concerns, as the table indicated that the University had not managed to meet its own targets. Academic discipline cases were very stressful for students, particularly if they were undertaking further work, and it was especially difficult if the University was unable to process such cases in the agreed timescales.
- 14.4 The student member observed that the paper referred to changes in the role of the Academic Conduct Officers (ACOs), but it was unclear whether these were reflected in the Code of Practice agreed at the last meeting of the Senate. Mr Swann confirmed that the Code of Practice was consistent with the changes.
- 14.5 A member said that there were some concerns regarding the implementation of the policy, and the involvement of ALs and staff tutors in the process, particularly now there were no longer regional ACOs. There were cases, where plagiarism had been identified through software, when ALs and staff tutors had been unaware of the involvement of a student in a plagiarism case until the final decision had been made and reported. In such a situation, an AL would be unable to advise a student who was seeking help having received an initial letter about a plagiarism issue. This undermined the principle of education and support. A system of automatic alerts for ALs and staff tutors, flagging students who had been sent an initial letter, had been scheduled for the end of September 2011, but had not been implemented. The Director, Students, Mr Will Swann, said that the Academic Conduct Office was aware of the problem. There was an intention to enhance the University's systems so that an automatic notification was sent to the AL and staff tutor in such cases, but it was not possible to provide a date on which this would be available.
- 14.6 With reference to paragraph 47, an associate lecturer member said that ALs would appreciate further information about what was required of them in the academic conduct process.
- 14.7 A member expressed disappointment that little progress had been made since the discussion on the increase in plagiarism cases arising from the Central Disciplinary Committee's (CDC's) report last year. Little had been done to ensure that OU students could engage with software such as Turnitin in order to manage their own academic experience, whilst other universities had introduced such software 5 years ago.
- 14.8 Referring to paragraph 48, an associate lecturer member asked whether it would be possible for ALs to have access to Turnitin in order to verify any suspicions they might have regarding plagiarism before referring the case to someone else. Mr Swann said that he would be happy to consider this.

Action: WS

14.9 In respect of Future Actions, a member said that information on the process by which the University dealt with collaborative teaching arrangements, both inside the UK with, for example, FE colleges, and outside the UK, would be a helpful addition to this paper. If this process was written into the University's policy it would provide good evidence for the next collaborative audit and for the Business Schools next reaccreditation. The Vice-Chancellor said that this suggestion would be noted.

Action: WS

14.10 With reference to paragraph 69, a member commented that Systems Futures was under considerable pressure and it was unclear why the University would be seeking to use bespoke IT solutions for raising cases, rather than using email or spreadsheets. A student member said that the manual procedures for raising plagiarism cases were not yet sufficiently well embedded or sensitive to students' needs to be automated. It was not possible for either Turnitin or CopyCatch to identify whether a student had copied material on a wholesale basis with the deliberate intention to plagiarise or whether they had inadvertently succumbed to poor academic practice. Mr Swann said that there was no intention to create a system for managing the identification and referral of cases insensitively or in the absence of human judgement.

14.11 The Senate **noted**:

- a) the evaluation of the Plagiarism Project
- b) the findings of the report.

15 QAA COLLABORATIVE AUDIT – KEY FINDINGS, JUDGEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

S/2011/04/13

The Senate **noted**:

- a) the key findings of the paper
- b) that the full report would be published in December 2011 and provided to the Senate at its April 2012 meeting following consideration in the Senate substructure

16 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

S/2011/04/14

16.1 Referring to the data in the survey about personal development (Q19-21), an associate lecturer member said that whilst ALs could observe students' development, there was not a consistent feedback process for them to use. Some faculties would ask ALs to comment about specific learning outcomes in relation to personal development, but others did not. How could ALs as assessors highlight any personal development needs that they observed within students' work and how could the University improve the satisfaction rate for those questions in the National Student Survey (NSS). In the absence of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality), Professor Denise Kirkpatrick, the Vice-Chancellor suggested that this matter be raised outside the meeting and brought back under Matters Arising at the next meeting.

Action: DK

16.2 The Senate **noted** the report on the results of the 2011 National Student Survey (NSS).

17 THE COUNCIL

S/2011/04/15

17.1 Referring to paragraph 24, which stated that there was virtually no face-to-face contact in Europe, a member remarked that this did not reflect the position of the Business School, which had a significant programme of face-to-face contact outside the UK. In 2009, for

example, there had been 587 tutorials covering a wide territory, including the Republic of Ireland. In response to a query, the Director, Students, Mr Will Swann, confirmed that the territory referred to was continental Europe - European Union.

- 17.2 The member said that paragraph 23, in which the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University would be decommitting from face-to-face tuition using ALs based in Europe, seemed to imply that these ALs would no longer be used to deliver tuition on-line either. The Faculty of Business and Law (FBL) had been discussing with Human Resources (HR) the impact that this would have on an international business school that needed to evidence its international presence. This was a particular issue as FBL prepared for EQUIS re-accreditation, which would be the most difficult to retain. The decision to decommit from the employment of ALs in continental Europe would be welcomed by the Business School, as the previous arrangement had not been satisfactory. It provided an opportunity to contract for the services required on a different basis, as the employment issue had impacted on the School's business internationally. The new process already existed inside and outside the European Union, where the OU was happy to contract tutoring services in English and in translation via third parties. The member sought reassurance that the discussions with HR were being treated seriously, as it was vital for the future of the Business School. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the discussions were being treated seriously and that the Dean and Dean elect would be involved in any decision-making.
- 17.3 The member observed that there were approximately 90 ALs currently working in continental Europe, about 70 of whom were resident there, representing 13 different nationalities. They were embedded into the business and management network, and provided necessary experience as well as promoting the OU. This group of people worked internationally and could help the OU to expand its business in Asia. The ALs were also used to give evidence to EQUIS and other bodies that they participated in module development, were appointed as critical readers, and were key to OU Worldwide (OUW) projects and the delivery of Global Direct products because of their expertise. Now that the decision to decommit had been published in a paper that was available on the University's intranet, a communications strategy was required to handle possible enquiries from ALs. The Vice-Chancellor said that the University would ensure that this was established.

Action: WS

- 17.4 The Senate **noted** the report on the meeting of the Council held on 19 July 2011.

18 ACTION BY CHAIR

S/2011/04/16

- 18.1 A member welcomed the strategy used to align the Associate Dean roles in the Faculty of Science with those of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors, but was concerned to see that this was subject to approval by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum and Awards) on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor. Mr Woodburn confirmed that this was not necessary. It had been approved by Professor Alan Tait as the Pro-Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for the faculties, not on behalf of the Chair of the Senate, and should not have been included in the paper.

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

19 PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR APPOINTMENT

S/2011/04/17

- 19.1 An associate member said that the AL Senate Reference Group did not know what the process was for the extension of the term of office for a Pro-Vice-Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor responded that it was his decision.

19.2 The Senate **noted**:

- a) the decision of the Vice-Chancellor to extend Professor Denise Kirkpatrick's term of office as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality) for a final period of two years, to 31 July 2014
- b) the establishment of a review of the three Pro-Vice-Chancellor portfolios and all the Vice-Chancellor's direct reports

20 FUTURE ITEMS OF BUSINESS

S/2011/04/18

The Senate **noted** the list of potential items for the agenda for the Senate meeting in January 2012.

21 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Meetings would be held on the following dates:

Wednesday 25 January 2012

Wednesday 18 April 2012

Wednesday 20 June 2012

22 FAREWELL AND THANKS

The Chair reported that Professor James Fleck, Dean and Director of Studies, Faculty of Business and Law would have been attending his final meeting of the Senate, but was unwell. On behalf of the Senate the Vice-Chancellor thanked him for his contribution and wished him well.

Julie Tayler
 Assistant Secretary
 Central Secretariat
 j.d.tayler@open.ac.uk
 November 2011

Attachments:

- Appendix 1: Curriculum and Validation Committee
- Appendix 2: Curriculum Partnerships Committee
- Appendix 3: Validation Committee
- Appendix 4: Research Committee
- Appendix 5: Human Research Ethics Committee
- Appendix 6: Research Degrees Examination Result Ratification Committee
- Appendix 7: Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee
- Appendix 8: Open University Students Association Senate Reference Group

Key:

MB = Mr Martin Bean
 SB = Dr Simon Bromley
 DK = Professor Denise Kirkpatrick
 GM = Mr Guy Mallison
 WS = Mr Will Swann
 AFW = Mr Fraser Woodburn

CURRICULUM AND VALIDATION COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~19.10.06.04.2011~~

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 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 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 delegate to the Qualifications Committee the approval of new modules and packs recommending the frameworks and guidelines to the Senate for approval.~~
- ~~56.~~ To approve the introduction of new non standard 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.
- ~~7. To formulate and interpret regulations that apply to the qualifications of the University generally.~~

- | ~~86.~~ 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.
- | ~~97.~~ To approve, on the advice of the Validation Committee, partner or associate status for institutions, the terms of their approval, and where appropriate, the termination of their 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.~~
- | ~~109.~~ To interpret and approve exceptions to the policies and regulations relating to examinations and assessment and qualifications.

Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance

- | ~~11.40~~ 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.
- | ~~12.44.~~ To monitor the annual review of qualifications, and the annual review of curriculum partnerships and institutional partnerships 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.
- | ~~13.42.~~ To contribute to the Senate's annual academic review of the University.

Assuring Quality and Standards, including approving regulations

- | ~~14.43.~~ 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.
- | ~~15.44.~~ 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 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 Director 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 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-modules and packs.
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CURRICULUM PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~1991.1008~~.2011

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 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 award 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 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 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) and to determine the institutional policy guidelines, good practice and enhancement within which areas of the University should operate when embarking upon new curriculum partnerships, managing existing partnerships, or terminating partnerships.
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

- ~~11~~2. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the introduction of new curriculum partnerships leading to an 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.
- ~~12~~3. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the closure of a curriculum partnership leading to an 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

- ~~13~~4. 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 Quality.
7. The Director of Assessment, Credit and Qualifications, or nominee.
8. The Director of the Centre for Inclusion and Curriculum or nominee.
- ~~9~~. One registered student appointed by the Open University Students' Association.
- ~~10~~9. One associate lecturer appointed by the Associate Lecturers Executive.
- ~~11~~0. One member of the Validation Committee, nominated by that Committee.
- ~~12~~4. 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~~2. 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.
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VALIDATION COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~1994.1008~~.2011

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 awards 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 awards offered by associated and 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 awards.
2. To approve the imposition of sanctions on associated and partner institutions where the quality and standards of an award are at risk, including the approval of the close of entry to a validated award.

Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance

3. To monitor the appointment of external examiners at each meeting and to monitor the number of associated and partner institutions, the number of re-approvals, the number of validated awards and applications for re-validation, and student numbers on the University's validated awards 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 awards, requiring evidence from associated and 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 approval or re-approval of institutions, and the validation, re-validation or review of individual awards.

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 awards 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 awards.

9. To keep under review the handbook for the University's validated awards, having regard to the relationships between such awards, 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 awards.

Advising other governance bodies or management

11. To provide detailed scrutiny of proposals for the approval of institutions, their re-approval and the terms of their 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 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.

14. To appoint two external members to serve as members of the Qualifications Committee.

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

None.

Judicial: deciding individual cases

154. To delegate to the Director of OUVS the responsibility for resolving complaints and appeals, where a partner institution's own procedures have been exhausted, on matters relating to programmes of study, awards, 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 Awards).
3. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality) or nominee.
4. One nominee of the Director, Students
5. The Director, Open University Validation Services.
6. The Director, Open University Worldwide or nominee.
7. The Head of Quality
8. 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.

9. Three members from partner institutions of the Open University.
10. One representative of each of the central academic units of the University, normally at associate dean level.
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 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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RESEARCH COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~1996.1004.~~2011

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. Matters of Strategy and policy relating to research degrees and higher doctorates are delegated to Research Degrees Committee.
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 in all matters within the Committee's remit.
- ~~5. To monitor reports from Research Degrees Committee on research student and research degree matters.~~
- ~~56.~~ To contribute to the Senate's annual academic review of the University.

Assuring Quality and Standards, including approving regulations

- ~~67.~~ To ensure that standards are set for research activities within the context of external research quality monitoring ~~including the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework.~~
- ~~78.~~ ~~To be responsible, via the Research Degrees Committee, Responsibility~~ for the recruitment, admission, registration, supervision and progress of research students, and for research degree and higher doctorate examinations is delegated to the Research Degrees Committee.
- ~~89.~~ ~~To be responsible, via the Research Degrees Committee, for t~~he approval of recommendations of examiners for research degrees and higher doctorates and the award of research degrees and higher doctorates is delegated to the Research Degrees Examination Result Approval Committee.
- ~~940.~~ 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

104. 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

None.

~~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

None.

Judicial: deciding individual cases

None

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. A representative of the Knowledge Media Institute (KMi), nominated by the Director of KMi.
- ~~4.~~ The Directors of the Research Centres, *ex officio*.
- ~~54.~~ The Chair of the Affiliated Research Centres Management Group, *ex officio*
- ~~65.~~ The Chairs of any committees reporting to the Committee.
- ~~76.~~ Four representatives of the Senate, elected by the Senate, of whom at least one shall be a member of regionally/nationally-based staff.
- ~~87.~~ One registered full-time research student and one registered part-time external student, appointed by the Open University Students Association.
- ~~98.~~ Two members of the research staff elected by and from such staff.
- ~~109.~~ A representative from an affiliated research centre.
- ~~110.~~ The Research School Academic Co-ordinator, *ex officio*.
- ~~124.~~ A Dean or Director, to be nominated by the Deans and Directors Group.

132. 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.
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HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~1926.1001~~.2011

Purpose

On behalf of the Research Committee to advise on ethics considerations relating to all Open University research involving investigations on human participants or materials, other than research that is deemed to be 'no risk', and to grant or withhold approval for such research proposals.

Terms of Reference

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

1. To provide guidance to researchers on the need for ethical scrutiny through the publication of internal guidelines, advice on external ethical documentation and dissemination of information on best practice.
2. To develop a code of practice on investigations involving humans and human materials.

Monitoring and reviewing actions and institutional performance

3. To keep under review its terms of reference to take into account the developing needs of the research community, and national and international research ethics review standards and legislation.

Assuring quality and standards, including approving regulations

4. To ensure institutional compliance with national guidelines and legislative requirements and to provide guidance to University officers on matters of compliance.

Advising other governance bodies or management

~~5. To make recommendations to the Research Committee on human participants and materials ethical issues.~~

56. To advise all levels of the University on ethical considerations relating to any research which involves investigations on humans.

~~7. To clarify the role and relationship of the Human Participants and Materials Ethics Committee to other committees/panels in the University.~~

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

68. To operate in a manner that is consistent with relevant national and legislative guidelines concerning the scrutiny and confidentiality of individuals and projects without adversely affecting institutional commitment to transparency and openness.

Judicial: deciding individual cases

79. To grant or withhold approval of proposals for research involving human participants or materials. [Note that if approval of a proposal is withheld the applicant may lodge an appeal, in the first instance with the HPMEC-HREC (Human Research Ethic Committee) and then if the appeal is not settled to the applicant's satisfaction, to the Research Committee.]

Membership

1. Five external members appointed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), to include:
 - a) a medical practitioner
 - b) a researcher from a research institution other than The Open University
 - c) a lay person
 - d) a representative from a corporate body
 - e) a person with specific ethics expertise.
2. The Chair of the Research Committee, *ex officio*, or nominee.
3. Two members nominated by the Research Committee.
4. One registered research student appointed by the Open University Students' Association.
54. Up to eight members co-opted by the Committee so as to cover any aspect, professional, scientific or ethical, of a research proposal which lies beyond the expertise of existing members.

Note 1: The Chair and Deputy Chair shall be appointed by the Research Committee

Note 2: At least one member of the Committee shall have expertise in psychological research

Mode of Operation

1. The Committee shall meet as and when required and shall report to the Research Committee at least annually.
2. The Committee may deal with straightforward applications by correspondence. The Chair, and by delegation the Deputy Chair, shall have executive authority to act on the Committee's behalf, in consultation with other members of the committee, to consider research proposals in between meetings.
3. A HREC Review Panel comprising the Chair, two internal members and one external member will work on a rota basis, consider and approve research applications via email.
34. The Committee shall seek the advice of specialist referees so as to cover any aspect, professional, scientific, or ethical, of a research proposal which lies beyond the expertise of existing members

RESEARCH DEGREES EXAMINATION RESULT ~~RATIFICATION-APPROVAL~~ COMMITTEE
(RRAT)

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~1928.1001.201109~~

Purpose

~~On behalf of the Research Degrees Committee, to ratify approve~~ research degree examination results and the award of Open University research degrees and to make recommendations to Research Degrees Committee on matters of policy relating to examination policy.

Terms of Reference

Legislation, setting policy and strategy frameworks, agreeing plans and priorities

1. To make recommendations to the Research Degrees Committee about changes to research degree examination policy in response to external changes or good practice requirements.

Assuring quality and standards, including approving regulations

~~The Research Degrees Examination Result Ratification Committee is part of the substructure of Research Committee, and reports to Research Degrees Committee (RDC). Under the delegated authority of RDC, the particular responsibilities of the Committee are:~~

- ~~21. To be responsible for the approval of the recommendations of examiners for examination results, and the award of Open University research degrees to for individual students registered for such Open University research degrees.~~

Monitoring and reviewing actions and institutional performance

- ~~2. To be responsible for the award of Open University research degrees to individual students.~~
3. To monitor the implementation of institutional research degree examination policy on behalf of ~~RDC~~ the Research Degrees Committee.
4. ~~To make recommendations to the RDC about changes to institutional research degree examination policy in response to external changes (e.g. Quality Assurance Agency requirements) and/or knowledge of good practice elsewhere. To monitor the maintenance of standards in the award of Open University research degrees.~~

Membership

1. A Chair appointed ~~from the membership~~ by the Research Degrees Committee.
2. A Deputy Chair appointed ~~from the membership~~ by the Research Degrees Committee.
3. The Chair of the Life and Biomolecular Sciences Management Group, *ex officio*.
4. The Chair of the Theology and Religious Studies Management Group, *ex officio*.
5. The Chair of the Architecture and Urbanism Management Group, *ex officio*.

6. ~~Six associate deans or equivalent with a relevant portfolio from the central academic units and their associated research centres~~The associate dean, (research) nominee from each central academic unit, ex officio.

~~7. Up to two co-opted members appointed by the Research Degrees Committee~~

Secretary, Head of Research Degrees Team

Mode of Operation

1. The Committee shall report to the Research Degrees Committee.
 2. It shall normally meet twice a year.
 3. The Chair, and by delegation the Deputy Chair, shall have executive authority to act on its behalf, in consultation with ~~the Chair of the Research Committee~~ other nominated members, to approve examination results and the award of degrees in between meetings, to enable the timely issue of results.
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QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~1908.1004.201109~~

Purpose

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee assures the Senate that quality assurance and enhancement arrangements are appropriately established and implemented, and oversees the University's engagement with external quality assurance processes.

Terms of Reference

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

1. To maintain the University's quality assurance and quality enhancement strategy for approval by the Senate, to ensure that a strategic approach to quality is maintained and cross-University quality-related issues are properly addressed and satisfactorily resolved; and to assure the Senate accordingly.

Monitoring, and reviewing, actions and institutional performance

2. To approve and review the University's arrangements for the management of quality assurance and enhancement, including use of student monitoring and feedback, in accordance with University policy and in the context of external requirements and guidelines.
3. To contribute to the quality assurance frameworks for Higher Education.
4. To oversee the preparation for, and the institutional organisation of, external quality assurance processes, including reviews by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and other Public and Statutory Bodies.
5. To approve plans for follow-up action to external quality assurance and enhancement processes and internal periodic review, and reports on the implementation and effectiveness of measures to address recommendations.

Assuring Quality and Standards, including approving regulations

Terms of reference 2 to 5 above are relevant to this core function.

Advising other governance bodies or management

6. To advise appropriate University committees on matters relating to academic quality.
7. To ~~recommend~~ facilitate arrangements for the exchange of best practice on quality assurance and enhancement matters between units of the University and between the University and its accredited and associated institutions, and affiliated research centre.

Membership

1. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality), Chair, *ex officio*.
2. The Head of Quality, *ex officio*.
3. Six members appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the Senate Membership Panel, of whom at least four shall be members of academic units (to include at least two centrally-based academics) and one external to the University. At least one of the internal members should be regionally/nationally-based. These members shall normally serve for a period of four years.

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 of its executive committees, in consultation with anybody 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.
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OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION SENATE REFERENCE GROUP

CONSTITUTION – UPDATED ~~23.01.2008~~19.10.2011

Purpose

The purpose of the OUSA Senate Reference Group is to act in an advisory capacity to the student members of Senate and in particular, to ensure that the student members of Senate have the benefit of a face to face forum in which they are able to draw on the diversity of circumstances, views and opinions of students as allowed for by OUSA within its representative structures.

Membership

1. *Ex officio* members:

- a) The President
- b) The Vice-President (Education)
- c) One ~~Deputy/Vice-President~~ Central Executive Committee Member appointed to the Senate by the President
- d) Three members appointed to the Senate by the Executive Committee
- e) One ~~Deputy/Vice-President~~ Central Executive Committee Member not already appointed to the Senate ~~appointed~~ by the President
- f) The student member of the Council
- g) One Executive Committee member for Student Academic Links
- h) The student Chair or Vice-Chair of the Central Consultative Committee (whichever is held by a student)
- i) One member appointed to each of the middle tier committees ie,
Curriculum and Validation Committee
Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee
Research Committee
- j) One member appointed to each of the central academic units
(eight members)

2. Postgraduate research students:

One full-time postgraduate research student
One part-time postgraduate research student
(who are not already members of the Research Committee)

3. Two postgraduate students who should NOT be part-time or full-time research postgraduates

4. Regional/National representatives:

Sixteen regional/national representatives: one from each of the OUSA regions/nations and sub-regions/sub-nations

Secretary
