



**MEETING OF SENATE
MINUTES
Monday 10 October 2022
14.00, virtual Zoom meeting**

Present:

Professors: Allen, Banissy, Barbour, Bickers, Birdi, Bond, Chapman, Clatworthy, Dermott, Dillingham, Edwards, George, Glynn, Hickman, Jessop, Linthorst, Luckhurst, Marklof, McGirr, Mundell, Nabney, Nairn, Norman, O'Toole, Parkin, Powell, Purdy, Raven, Ridley, Rivers (on behalf of Professor K Oliphant), Robbins, Roberts, Ross, Rust, Savery, Schwarzacher, Smart, Squires, Tavaré, Taylor, Tether, Timpson, Tormey, Warburton, Welch, West, Wilson

Dr M Allinson, Ms Y Ankaine, Dr N Carhart, Dr A Clayton, Dr T Cogan, Dr V Erlandsson, Mr E Fay, Ms A Garr, Dr M Gillway, Dr F Ginn, Dr J Howarth, Ms S Johnson (Clerk) Dr J McManus, Ms L Parr, Dr B Pohl, Dr D Poole, Dr S Proud, Dr M Werner, Dr K Whittington

In attendance:

Ms N Antoine (SU Sabbatical Officer), Ms J Bridgwater (Deputy University Secretary and Director of Legal Services), Ms T Brunnock (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager), Ms C Buchanan (Chief People Officer), Ms P Coonerty (Executive Director for Education and Student Experience and Academic Registrar), Ms S Johnson (Clerk), Mr B Mac Ruairi (Chief Property Officer), Professor C Relton (Academic Trustee), Mr S Swales (Head of Academic Staff Development)

Apologies:

Mr J Barrie, Mr J Boyer, Professor C Butts, Professor K Cater, Mr S Chadwick, Professor E Clark, Dr N Davies, Professor C Faul, Dr C Fricker, Professor T Hodos, Professor A Juncos, Professor B Main, Professor K Malik, Professor D Manley, Professor P Manzini, Professor M Munafò, Professor K Oliphant, Professor M Spear, Professor T Tahko, Professor N Wilding

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 20 JUNE 2022.

- 1.1 APPROVED the minutes of the meeting of 20th June 2022 and noted that when discussing teaching and research there should be parity of language to avoid creating a hierarchy between the two.

2. CHAIR'S REPORT

- 2.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (SN/22-23/001) (on file)).

- 2.2 NOTED the report of the Vice-Chancellor and the following key issues:

- In terms of the Sector, it was difficult to predict the current political landscape.
- There had been a very successful admissions process and there were no issues with student accommodation. The University had planned carefully so as not to have unplanned overshoots in student numbers and resultant accommodation problems.

REDACTED: Section 2 (43) Commercial interests

- The University Executive Board Residential had taken place on the 3rd and 4th October. The Board were joined by Student Union representatives and the focus was on moving

into the delivery phase of the Strategic Plan and recognizing the tensions between immediate needs and long-term ambitions. There would be a number of personnel changes over the next 3 months within the senior team and the enormous contributions of those team members were recognized; this would, however, also provide the opportunity to re-evaluate leadership models and governance structures university wide to ensure that there was clarity about decision-making and that it was agile, and at the right level. The pandemic had necessitated executive decision making over some of the smallest issues at a very senior level and there was now an imperative to ensure a clear governance framework across the University supporting decision making at the right level by the right people.

- The key principle in moving to strategy delivery was that it should be simple and understandable and there was clarity about who could make decisions and at what level, bringing much more decision making to a local level. It was recognized that staff involved in day-to-day delivery needed autonomy to make the relevant decisions.
- It was important to ensure that going forward there were the appropriate academic and professional services leadership and governance models to support the delivery of the University Strategy. To this end the DVC would be establishing a Working Group of Senate members to consider options for academic leadership. Senate members would be invited to put forward their names for the Working Group and the DVC acknowledged that there needed to be diverse representation across all categories of Senate membership and would ensure that this was the case.
- The aim was to produce a Green Paper for December and a White Paper in the new year with a final decision by the Board of Trustees in May or June.
- The Professional Services Target Operating Model would support delivery of the Strategy and academic priorities. Similarly, there would be a focus on transparent, agile decision making at the right level.
- There would be full engagement with the academic and professional services communities and not just a focus on 'top tier' structures and governance.
- The Board of Trustees meeting in September focussed on the Curriculum Enhancement Programme and Institutional Risk Exposure: **REDACTED: Section 2(43) Commercial Interests**
- Trustees were assured about the ongoing matrix working around assessment in both theory and practice. In addition following the Board meeting, members had met with representatives from the Student Union to hear more about their current priorities and activities.

2.3 **APPROVED** the Senate Standing Orders for 2022/23 at **Appendix 1**. **NOTED** that there were no changes from 2021/22, and that they were revised and approved by Senate on 11 October 2021 to reflect changes to the Constitution made in August 2021.

2.4 **NOTED** the Senate Forward Plan for 2022/23 at **Appendix 2**.

3. ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM SU SABBATICAL OFFICERS

3.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: **(Presentation)** (on file)).

3.2 Nicole Antoine (Undergraduate Education Officer) presented and highlighted the key collective priorities for the Student Union; Cost of Living, Student Wellbeing and Sustainability. As undergraduate Education Officer Nicole also presented the key education priorities which were to:

- Increase academic student support
- Promote inclusivity, diversity, and access in and around campus
- Develop the transparency and improvement of student services

3.3 The Chief Property Officer and Executive Director for Education and Student Experience and Academic Registrar updated Senate on what the University was doing to help alleviate the impacts of the cost of living on students. Key issues highlighted were:

Catering prices frozen, warm study spaces, lower rents (though this was challenging), cheaper and more reliable transport, part time employment opportunities, keeping down laundry prices and rolling out tutorials on how to eat healthily and cheaply, food waste. The financial assistance fund had been topped up considerably and the turn around time for support was now 48 hours or less.

3.4 **DISCUSSED:**

- How Senate could contribute to achieving the SU goals, particularly through alignment with overall University strategic priorities.
- Working with the Student Union Undergraduate Education Officer to assist transition back into the University for students returning from year abroad studies and linking in to BILT project on transitions at different stages in the student career.

4. **EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE UPDATE TO INCLUDE NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS) AND NEXT STEPS ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR (SAY)**

4.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (**Presentation**) (on file)).

4.2 The Pro-Vice Chancellors for Education presented.

4.3 **NOTED** the presentation and key messages.

4.4 **DISCUSSED:**

- The importance of understanding what students want from feedback and informing students of what feedback they were going to receive.
- The level of satisfaction needed to get into the top 10 in the NSS was very high and in order to achieve that there probably needed to be some element of student loyalty; satisfaction could very much depend on individual needs. Whilst small changes could make a big difference, they were not always easy to roll out, particularly on courses where contact with students was not week on week.
- Whilst there was often a focus on providing feedback faster it was important to check what feedback students actually wanted and that it was useful feedback.
- The Programme Director role was potentially very important and could help set expectations with students. There was more this role could do in relation to supporting the student experience.
- Potentially the timing of feedback could have a major impact on the outcomes of the NSS survey.
- Inconsistency in the 'places' where feedback was posted could make it more difficult for students to easily find the feedback. Greater consistency could potentially produce improvements. Also using different ways to provide feedback, e.g., visual, tick box might also be helpful. Making feedback consistent, exciting and personalised would help in terms of the student experience.
- There was a sense of shared endeavours in improving feedback across the University and good practice needed to be shared.

5. **RETURN TO TOP 50 IN GLOBAL RANKINGS**

5.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (**Presentation**) (on file)).

5.2 The Pro-Vice Chancellor Global Engagement presented.

5.3 **NOTED** the presentation.

5.4 **DISCUSSED:**

- The importance of rankings and the challenges, particularly as metrics can change over time
- The fact that being in the top 50 QS rankings was a pre-requisite for some international students in terms of gaining scholarships or for example to get a living permit for Shanghai.
- The importance of the Bristol brand and values and making this known globally – what help did colleagues need in ‘marketing’ the University globally and getting Bristol on the world map?
- Citations could make a huge difference to rankings as could the outcome of the Academic Reputation Survey, particularly when there were contributions from international colleagues.

REDACTED: Section 2(43) Commercial interests

- Whilst the campaign around QS rankings was welcomed with a more managed approach, Senators had some reservations in relation to rankings in general.

6. RESEARCH UPDATE – COST OF LIVING ACTIONS AND RESEARCH PIPELINE

6.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (SN/22-23/002) (on file)).

6.2 The Pro-Vice Chancellor Research & Enterprise introduced the item.

6.3 **NOTED** the research update.

6.4 **DISCUSSED:**

- The research pipeline **REDACTED: Section 2(43) Commercial Interests**
- **REDACTED: Section 2(43) Commercial Interests**
- Faculty Research Directors had indicated that more support was needed from senior colleagues to help more junior staff members write proposals. **REDACTED: Section 2(43) Commercial Interests**
- **REDACTED: Section 2(43) Commercial Interests**
- There was more being done to support ‘volume’ proposals going forward and improve the level of submissions across the piece not just focussing on the ‘big hitters’.
- **REDACTED: Section 2(43) Commercial Interests** ch commented that he was not hearing the same level of issue from other institutions.
- **REDACTED: Section 2(43) Commercial Interests**

7. UPDATE ON USING THE ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS FRAMEWORK (APF) FOR PROMOTION AND GRADE M MOVEMENT

7.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (SN/22-23/003) (on file)).

7.2 The Deputy-Vice Chancellor & Provost introduced the item.

7.3 **DISCUSSED:**

- The impact of using the Academic Promotions Framework (APF) in promotion and movement both in terms of how it is being used and the outcomes.

- How to deal uniformly with applications for conversion to core posts and to link this with the strategic priorities of the university and in particular financial impact information.
- Support for different categories e.g., engagement and clarification of guidance e.g. in relation to contributions prior to being at UoB.
- The potential of including anonymised case studies to illustrate career progression, whilst emphasising that there are many diverse ways that colleagues can develop their career paths.

8. FREEDOM OF SPEECH UPDATE

8.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (**Presentation**) (on file)).

8.2 The Deputy-Vice Chancellor & Provost introduced the item.

8.3 **NOTED:** the University's commitment to promoting freedom of speech and academic freedom.

8.4 **NOTED:** the new complaints procedure in relation to Freedom of Speech, which better reflected the importance of transparency in the process, particularly making timelines clear at the onset of a complaint, how long the process might take and when the outcome was likely to be known.

9. EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT, INCLUDING TERMS OF REFERENCE

9.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (**SN/22-23/004**) (on file)).

9.2 The Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education introduced the paper.

9.3 **APPROVED:** the updated terms of reference for the University Education Committee.

9.4 In relation to the Structure of the Academic year, the project was being scoped and the assessment strategy would be key. Academic personal tutoring could have an impact on student experience and could be used to compliment professional services support programmes. The results of a pilot in the school of Economics, Finance and Management would be brought to Senate in the new year.

9.5 **DISCUSSED:** **REDACTED: Section 2(43) Commercial Interests**

10. RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT, INCLUDING TERMS OF REFERENCE

10.1 RECEIVED: paper ref: (**SN/22-23/005**) (on file)).

10.2 The Pro-Vice Chancellor Research & Enterprise introduced the paper.

10.3 **NOTED:** the report from URC on activity since the last report in June.

10.4 **NOTED:** the Terms of Reference for URC which were approved by Senate in April.

Approved (Vice-Chancellor & President):

Date: 10 October 2022

**REDACTED: Section 2(40)
personal information**