MEETING OF SENATE
MINUTES
Monday, 15 October 2018

1400, Reception Room, Wills Memorial Building

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (Chair), Professors Barnes, Bond, Canagarajah, Carrington, Cini, Cooper, Christianini, Dermott, Elliott, Farwell, Flecker, Grierson, Heslop, Iredale, Ireland, Macfarlane, Marklof, Nabney, Nix, Nobes, Oliphant, Orpen, Pancost, Pantazis, Pollmann, Powell, Purdy, Raven, Ridley, Robbins, Sandy, B Smith, F Smith, Squires, Szczelkun, Wilding, D Wilson, E Wilson.

Dr J Agarwal, Dr M Allinson, Ms N Ayub, Dr M Barbour, Mr C Brasnett, Mr S Bullock, Dr D Damen, Dr L Dickinson, Ms S Emerson, Dr S Fitzjohn, Dr C Fuller, Dr I Hers, Dr A Howkins, Mr P Kent, Dr I Lazar, Dr E Lithander, Dr E Love, Dr S McGuinness, Mr T Metcalfe, Ms M Millard (on behalf of Mr A Pearce), Mr J Mkok, Dr FMohammadi, Dr E Morris, Ms A Noble, Dr T O’Toole, Dr S Proud, Dr S Quadflieg, Mr D Quintero-Dominigues, Ms L Robinson, Dr M Stam, Stanford (on behalf of Mr S Singh), Dr L Walling.

In attendance: Ms L Barling (Clerk), Ms C Buchanan, Ms P Coonerty, Mr R Kerse, Ms Michele Shoebridge.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting on 11 June 2018.
1.1 APPROVED: the minutes of the meeting of 11 June 2018.

2. Chair’s Report
2.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/001).

2.2 The Vice-Chancellor welcomed all new Senate members for the 18/19 academic session.

Standing Orders of Senate
2.3 Senate considered some recommended changes to its Standing Orders (see paper ref SN18-19/001), and agreed that it would be important to clarify within the Standing Orders the following:
   • that the Standing Orders were approved by Senate annually.
   • whether academic staff members of the Board had voting rights at Senate.

2.4 APPROVED: Standing Orders of Senate for the 18/19 academic session, subject to the above clarifications.

2.5 The rest of the report was introduced by the Chair.

Use of Chair’s powers
2.6 NOTED: that over the summer vacation, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor approved, by way of delegated authority from the Chair of Senate under Chair’s Powers, on behalf of Senate, the following:
   • A change to Ordinance 19 such that award certificates clearly identify the MSc by Research as a research degree (prior to this change Ordinance 19, and therefore award certificates for the MSc by Research, specified it was a ‘Master of Science’ and
denoted by ‘MSc’, which did not allow for a clear distinction from a taught MSc). From 1 August 2018 the name of the degree in Ordinance 19 and therefore on award certificates has been changed to ‘Master of Science by Research’ and denoted by MScR. The University Education Committee agreed the proposal and the Vice-Chancellor was asked to consent to the amendment using Chair’s powers on behalf of Senate. This was then approved at the 6 July 2018 meeting of the Board of Trustees.

• The appointment of Ms Jolene Cook to the IT Committee, from 1 July 2018, for a one-year term, in alignment with her term on the Board of Trustees. As this is a joint committee of Senate and the Board, the MAGG also approved this appointment at its meeting on 11 September 2018.

• The re-appointment of Prof Innes Cuthill to the Ethics of Research Committee, from 1 January 2019, for a final three-year term, until 31 December 2021. As this is a joint committee of Senate and the Board, the MAGG also approved this re-appointment at its meeting on 11 September 2018.

• The re-appointment of Dr Chris Wright from 1 January 2019 to the Ethics of Research Committee, for a final three-year term, until 31 December 2021. As this is a joint committee of Senate and the Board, the MAGG also approved this re-appointment at its meeting on 11 September 2018.

Sector developments

Brexit

2.7 Members noted that the University was doing everything that it could to plan for and mitigate against potential damage caused by a no deal Brexit, and an impact assessment and action plan for a range of scenarios was currently being mapped out.

2.8 It was clear that there had been a change in the government’s language around immigration, particularly regarding international students and staff. Whilst international students were still included in the immigration numbers, for now, the language was becoming much more appreciative, and there was a recognition of the contribution that international students and staff bring to the UK. The government had also committed itself to review post graduate work entitlements and visas over the coming year.

Higher and Further Education Funding Review

2.9 The independent review panel would publish their report in November 2018, before the Government concluded the overall review in early 2019. There was minimal information as to what the review recommendations would likely be, however there was some concern that there would be some redistribution of the funding “pot”, which could be quite significant. Once the recommendations were published, the University would have a better understanding of the funding environment in which it was working. In the meantime, the University was evaluating various scenarios.

University updates

2.10 In respect of student recruitment, the sector had found it challenging this year, but Bristol had performed well and had largely hit its targets without a significant drop in tariff. It was expected that next year would be as tough given the social demographic, and the competition would also be tougher. The Vice-Chancellor thanked all staff for their hard work.

2.11 There had been some significant developments of physical infrastructure over summer, including the Indoor Sports Centre and the temporary additional teaching space in Royal Fort Gardens. The repurposing of Senate House as a student space continued. Planning permission to cut down the tree in Senate House courtyard had been obtained, which would enable further development of the Ground Floor and Upper Ground Floor.
In respect of the results of NSS and PRES, it was noted that whilst these undoubtedly suffered a negative impact from the industrial action, it was recognised that other comparable institutions were not impacted to the same degree. The Vice-Chancellor assured Senate that the senior team was taking the results very seriously.

In respect of RPIF, the Research England fund-matching programme for research, the University had bid for £29M with £71m of matching contributions from industry.

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the £1m philanthropic gift that had been received from a Bristol Alumnus, which was felt to be an important vote for confidence in the University.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked staff for their hard work in delivering REF readiness.

Members were informed that the University of Bristol joined the Alan Turing Institute on 1 August 2018, and an open call for applications for Turing Fellowships and Sponsored Projects was launched immediately, managed by the Turing University Lead (Prof Kate Robson Brown), the University Liaison Manager for the Turing (Patty Holley), and the Turing Institute Director of Academic Engagement (Prof Allaine Cerwonka). 30 Fellowships and 12 projects were awarded to Bristol in this competition, which was an outstanding outcome. For comparison, the University of Cambridge was awarded 23, and the University of Leeds 24. The total income from this competition currently stood at £1 110 009 over 2 years, but this was set to rise. All Faculties now host at least 1 Turing Fellow. The Faculty of Engineering now had 12 Fellows (including KRB as fractional with Arts), and 4 projects; The Faculty of Science now had 9 Fellows and 3 projects; The Faculty of Health Sciences now had 4 Fellows and 2 projects (1 shared with Life Sciences); The Faculty of Life Sciences now had 3 Fellows and 3 projects (one shared with Health Sciences); The Faculty of Arts now had 2 Fellows (including KRB as fractional with Engineering); and the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law now had 1 Fellow. This first cohort of Turing Fellows included 7 women, largely clustering in Arts, Life Science and Science, and mostly non-Professorial. It was notable that all 3 of the Life Science Fellows were women.

In respect of senior recruitment, the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that interviews for the DVC Provost role had concluded that and Professor Judith Squires (JSq) had been identified as the preferred candidate. Senate then ENDORSED the appointment of Professor Judith Squires to the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost. The Board would be asked to approve the appointment at its meeting in November. It was confirmed that searches were underway for Registrar & Secretary and the PVC Student Experience and that the search for a new PVC Education would commence once the appointment of the DVC & Provost was confirmed by the Board.

[REDACTED: likely to prejudice commercial interests].

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the overriding message from the recent UMT Residential day and the University Planning Conference was that this year the focus of the University should be on consolidating and building upon the investments and changes that had been made over the previous few years – for example, Bristol Futures, Bristol Doctoral College, and the Bristol Institute of Learning and Teaching. In addition, it was clear that there were two key areas that would require a particular focus this year, and which UMT would be discussing further at upcoming meetings – these were Employability and Assessment & Feedback. UMT would be considering the measures that needed to be taken and the resources required to address the weaknesses in these key subject TEF areas. A more detailed update would be provided to Senate at its next meeting.
2.20 Post meeting note: There was an omission in the report under the section heading ‘Recent successes with fellowship applications’. Beatrice Collins from the School of Chemistry had also received a Royal Society URF which was for 5 years (01/10/18 - 30/09/23) and amounted to £544,646.

2.21 Senate members were reminded that most of the items that were discussed at Senate could be shared more widely and they were encouraged to be pro-active about communicating the decisions that were made at Senate meetings to their colleagues in Faculties and Schools across the institution.

2.22 By way of a reminder, the paper classifications were included in the Senate Standing Orders. They were as follows:

a) Open: Papers that can be given general circulation.

b) Confidential: Matters that should be kept confidential before discussion at the committee for which the papers have been prepared but which could normally be generally available following the meeting.

c) Strictly Confidential: Matters that should remain confidential unless specifically released by the Chair of the relevant committee. These will be primarily staffing matters that are commercially confidential and matters of policy where premature disclosure could damage the University’s interest.

Papers should be classified “Open” unless there is a good reason to the contrary. However, the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act could, on occasion, override these internal classifications. While certain categories of information are exempt from the provisions of the Act, (please refer to the University’s Freedom of Information webpage at: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/foi/ for details), simple classification of whole documents will not ensure exemption. Internal use of the above categories of classification may, however, be a useful indicator of areas which, if subject to FOI access request, should be scrutinised for exemptions.

3. USS Update, including proposed response to the UUK employer consultation on the recommendations of the JEP report

3.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/012)

3.2 NOTED: the current consultation by the USS Trustee on increasing future contribution rates and the potential implications on our people and future costs to the University.

3.3 Members considered the proposed response to the UUK employer consultation on the recommendations of the JEP report, noting that the Bristol submission had been quite significantly lauded in many circles because of the way it showed collaboration across the sector.

3.4 After due consideration, Senate strongly ENDORSED the proposed response to the UUK employer consultation on the recommendations of the JEP report.

4. Vice-Chancellor’s question time

4.1 Members of Senate noted that increasing the percentage of women among the professoriate could increase the gender pay gap rather than decrease it. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor agreed that there were tensions between these goals. However, he emphasised that the Professorial Gender Pay Gap working Group had debated the issue and had agreed that it was more important to make a sustained medium-term impact on the gender pay gap by improving the percentages of female professors.
4.2 It was agreed that relevant sections of the Staff Survey results would be shared with Senate for their consideration at the 10 December meeting.

5. **Written questions**
5.1 None had been received. Members of Senate were reminded that they could submit written questions in advance of each meeting, for discussion.

6. **Annual Presentation from the Bristol SU Sabbatical Officers**
6.1 RECEIVED: The Annual PRESENTATION from Bristol SU Sabbatical Officers, delivered by the Undergraduate Education Officer and the Union Affairs Officer (Bristol SU).

6.2 **NOTED:** the Sabbatical Officers’ priorities for 2018/19.

6.3 The following was highlighted:
- Bristol SU would be improving its engagement with student representatives by delivering more training for them, arranging networking conferences, and by better championing their voices across the institution. The Sabbatical Officers were additionally aligning their priorities with the priorities of the course representatives, in order to better empower them to deliver on their objectives.
- It would be important to involve staff in student rep training and conferences, and to engage with staff as part and parcel of the Bristol SU engagement piece.

7. **Faculty Board recommendations**
7.1 None were received.

7.2 It was noted that the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law would be bringing a recommendation to Senate in due course around staff workload and sickness.

8. **Whole Institution Strategy for Mental Health and Wellbeing**
8.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED** (paper ref SN/18-19/002)

8.2 The report was introduced by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).

8.3 Members noted that a consultation on two new University Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategies (one for students and one for staff) was launched on 10 October 2018. These documents were open for feedback until 7 November 2018. As well as this online consultation, there would be other opportunities to have input. These would be advertised jointly by the Student Union and the University during the next month. Feedback regarding the student strategy could also be provided via the Bristol SU. For more information, or to provide feedback, members should visit: [https://tinyurl.com/y8qx46a5](https://tinyurl.com/y8qx46a5).

8.4 It was also noted that the strategies would be revised in light of the feedback from the consultation and Senate would receive the final versions of these for agreement at its meeting on 10 December 2018. The Board of Trustees would also consider the strategies at its November meeting in order to agree the approach to Board monitoring of this strategy going forward.

8.5 Members of Senate made the following comments:
- The concept of ensuring a good ‘work-life balance’ should be better referenced in both strategies. This should be coupled with a softening of the language to reflect the fact
that the University recognised how hard staff were working under extremely pressurised circumstances.

- Whilst wellbeing initiatives, workload review, and action learning sets were important responses to providing support for mental health and wellbeing of staff, these did not completely address the issue of total volume of workload. The volume of workload should be named and recognised, and whilst workload measurement models were helpful, these were not the same as reducing workload.
- Postgraduate students were barely referenced in both documents and this ought to be rectified.
- Some members of Senate expressed concerns that the quantum of Wellbeing Advisors was too low.

8.6 Members of Senate were strongly encouraged to engage with the formal consultation on the draft strategies, and to also encourage their colleagues to do so.

9. Update on Review of Academic Progression & Promotion

9.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/003)

9.2 The report was introduced by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education).

9.3 Members noted that:
- The paper contained an update on progress made within the review of promotion and progression arrangements for academic staff, outlining changes to the operation of the promotion process for the forthcoming round and;
- That it provided clarification of the next steps in the review which would include further development of new promotion & progression criteria (after an initial consultation with Heads of School) and a timetable of consultation for this, and the introduction thereafter of progression on the basis of ‘readiness’.

9.4 Members of Senate made the following comments:
- It would be important for the Task and Finish Group to consider whether the title ‘Reader’ ought to be replaced by a title better recognised outside the UK as there had been no clear consensus at the last Senate meeting when this point was discussed.
- There were some concerns expressed by members of Senate that the inclusion of a requirement to focus on achievements since the last promotion may disadvantage those coming forward for promotion late. It was agreed that a change would be made to reflect this concern1.

9.5 Further updates would be brought to future meetings of Senate.

9.6 Members of Senate were strongly encouraged to communicate these new processes to their colleagues in Schools and Faculties.

10. Update on the new Library Project

10.1 RECEIVED and NOTED: A PRESENTATION from the Director of Library Services on the new Library Project.

11. Structure of the Academic Year

11.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/004).

11.2 The report was introduced by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

1 Note: after the meeting, a change was made to the Promotion application form, in order to address the concerns expressed by Senate.
11.3 Members were reminded that at its June 2018 meeting, Senate received and supported a green paper regarding the structure of the academic year and approved the setting up of an oversight group to oversee a wider consultation and the development of a future white paper for Senate.

11.4 It was noted that the consultation would commence in October and would run until early December. The resulting feedback would be considered by the Structure of the Academic Year Oversight Group and would inform a white paper for submission to the February 2019 meeting of Senate.

11.5 Members made the following comments:
- It would be important for the Oversight Group to also consider as part of the review issues such as staff mental health and wellbeing, and workload expectations.
- Inevitably, with the changing volume and number of students at the University, there was going to be a change in the availability of space – this would also need to be tied in very carefully with the review.

11.6 Members of Senate were strongly encouraged to share this information with their colleagues in Schools and Faculties.

12. Report of the University Education Committee

12.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/005).

12.2 The report was introduced by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)

12.3 APPROVED: the terms of reference for the University Education Committee for 2018/19.

12.4 Senate considered the academic integrity policy and it was agreed that the Research Committee might also wish to review the policy, particularly the dimension that relates to staff in terms of authorship, for example.

12.5 APPROVED: the academic integrity policy and a short set of associated regulations for the PGR and Taught Codes.

12.6 NOTED: the change to Ordinance 19 which was endorsed under Senate vacation powers during the summer.

12.7 NOTED: the rest of the items for report from 27 June and 26 September meetings of Education Committee, specifically:
- Approval by the Education Committee of new programmes, programme withdrawals/suspensions and changes to programme specific regulations;
- Approval by the Education Committee of a recommendation from Student Recruitment Committee regarding the two-grade contextual officer policy. The committee had agreed that the contextual offer policy should not be amended to make contextual offers contingent on students firmly accepting an offer. Instead, the current contextual offer policy would be retained for 2019 entry cycle but would be reviewed during the 2018-19 academic year.
- Approval by the Education Committee of a series of recommendations outlined in a report from the BAME Attainment Gap Task & Finish Group. Examples of the recommendations include:
  - ensuring that clear questions about what action is being taken to address issues of inclusion and equality are embedded in all quality assurance
processes including programme approval, Periodic Programme Review and Education Action Plans (EAP);
  o developing guidelines and toolkits for Schools and Faculties to support their work in addressing inclusion via the curriculum and pedagogic practice;
  o working with Faculty Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committees to support them in developing good practice and effective action in addressing inequalities in student outcomes.

- Approval by the Education Committee of an updated Policy on Study Costs for Taught Programmes, which clarifies that schools should be expected to pay for: equipment and clothing that is essential for the programme of study; items that are considered personal protective equipment (PPE); and costs for submitting summative coursework in printed form (including costs associated with printing and binding PGT dissertations). The committee recommended to UMT that the policy should be introduced from the start of 2018/19. UMT supported this recommendation and the policy has been circulated and is available online: [www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/academic-quality/policy-on-study-costs-for-taught-programmes.pdf](www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/academic-quality/policy-on-study-costs-for-taught-programmes.pdf)

- Approval by the Education Committee of a revised Policy for Education Action Plans, which incorporates PGR programmes into the EAP process alongside taught programmes: [www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/academic-quality/documents/eap/EAP_Policy_June2018.pdf](www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/academic-quality/documents/eap/EAP_Policy_June2018.pdf)

- Approval by the Education Committee of a further set of revisions to the Taught and PGR Codes for 2018/19. The Codes for 2018/19 have now been published and are available online: [www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/facultyadvice/policy/#regs](www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/facultyadvice/policy/#regs)

- Approval by the Education Committee of a series of recommendations for reporting, certifying and considering student circumstances in the submission of summative coursework in UG programmes from 2018/19. The policy statements to govern the change of approach are included in the Taught Code for 2018/19. A new form for extension requests has been developed and published; guidance for schools on considering requests for extensions has also been developed and circulated.

- Approval by the Education Committee of the proposed recommendations outlined in a report from the Anticipatory Adjustments Task & Finish Group. The recommendations include:
  o developing good practice guidance on producing teaching materials in accessible formats;
  o working with colleagues to identify anticipatory adjustments to make Welcome Week more accessible for disabled students;
  o developing an online Disability Awareness ‘Essential Training’, as part of ‘MyReview’.

The main change is that Fitness to Study decisions will now be taken by the Deputy Registrar and the Director of Student Services, with stage one case reviews being convened by the Head of Student Wellbeing or Student Residential Life. The aim of the amendments is to encourage earlier intervention and positive, informal and consistent action to be taken with the student’s co-operation and involvement.

12.9 Members were specifically encouraged to read the details in the accompanying paperwork about how the Education Committee intended to address issues around employability and academic support as they provided more clarity to staff in faculties and schools.
12.10 As part and parcel of Bristol Futures, members noted that staff were being asked to engage with streamlining programme structure in order to enhance pedagogy to reduce assessment and thereby to reduce workload stress.

13. Report of the Research Committee

13.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/006).

14. Report of the IT Committee

14.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/007).

14.2 APPROVED: the terms of reference for the IT Committee for 2018/19. As this was a joint Board/Senate committee, the terms of reference would also be considered by the Membership Appointments and Governance Group (MAGG) on behalf of the Board at its meeting on 17 October.

15. Annual Report of the Promotions Committee

15.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/008).

16. Report of the Board of Trustees: 6 July 2018

16.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/009).

17. Membership of Senate for the 18/19 session

17.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/010).

18. Provisional Senate Business Schedule 18/19

18.1 RECEIVED and NOTED (paper ref SN/18-19/011).

19. Future agenda items

19.1 Senate was asked for any proposed future items to be passed to the Secretary, or to the Governance Team (governance@bristol.ac.uk).

20. Equality of Opportunity, including consideration of Equality Related Risks

20.1 Senate were invited to record any particular issues regarding Equality and Diversity that it has considered today, including items for further discussion. These may include the issues around Academic Staff Progression and Promotion, Mental Health and Wellbeing strategies, Structure of the Academic Year, and various items in the Education Committee Report.

21. Communication and Consultation

21.1 Senate recorded any particular issues regarding communication/consultation that it has considered today. These may include communication and consultation around Staff and Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategies, the consultation on the structure of the academic year (due to launch in October), and communication of any other decision or item of information discussed at Senate to wider colleagues. Please disseminate today’s papers with colleagues in schools.

22. Quality Assurance

22.1 Senate recorded any particular issues regarding Quality Assurance that it has considered today, including items for further discussion. These may include items from the Education Committee Report.

23. Date of next meeting

23.1 The date of the next meeting of Senate is due to take place on Monday 10 December 2018, 1400, in Room 4.10, Berkeley Square.