



MEETING OF SENATE MINUTES

Monday 07 October 2024

14.00, virtual Microsoft Teams meeting

Present:

Professors: Mellisa Allen, Michele Acuto, Barry Main, Michael Banissy, Michele Barbour, Jonathan Beaverstock, Alvin Birdi, Ian Bond, Matthew Brown, William Browne, Craig Butts, Edmund Cannon, Emma Clark, Tristan Cogan, Ryerson Christie, Ian Craddock, Mark Dillingham, Alison Donnell, Natalie Edwards, Tom Ellson, Charl Faul, Mike Fraser, Sarah George, Ruth Glynn, Darryl Hill, Tansy Jessop, Oliver Johnson, Catherine Kelly, Astrid Linthorst, Karim Malik, David Manley, Paola Manzini, Richard Martin, Jennifer McManus, Anthony Mulholland, Stuart Mundell, Ian Nabney, Aydin Nassehi, Leah Tether, Therese O'Toole, Hugh Piggins, Guy Poppy, Martyn Powell, Brian Squire, Chrissie Thirlwell, Nicholas Timpson, Tuomas Tahko, Jeremy Tavare, Nicholas Roberts, Alison Rust, Nigel Savery, Annela Seddon, Helen Simpson, Palie Smart, Michelle Spear, Judith Squires (**Chair**), Karen West, Kate Whittington, Chris Willis, Liang-Fong Wong, John Wylie.

Dr Peter Allen, Dr Mark Allinson, Mr Yogadhveep Arora, Miss Sarah Bain, Dr Ruzanna Chitchyan, Miss Gurvin Chopra, Dr Alex Clayton, Dr Jennifer Collins, Dr Suchandrima Das, Dr Amy Edwards, Mr Ed Fay, Dr Jonathan Fellows, Mr Jordan Fung, Dr Hermes Gadelha, Dr Laurant Goodhead, Dr Maxine Gillway, Dr Gibran Hemani, Dr Michael Henahan, Dr Joanna Howarth, Miss Bhavni Joshi, Dr Chris Kent, Dr Zoe Leinhardt, Mrs Antonia Lythgoe, Dr Stephen Montgomery, Dr Alison McClean, Dr James Palmer, Dr Dinesh Pamunuwa, Dr Angeliki Papadaki, Ms Lucinda Parr, Miss Lucy Pears, Mr Dan Smith, Dr Matthew Tointon, Jo-Jo Vyvyan-Jones, Dr Meng Wang.

Apologies: Professor Esther Dermott, Ms Paula Coonerty, Professor Harry Mellor, Mrs Mary Millard, Professor Marcus Munafò, Professor Tim Parkin, Professor Benjamin Pohl, Professor Evelyn Welch.

In attendance: Helen Cole (Senior Governance Officer, Clerk to Senate and **minutes**), Ella Lovibond (Sport and Student Development SU Sabbatical Officer) for item 4 only, Andrew Pearce (Director of Faculty Operations, Health Sciences Faculty Office) on behalf of M Millard, Linlu Ye (Equality, Liberation and Access SU Sabbatical Officer) for item 4 only.

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 17 June 2024 (*on file*)

- 1.1 APPROVED subject to minor amendments provided by the Chair of Ethics of Research Committee and noted by the Clerk to Senate.

2. CHAIR'S REPORT

- 2.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: **(SN/24-25/001)** (*on file*).

- 2.2 The Chair welcomed the new members who had joined Senate effective from 1 August 2024. The Chair also thanked the existing members for their continued support of Senate and its workings, noting that being a member took commitment both in terms of time at the meetings and reading papers in preparation.

- 2.3 The Chair noted that this was Professor Guy Poppy's (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation) first meeting of Senate since joining the University. Professor Poppy thanked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and introduced himself to the members of Senate.
- 2.4 With regret, the Chair advised Senate that in addition to the former members of staff listed in the paper, Dr Steve Lyne formerly the Head of the School of Economics, Finance and Management had died recently and that an obituary would be posted on the Staff Bulletin in due course.
- 2.5 It was noted that the Structure of the Academic Year (SAY) would be discussed under agenda item 7. On behalf of the University, the Chair expressed thanks to the members of Senate for their additional work and engagement in the implementation of the SAY for the start of the academic year. The launch had appeared to be successful but that Senate members' views would be an important source of feedback from the academic community.
- 2.6 The Chair provided a verbal update on the latest admission data for the current academic year, noting that the University had worked hard to achieve an acceptable position despite a challenging confirmation cycle. It was noted that despite the success achieved in the last few months it was necessary for the University to continue to be prepared to respond to volatility over an extended period of time combined with wider systemic changes both nationally and internationally. It was noted that in response, discussions on the interplay between the goals of the University's Strategy, the Long-Term Financial Framework and a review of student intake targets for the years ahead had been the subject of discussion at recent meetings of University Executive Board (UEB). This work would be considered by the Board of Trustees in due course.
- 2.7 NOTED that the scheduling of the Senate meetings would be reviewed by the Clerk to Senate over the next few weeks to ensure alignment with the Structure of the Academic Year (SAY) project.
- Action: Clerk to Senate**
- 2.8 NOTED the use of Chair's Powers for decisions between meetings during the Summer 2024 as per the paper.
- 2.9 APPROVED the Senate Standing Orders for 2024/25.
- 2.10 NOTED the Senate Forward Plan for 2024/25.
- 2.11 NOTED the Senate membership for academic year 2024/25.
- 2.12 NOTED that the minutes of the last meeting on 17 June referred to an update on progress from the discussion on Assessment of third-party suitability (defence industries) being provided to the October 2024 meeting. In response, the Chair advised that a statement reflecting the University's stance had been posted on the University's website. Work had also continued with collaboration occurring between the Chair of Ethics of Research Committee and colleagues in the Division of Research, Enterprise and Innovation, with input from the Pro Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Science and Engineering and the Head of the School of Civil, Aerospace & Design Engineering. A proposal that would apply across the University, that was aligned with policies and protocols on wider research ethics and the trusted research agenda would be considered by Academic Leadership Board in the next month. Senate to receive a further update at its next meeting on 9 December.

3. REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC TRUSTEES ON BOARD-RELATED BUSINESS

3.1 Professor Ian Craddock and Professor Natalie Edwards provided a verbal update on the business undertaken by the Board of Trustees at its meeting on 20 September 2024.

3.2 At its meeting the Board of Trustees considered the following:

- NSS 2024 Results analysis
- SU Sabbatical Officers Presentation
- US2030 Update
- University Risk Appetite
- Report from Remuneration Committee

4. ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM SU SABBATICAL OFFICERS

4.1 The following SU Sabbatical Officers joined Senate for this item: Gurvin Chopra (Postgraduate Education Officer), Ella Lovibond (Sport and Student Development Officer) and Lucy Pears (Student Living Officer), Linlu Ye (Equality, Liberation and Access Officer).

4.2 In discussion, Senate noted that the goals of the Sabbatical Officers for this academic year were broadly aligned and in synergy with the University's own ambitions.

4.3 In response to a question about the types of transport (including priority) available to students living in halls south of the main Clifton precinct, Sabbatical Officers responded that they were with engaged with students living in these areas including Paintworks, in the Arno's Vale area of the city.

4.4 NOTED the request from Sabbatical Officers for members of Senate to consider whether they were aware of spaces within the University's estate that could be used as Sensory Rooms. Sabbatical Officers outlined the basic requirements of such a space and the link below was shared: <https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/venues-and-shops/sensory-room>. AGREED that Senate members should contact Lucy Pears (Student Living Officer) at su-student-living@bristol.ac.uk

5. EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE: NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS) RESULTS (CONTEXT, ANALYSIS AND PROPOSED ACTIONS)

5.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/24-25/002) and **presentation** (*on file*).

5.2 Senate discussed the extent to which individual systems and processes impacted negatively on student satisfaction levels especially when academic staff at School level did not have autonomy/ control to make changes to default system settings, Blackbaud and Turnitin were cited as particular examples. In response, the Chair noted that significant variations in student satisfaction between Schools remained despite each School using the same systems, this spoke to the wider issues and indicated that there was opportunity for best practice in terms of local level engagement between staff and students to be shared more effectively. Forthcoming changes to be delivered by various initiatives including US2030, student journey and student experience programme would provide opportunities to reinforce accountability and responsibility for NSS outcomes beyond academic staff in individual Schools to make it the responsibility for all staff across the University.

5.3 A question was raised regarding the reasons behind the decline in score on the individual question about freedom of expression. It was noted that this required investigation but was most likely a sector wide change in response to recent geopolitical and environmental crises.

6. ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN: SUBMISSION AND WIDENING PARTICIPATION UPDATE

6.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/24-25/003) (*on file*).

6.2 NOTED the submission of the Access and Participation Plan and progress on internal widening participation targets.

6.3 NOTED that there was heterogeneity between Schools within Faculties, i.e. they varied in terms of their progress in these areas. The question was asked as to whether staff in the central team responsible could provide *quick wins*/ share best practice in terms of improvements that the lower performing Schools could employ in the next cycle. The suggestion followed on from the earlier discussion on improving NSS scores where bespoke interventions in some areas had been successful. AGREED that this suggestion be passed onto the paper author, the Director of Student Journey.

Action: Clerk to Senate

7. US20230 UPDATE TO INCLUDE SAY AND ACADEMIC STRUCTURES

7.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref (SN/24-25/004) (*on file*).

7.2 NOTED the Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) reiterated the University's thanks and appreciation to Senate members and the wider staff body for their help in delivering the progress made to date on the implementation of SAY. A verbal update on a planned review of the start of this academic year and teaching assessment, the next steps and areas of potential challenge ahead was provided.

7.3 The question was asked as to whether there was SharePoint site or university webpage that lists all appointments into these positions within the three new faculties. It was difficult to find information about who is in which role. In response, it was noted that this was being created and a link would be shared in due course. A link was circulated to the members with the draft minutes.

Action: Clerk to Senate

7.4 A question was raised on where and what extent the principles agreed by the Academic Leadership Structure Senate working group that was convened from January 2023 to September 2023 had been aligned to in the plans that were now taking shape. In response the Chair noted that outcomes would be shared in due course.

Action: Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost and the Clerk to Senate

7.5 AGREE that the Senate members who raised queries in the following areas should contact the Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) directly to discuss further.

- How the SAY implementation review mentioned would consider the increased misalignment between the start of TB1 and the start of DTP funded PhD students.
- The extent to which third year re assessment could be reduced/ streamlined when the proportion of students who took part was relatively low. NOTED that in some cases this was an accreditation requirement so could not be entirely eliminated.

8. GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT PLANS

8.1 RECEIVED and **NOTED**: Presentation (*on file*).

8.2 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement) presented to Senate.

8.3 In response to a question, it was noted that work was ongoing to explore ways that spaces at Temple Quarter could be utilised from the 2026 opening onwards. The aim was to frame together the identity and branding of the University with its international

reputational focus and make the new campus deliver on outputs beyond a standard a conference venue.

9. ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS FRAMEWORK UPDATE INCLUDING REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE

9.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/24-25/005) (*on file*).

9.2 NOTED the report which provided details of successful outcomes of the 2023-2024 annual academic promotion procedure and an update on the operation of the process.

9.3 A query was raised as to what proportion of the total was being referred to in the following extract from paragraph 5 from the paper: "...Of all applications, 26 cases were referred...". Clerk to Senate to seek information from report author after the meeting and update members as part of the circulation of the draft minutes. [After the meeting it was confirmed that the total was 184, see email to Senate members on 14 October.]

Action: Clerk to Senate

9.4 Members also suggested that for the next report the following additions/ improvements could be made. Clerk to Senate to share with report authors.

- Interesting to know if any (how much) selective external feedback was requested.
- Randomised trialling of external feedback for QA purposes had been scheduled to take place, future report could include a comment on this work.

Action: Clerk to Senate

10. TEMPLE QUARTER UPDATE

RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/24-25/006) (*on file*).

10.1 In discussion it was noted that as the opening date approached work related to the balance of activity in the new spaces would intensify. It was essential that relevant Heads of School were engaged and connected with the decision making process relating to the types of educational and academic activity that would use the new facilities.

10.2 NOTED that the timetabling team would need to ensure that students had sufficient time to move from Temple Quarter to the main campus (Clifton) if they had classes on both, this had the potential to pose a significant risk to effective teaching delivery. In response, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) and the Chief Operating Officer advised that a report on this area (produced in collaboration with SUMS consulting) was expected in mid October and the results would be presented to Senate in due course.

11. EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT including: Terms of Reference and Change to policy regarding staff participation in CREATE scheme

11.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/24-25/007) (*on file*).

11.2 APPROVED the Terms of Reference for the University Education Committee for 2024/25.

11.3 NOTED the items for report from the 19 June and 25 September meetings of University Education Committee.

Policy regarding staff participation in CREATE scheme

11.4 A question was raised about whether sector relevant experience referenced in the paper could include that gained internationally. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) responded that teaching experience at comparable universities was

accepted on a case by case basis. This was confirmed after the meeting by the relevant staff member at the Bristol Institute for Learning and Teaching (BILT).

- 11.5 A question was raised on how staff who lacked a fellowship at the present time but had associate status could progress on the scheme. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) responded that staff in this situation should contact BILT staff to write a *reflection* to demonstrate experience that was equivalent to the taught route.
- 11.6 A question was raised on whether staff on Pathway 3 who delivered teaching and were on an 11 month fixed term contract could take part in the scheme despite not meeting the 12 month threshold referred to in the paper. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) responded that flexibility in this area did already exist. Staff were able to complete the Fellowship scheme even if they were on contract for a shorter time, BILT staff recommended that staff discuss with their line manager their development needs versus workload balance. This was confirmed after the meeting by the relevant staff member at the Bristol Institute for Learning and Teaching (BILT).
- 11.7 A request was made that the wording of the policy be made less ambiguous and clarified in terms of the timing of whether staff needed to already hold an Advance HE fellowship at the time of submitting a promotion application or whether having passed was sufficient. After the meeting, the relevant staff member at the Bristol Institute for Learning and Teaching (BILT) noted and confirmed that this change would be made.
- 11.8 APPROVED an update to the policy for staff participation in the CREATE scheme, subject to the amendment detailed in paragraph 11.7 above. AGREED the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) to approve the final version on behalf of Senate.

12. RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT INCLUDING: -TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR APPROVAL

- 12.1 RECEIVED and **CONSIDERED**: paper ref: (SN/24-25/008) (*on file*).
- 12.2 NOTED the attached report from URC on activity since the last report in June 2024.
- 12.3 APPROVED Terms of Reference for University Research Committee (2024-25) – Annex A.
- 12.4 The following areas were discussed and it was agreed that the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) and the Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise and Innovation) would engage directly with relevant Senate members after the meeting.
- That current models of workload allocations did not include REF related elements. In response it was noted that had been highlighted in the report from Research Committee to Academic Leadership Board as an area requiring further attention/ solutions in particular as to ways to measure and record research activity when compared to teaching
 - The guidelines available for research directors on ensuring delivery of research integrity and quality as referenced in the ToRs for the Research Committee.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 13.1 There was none.

MEETING CLOSED. Next meeting Monday 9 December 2024, 2pm.