



Minutes Meeting of the Senate

Date: 18 October 2023

Present: The President & Vice-Chancellor in the Chair

Professor P Bath, Professor S Beck, Professor S Bhaumik, Dr B Birdi, Professor R Blakeley, Professor A Blom, Professor L Brooks, Professor C Buck, Dr J Burr, L Byrne, Professor M Carre, Dr C Codina, Dr T Cooper, Professor L Cross, Professor J Derrick, Professor N Dibben, Professor S Fitzmaurice, Professor A Fleming, Professor J Flint, Dr J Forstenzer, Professor R Freckleton, Professor G Gee, Professor M Gilbert, Dr L Gray, Dr S Hale, Dr V Halliday, Professor R Hand, Professor S Hartley, Professor P Hatton, T Hodgson, Professor J Hodson, Professor G Jewell, M Jones, Dr I Kersbergen, Professor R Kirkham, Professor W Kitchen, Professor D Lambert, Professor R Lawthom, M Lourido Moreno, Dr A Majid, Dr S Marsh, Professor C Miller, Professor E Milne, Professor T Moore, Professor N Morley, N Musa, Dr C Nic Dháibhéid, Dr S D North, Professor J Oakley, Professor G Panoutsos, Dr B Purvis, Professor K Reed, Professor L Robson, T Rocha, Professor S Rushton, H Sadiq, Dr R Simpson, Professor M Strong, N Stubbs, R Sykes, Professor C H Tan, Professor K Taylor-Jones, Professor A Tiwari, Professor G Valentine, Professor M T Vincent, Dr N Walkinshaw, Professor C Watkins, C Williams, Professor L Wilson, Professor H Woolley.

Secretary: J Strachan

In attendance: J Ambrose, M Borland, S Callan, A Carlile, K Clements, A Davison, A McSweeney, A Morgan, M Nuttall, K Sullivan.

Apologies: The Senate received apologies from 16 members.

Welcome

The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) welcomed members to the meeting. There were 23 new members of Senate, including 4 new student representatives. Al Carlile, Michelle Nuttall, Alix Morgan and Jacquie Ambrose were in attendance for item 4, Update on UEB Scenario Planning.

Members of Senate were reminded of the purpose of Senate. The statutes were clear that Senate, subject to the Statutes and the control and approval of Council, oversees the teaching and research of the University and admission and regulation of students. The remit of Senate is teaching, research, admissions and regulations.

1. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

Dr Sam Marsh declared a conflict of interest in relation to questions submitted in advance taken under item 6, Update on the Marking and Assessment Boycott, and his role with the Sheffield University and College Union.

Two members had submitted questions regarding potential conflicts of interest in relation to item 4, Update on UEB Scenario Planning; it was acknowledged there were potentially a significant number of conflicts of interest arising from this item. Senate noted these conflicts and that it was not necessary to exclude any member from the meeting or from the discussion, acting only in their capacity as members of Senate acting in the University's best interests.

2. President & Vice-Chancellor's Report to Senate

The President & Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) presented the report and provided updates:

- a) UK associates to EU research collaboration programme - Since Senate last met the University had welcomed the announcement that the UK would become an associate member of Horizon Europe. This meant UK researchers would be able to shape EU research programmes and lead consortia, as they could when the UK was part of the EU. The University had been lobbying for association since the UK left the EU and was now encouraging researchers to apply to Horizon programmes.
- b) COMPASS South Yorkshire Investment Zone - The AMRC had announced its largest-ever research project as part of the new South Yorkshire Investment Zone. COMPASS – Composites at Speed and Scale – was one of the North of England's largest-ever research and innovation projects. The £80m research project, led by Boeing, would work on making aviation more sustainable by manufacturing lightweight structures for aeroplanes. The South Yorkshire Investment Zone was the first to be announced in the UK. This was a real success for the region and it would create opportunities for more inward investment, skills and jobs for the region.
- c) Knowledge Exchange Framework 2023 - Since circulating the Senate papers, Research England had published its Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) results for 2023. The KEF assesses the levels of engagement of universities with partners outside the sector and the University has performed strongly. The University came in the top quintile (20%) of English universities for Intellectual Property and Commercialisation, Public and Community Engagement, and Working with Business. The results also showed that the University was highly engaged in Research Partnerships and Working with the Public and Third Sector.
- d) QS World University Rankings - The University of Sheffield had fallen out of the top 100 in the QS world rankings dropping from 96th to 104th place. This was in line with predictions presented in the June update. Recent changes in QS methodology have had a negative impact on our performance as we have performed poorly in the new metrics. UEB had agreed on a set of recommendations on how we will work to positively influence our rankings position. Following discussion, it was agreed to

share more granular data metrics, at faculty and department level, to support staff with local actions. **[Action by: AC]**

3. Matters Requiring Approval

Senate received and noted a summary of the matters for which Senate's formal approval was sought.

4. Update on UEB Scenario Planning

Senate received an update from the P&VC on proposals for creating a new school structure. It was noted that the initial proposals, the rationale for moving to a new structure, the principles that would guide the work, the timeline for taking the proposals through a process of wide engagement, and subsequent decision making through the University's Governance, had already been shared with all staff and were available on the University website. Further updates were shared to; clarify the role of Senate, provide an overview of the engagement carried out; share feedback from the Senate Education Committee (SEC) and the Senate Research and Innovation Committee (RIC) on the proposals and provide an update on the timeline.

a) Role of Senate in decision making and providing advice to Council

It was clarified that, in accordance with the University Charter and Statutes, the decision to create a schools structure was reserved for Council and Senate's powers were subject to Council control and approval. However, Senate had an important role because the Regulations stated that where appropriate any decision is subject to advice as appropriate from a number of different parties 'Senate, the President & Vice-Chancellor or other members of their executive board, or other committees'. The Regulations also stated that the decision could not be delegated, it had to be made by Council.

b) Engagement and feedback to date

Since detailed proposals had been shared with the Faculties on 4th October, there had been extensive engagement with academic, professional services and technical colleagues across Faculties. The Faculty Vice Presidents (FVPs) had reported progress of engagement in their faculty to UEB and the Senate's Education and Research and Innovation committees had met to consider the proposals.

c) Feedback from the Senate Education Committee (SEC)

Senate received an update from the Chair of the SEC on feedback from a meeting on 11 October 2023, which had included student representatives, where SEC was invited to consider what opportunities this afforded to enhance the student experience and to share views on previous or ongoing transitions to larger Schools. The following was highlighted; the importance of student voice in developing the proposals; opportunities to enhance the student experience and the need to ensure that student experience was central to the plans; there were opportunities to rebalance and clarify student facing services so they were consistent and visible across schools; key services needed to be retained at school level so they were accessible and visible to students; there was an opportunity to accelerate work

under the Education Pillar; there could be pressure at department level to work through operational impacts and there needed to be appropriate support for academic staff to balance this; it was important to recognise that the transition would take time; it would be important to ensure a clear institutional approach and clear and regular communication with students.

d) Feedback from the Senate Research and Innovation Committee (RIC)

Senate received an update from the Chair of the RIC on feedback from a meeting on 11 October 2023. The following was highlighted; the balance of opportunities and challenges across faculties varied. Overall, while some challenges were identified, RIC felt that the proposal would offer opportunities to help drive the Universities ambitions in terms of Research and Innovation; larger clusters could help enable some key strategic partnerships; there were lessons to be learned from previous and ongoing restructures (Schools of Health and Biosciences); there could be opportunities to reduce inefficiencies and duplications which could release more capacity for research; there were opportunities for fairer distribution of support for research leaders. Key challenges and concerns included; research groupings and cluster may not always map across well to the schools structure and this would need some thought; it was important to recognise the need to protect disciplinary identities; there would need to be an ongoing process to build cohesion in new schools; it was important to define what success would look like; careful consideration should be given to impact on workloads during the change period; thought needed to be given to schools where all staff would not be co-located.

e) Feedback from the Faculty Vice-Presidents (FVPs)

Senate received an update from the P&VC on feedback to UEB from the FVPs following engagement with their faculties. Key highlights included:

Conversations were ongoing and the initial proposals were still being tested. In some cases alternative configurations had been proposed by the faculties; UEB would consider all suggestions thoroughly and carefully. UEB would consider all the feedback from FVPs on 7 November. Should there be a need for further discussion, UEB would continue to support engagement on the proposals up to the Senate meeting in December. It was clear that news of this kind was unsettling and a key early priority was to provide more clarity for staff groups that had expressed concern about uncertainty. UEB would strive to give all staff as much opportunity as possible to have a say in how best to manage the changes, especially at Department Manager level, but it also recognised that providing some clear milestones would be reassuring. The voice of students was equally important and there had already been very productive conversations with the current sabbatical officers in the Students' Union and UEB would continue to keep them fully engaged. UEB would continue to engage with the trade unions through the normal channels.

f) Timeline

Senate received an update from the Vice-Chancellor (P&VC) on the proposed timeline. The following was highlighted;

An update would be shared with Council on 27th November and a final view would be sought from Senate in December, ahead of seeking formal Council approval on 14th December. Recognising how close the final Council and Senate meeting dates were, UEB

would strive to share papers as early as possible so members had an opportunity to share feedback ahead of the next meeting. It was intended to implement the changes in phases over two academic cycles over the next two years, with some new schools in place for the start of the 2024/25 academic year, and the remaining being in place for the start of the 2025/26 academic year.

g) Discussion

Fourteen members raised sixteen oral questions and points for discussion.

Several members emphasised the need for a meaningful consultation. In response to concerns expressed that the timeline for Council to approve the proposals, would not allow for board or meaningful enough consultation across the organisation, including with students, the P&VC clarified that the timeline had been given careful thought and was based on work already done and engagement that was already underway. The proposed engagement mechanisms, which were published on the University website, had also been given careful consideration. It was noted that if it became evident that more time was needed, UEB would consider extending the consultation period.

Several members urged for a slowing down of the process and expressed concern that the proposed timeline for Council to approve the proposals was too compressed and would not allow Senate sufficient time to consider the final proposals, such that it would be able to provide meaningful advice to Council. It was noted that, while UEB recognised the rationale for slowing the process down, the proposals would mean real change for some people and UEB had an obligation to keep the period of uncertainty as short as possible. Council would consider an update on the proposals in November, at which time it would consider the advice it wished to seek from Senate. It was reiterated that, should it become evident that more time was needed, in terms of governance timelines or a need for broader consultation, this would be considered.

In response to a point raised that sabbatical teams were concerned about having sufficient time to get meaningful and widespread feedback from students, it was noted that there had already been engagement with the sabbatical officers and this was ongoing. It was highlighted that there were several ways in which students could continue to engage with the process, the details of which had been shared with students.

In response to a request for more detail on the proposals and clarity on what staff could and could not influence, it was noted that engagement with colleagues was still underway on the detailed plans, further details would be shared with Senate in due course.

In response to a request for a review of the recent restructures (Faculty of Health and Biosciences) to include lessons learned, it was noted that the restructure of the Faculty of Health was not complete. UEB had been receiving feedback on lessons learned and this had been considered in the development of the new proposals. It was highlighted that changes made in the Faculty of Health and Biosciences did not translate directly to the current proposal because they had occurred for different / specific reasons; the current proposal was based on a more general principle and the full proposal would be brought to Senate in due course.

In response to a question about whether Senate would be provided with an analysis of how the proposed changes would translate to the hoped for advantages and whether that could be done for different types of department groupings, it was noted that this would be an essential part of presenting the proposals and would be shared. The analysis would also make clear the extent to which each advantage required progress with policies and processes.

A point was made that it would be important for management to take staff and students with them and, while it was helpful to hear feedback from the SEC and the RIC, this did not square with current feedback in departments. UEB recognised that that buy-in from the organisation was important and would continue to welcome feedback from members and further engagement with staff and students to work towards this.

A comment was made that the current plans for consultation did not provide sufficient opportunities to hear important voices and a request was made to ensure that the consultation process be published, to ensure that colleagues could see exactly how they could feed into the process. It was noted that UEB intended to be as transparent as possible. In terms of the consultation process, clear channels had been set out in communications to staff. This was also published on the website, which would continue to be updated with the latest information.

It was highlighted that workload concerns were one of the key drivers for change. In response to queries about evidence for this and what other options had been considered to reduce workloads, it was noted that workload concerns had been raised by academic and professional services colleagues for the last few years and it was a common theme in recent staff surveys and other forums, with academic staff raising the greatest concerns. The University had taken steps to try and address these concerns, including establishing an academic workload group, which had developed principles for academic work allocation and taking steps to reduce bureaucracy during Covid but the problems persisted in several ways. UEB believed that introducing schools would help to reduce workload and free up academic time and would provide the tools to address some of the differences in workload across the organisations. It was highlighted that this would not fall out of the structural change itself, it was work that would need to be done. Colleagues had modelled how much leadership time could be saved that could effectively return to other activities (research / teaching) and the University needed to find a way to realise that benefit.

In response to a query about whether budgetary constraints and / or staff retention issues were the driver for not creating more posts to address workload issues, it was noted that the University did not have the resources to create additional roles at the scale required to address the extent of the workload challenges. The University needed to find another way to address inefficiencies and improve the way it worked.

In response to a question about how the proposals would impact the English Language Teaching Centre (ELTC), it was agreed to provide more information on this. **[Action by: P&VC]**

In response to a question about whether a consensus of Senate would be sought on the proposals, the P&VC explained that while this is the preferred outcome, it would depend on

how Council wanted to be advised by Senate. It was noted that Senate's Standing Orders set out that Senate should proceed by consensus wherever possible.

There was no specified requirement in the Regulations or the Standing Orders about the form that the advice must take and it was up to the University Council to decide what form the advice from Senate should take. There was precedent for this; on a previous occasion, in relation to the review of a Department in 2021, Council decided it wanted to benefit from the views of the Senate through a questionnaire to provide deep and rich academic advice and it also benefited from the routine report to Council on the proceedings of the Senate. It was clarified that there was no requirement in the University's Governing documents to have a consensus view from Senate in these circumstances. It was noted that Council was due to meet to consider the proposals in November 2023; Senate would be updated on Council's decision in respect of the advice it wanted to seek in due course.

A comment was made about the importance of demonstrating good leadership and concern was expressed that there was a gap between leadership and the University community and that leadership would make changes without engaging with staff. It was noted that leadership had already welcomed feedback on the proposals and significant further engagement was planned; the FVPs had been open and honest in their discussions with HoDs and feedback from those meetings did not indicate that anything was being suppressed.

Senate received feedback from the Dean of the School of Medicine and Population Health, on his experience of the recent restructure of the Faculty of Health. It was highlighted that colleagues had initially been opposed to the change and to the timeline but, having been through the process, while it had been disruptive, they would not have wanted to extend the process over a longer period of time due to the impact on staff and students. It was important to listen to and understand people's concerns through positive engagement and the onus was on local leadership to facilitate that. Key concerns raised by staff had been around loss of identity and autonomy. One of the advantages had been aligning processes managed by professional services to reduce workloads and improve staff experience. The P&VC welcomed this feedback; the University would continue to take feedback from the colleagues involved in the recent restructures.

A comment was made about the importance of setting out the academic benefits of the restructure and the need for Senate to have sight of this. It was agreed that finding the right academic alignment was crucial; UEB would take this further on board. Ultimately this was an academically motivated project and UEB recognised that where changes were made solely for financial or administrative benefit they did not succeed.

In response to a query about what would happen in the event that the consultation process brought to light issues not previously considered, Senate was assured that if there was compelling evidence the proposals were not the right approach, it would be irresponsible to proceed.

5. Senate Annual Academic Assurance Report 2022-23

- 5.1 Senate received the report and agreed for it to be submitted for consideration and approval at Council's meeting on 27 November 2023, noting that a Joint Sub-Group of Council and Senate would be convened in the intervening period to discuss the report.

It was highlighted that Council was responsible for overseeing quality and standards relating to research, education, and the student experience. This responsibility was delegated to Senate and the report provided Council with assurance that Senate had discharged its delegated powers by maintaining and enhancing academic quality and standards.

In response to feedback from Council on the previous year's report, key changes had been made to include a statement of academic assurance, clearer sight of the evidence that led Senate to feel assured that quality and standards were being upheld, clearer statements about the level of academic assurance provided and clearer sight of the evaluations that underpinned Senate's assurance. The report also had a stronger risk-based focus throughout with clearer identification of risks relating to academic quality and standards. It was highlighted that Council also commended Senate for the work it undertakes around quality and standards and also recognised the many ways in which Senate had enhanced this work over the last 5 years.

- 5.2 Senate commended the work of the Committee to develop and improve the report. The following high-level conclusions of the report:

(a) Based on Senate's work in 2022-23, it was assured that:

- Academic governance was robust and effective;
- Academic quality and standards were being maintained, as evidenced by compliance with relevant external regulatory requirements;
- Appropriate work was being undertaken and/or was planned to enhance academic quality and standards as part of the University's commitment to continuous improvement;
- Relevant academic risks are being identified and effectively managed.

(b) A self-assessment of the University's performance in providing academic assurance to Council against a leading sector framework suggested it was currently providing a "good" level of assurance with potential to improve to "leading edge" assurance in the future.

6. Update on the Marking and Assessment Boycott

Senate received a report from the Chair of Senate Education Committee on action taken to mitigate the impact of the marking and assessment boycott (MAB) on students and a separate update on the use of Special Regulations during the period 2022-23.

6.1 Background

During the 2022-23 academic session, from 20 April to 6 September, 199 members of staff at the University took action, in the form of a marking and assessment boycott, during all or part of this period and this resulted in pockets of impact on both graduating and continuing students. The University had taken steps to ensure that assessments had been appropriately marked and moderated, by suitably qualified staff with appropriate disciplinary knowledge and expertise and additional guidance was provided to Heads of Department (HoDs) and Chairs of exam boards. The actions taken mitigated the impact of the boycott and the majority of final year undergraduate students were able to graduate on time with classified awards. However, there were a small number of cases where a decision was approved to make an interim award of an unclassified degree (referred to in the University's regulations as a Pass degree).

6.2 Current Position

Senate noted that, since publishing the report, there were currently no graduates with interim awards/pass degrees. In addition to interim classifications, some graduating students were awarded classified degrees with 90 credits or above in their final year; it was noted that there were no longer any graduates classified with missing marks. The University had notified the Office for Students of a reportable event due to the impact of industrial action (marking and assessment boycott) on the small number of final year students who had not been able to graduate with classified degrees according to the normal timescale, given the delays in marking their assessments.

It was highlighted that with regard to continuing students, there were currently only 6 students who had been permitted to continue with up to 40 credits of missing marks. These were all awaiting marks (understood to be resit marks).

6.3 Use of Special Regulations

It was noted that one element of the mitigating action, had been to issue temporary guidance to the heads of departments and chairs of examination boards during the 2023 Marking and Assessment Boycott; including the use of Special Regulations.

In response to a submitted letter from Dr Sam Marsh (read out in full), which raised concern that Senate had been misled in an update to Senate on the marking and assessment boycott in June 2023, specifically with regard to assurance given to Senate in June 2023 that all action being taken by the University to mitigate the impact of the marking and assessment boycott was within the University's regulations and concern that the Regulation 29, which came under the title 'PROGRESSION BETWEEN YEARS', had been breached through the use of Special Regulations, which were used to award degree classifications to students with missing marks (resulting from the MAB) and allowing students to progress with missing marks (resulting from the MAB), it was noted that each of the points raised in the letter had been investigated thoroughly by the University Secretary, as part of her responsibility to provide advice to all members of Senate. That investigation found that all mitigating actions taken were consistent with the Regulations; a detailed response to each point raised had already been provided to the member.

It was clarified that part of the current Regulations allowed for circumstances which may arise where an application was made for an exception to the Regulations for a student in order that they were awarded the outcome that best reflected their performance. These were called special regulations and the Faculties and the Vice President for Education had delegated powers under the Regulations in respect of special regulations. It was highlighted that awarding provisional classifications and progressions via Special Regulations was a standard procedure and the approval of special regulations had been undertaken in accordance with the powers and (delegated) authority set out in the Regulations and nothing that had been done during the MAB took place outside the current regulation framework.

It was acknowledged that the use of Special Regulations had not routinely been reported to Senate in previous years and this was rectified this year. A new update on the use of Special Regulations for the period 2022-23 was included in the papers (appended to the Senate Education Committee report). It was highlighted that there had been a total of 294 Special Regulations cases approved in 2022-23 (compared with 292 in 2021-22). This was provided for transparency and would be reported periodically going forward.

It was highlighted that in the case of the MAB, students had completed their assessments and so their obligations to the University. What was missing, in some cases, were the marks, which was an unprecedented situation. The recommendation to award provisional classifications and/or interim pass degrees was made by examination boards across four Faculties. The same was true for the recommendation to allow students to continue with missing credits, in line with both the current regulation framework and the regulatory responsibilities defined by the Office for Students (OfS).

Following a detailed discussion, it was agreed to share full details of the concerns raised and the response from the University Secretary with members (on request). **[Action by: JS]**

In response to points raised about transparency of changes to the regulation, it was agreed to share details of where members could access previous versions of the Calendar. **[Action by: JS]**

In response to a question about whether the impact of the MAB on students had resulted in any student complaints or appeals, it was clarified that this would be reported to Senate through the usual reporting mechanisms (annually in June of each year).

There was a brief exchange of views on the mitigations for marking and moderating and whether or not assessments had been marked and moderated by staff with appropriate disciplinary knowledge with the point being made that some final year projects had not been marked by supervisors; there was a difference of opinion as to whether supervisors were always best placed to mark these. The Vice President for Education acknowledged the point that it had been necessary to move away from the usual practice; it was noted that six to seven departments had been severely affected and in all cases the mitigations and changes to usual practice had been done within the university moderation policy.

REPORTS FROM STATUTORY BODIES

7. Report on the Proceedings of the Council
(Meeting held on 10 July 2023)

Senate received and noted the Report on the Proceedings of the Council.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

8. Report of the Senate Academic Assurance Committee
(Meeting held on 19 September 2023)

Senate received the report and approved the Committee's Business Plan and Terms of Reference and Membership for 2023-24. Senate noted the six themes the Committee planned to examine or revisit for assurance across the 2023-24 academic year, which had been selected to ensure a balance across research, education and the student experience. It was highlighted that the Committee had benefited greatly from the input of the Students Union Education Officer when shaping the Business Plan.

During discussion, the Committee's plan to look at the quality of education experience for international students was welcomed and a point was raised about whether this included University of Sheffield International College (USIC) Students. It was clarified that this work was currently planned to look at International Students on Undergraduate and Postgraduate Programmes. It was agreed that the Committee would look at broadening the scope of this to include a holistic look at the International Student experience, including transitioning from the USIC, whether in the scheduled session on international students during 2023-24 or at some other point in the future work of the Committee. **[Action by: GG]**

9. Report from the Chair of the Senate Education Committee
(Meeting held on 11 October 2023)

Senate received the Report and approved the following:

- (a) New, significantly amended, and closed programmes, title changes and new exit routes approved by Faculties between 12 May 2023 and 26 September 2023.
- (b) Amendments to Regulation XXII Discipline of Students, to clarify the powers devolved under the Regulation and amend the makeup of the Discipline Pool.

It was highlighted that the Committee had received and discussed a report on the National Student Survey 2022-23 and had discussed and noted a paper on Enhancing Education Governance, which had resulted from a project on the Faculty Education Committees led by Professor Graham Gee. Both reports would be shared with Senate for information in due course. **[Action by: MV]**

It was also highlighted that the Committee had discussed proposals to disband some of its sub-committees; an update would be shared with Senate in December 2023.

In response to a submitted question regarding the rationale for the amendment to the makeup of the Discipline Pool, to remove specific reference to members of the School of

Law populating the Chairs of Senate Disciplines Panel, it was clarified that one element of the revisions to the Discipline regulations for students had been to update the membership of the Discipline pool to allow Chairs of Senate Discipline Panels to be appointed from across the professoriate and not restricted to appointments from the School of Law. It also allowed the appointment of professorial equivalent staff as Chairs of Senate Discipline Panels to hear matters of non academic misconduct only. It was highlighted that the change had been put forward by the Quality and Scrutiny Committee to align with sector best practice. It aimed to reduce the burden on the School of Law, create parity with staff disciplinary processes where staff with legal backgrounds were not required to chair staff disciplinary panels and reduce the burden on academic staff where academic judgement was not essential. The change would also allow delineation between matters of academic and non-academic misconduct (where academic judgement was not essential).

In response to a question about student engagement on the amendment to the Regulation, it was highlighted that there had been a workshop with the Students' Union (SU). The SU had welcomed the change and SU Representatives on Senate emphasised the need to ensure ongoing dialogue about matters relating to student conduct.

**10. Report from the Chair of the Senate Research and Innovation Committee
(Meeting held on 11 October 2023)**

Senate received and noted an update including; an update on the annual review of strategy delivery plans for both research and innovation; proposed changes to the innovation strategy plan, which included broadening the plan to cover all translational innovation assets; an update on the work of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) Steering Group, which had fed into the Russell Group's response on Research England's plans for REF2028. A written report from the October meeting would be shared at the next Senate meeting.

[Action by: SH]

**11. Report of the Senate University Research Ethics Committee
(Meeting held on 20 September 2023)**

Senate received the report and approved the Committee's Terms of Reference (ToRs) and Membership for 2023-24. IT was noted that the Committee had made a number of changes to the ToRs to better reflect the Committee's current activities and strengthen its membership.

REPORTS FROM JOINT COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND COUNCIL

**12. Report of the Honorary Degrees Committee
(Meeting held on 9 March 2023)**

Senate received and noted an update including details of the nominees agreed by the Committee for the conferment of Honorary Degrees at Degree Congregations in 2023. It was noted that nominations had been received from Members of the Honorary Degrees Committee, the Faculty Executive Boards via their Vice Presidents, and from other members of the University and the wider community.

OTHER MATTERS

13. Provisional Senate Business Schedule 2023-24

Senate received and noted the report. It was highlighted that, as agreed by Senate at its previous meeting, the first Senate Information Session had been arranged for 13 December 2023, to run immediately prior to the Senate meeting. The session would focus on the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023.

In response to point raised about the timing of the session in relation to the Senate meeting, which it was felt to be too condensed / resulted in a significant time obligation, and a query about whether the session could be accessed online, it was agreed to take this feedback into consideration when planning future sessions.

14. Returning Officer's Report

Senate received and noted the report. It was highlighted that the Senate Election Guidelines would be updated to clarify that the period of appointment of an elected staff member would be extended for the duration of any substantial absence from the University, such as maternity leave or a sabbatical period away from the University.

15. Report on Action Taken

Senate received and noted the report.

16. Major Research Grants and Contracts

A report listing major research grants and contracts awarded since the last meeting of the Senate was received and noted.

17. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Meeting held on 28 June 2023)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

18. Matters Arising on the Minutes

There were no other matters arising on the Minutes not covered elsewhere on the Agenda.