

Senate Minutes

Date 03rd April 2019

Location Acland, 201

Time 14:00 to 16:00

Attendees

Prof. Michael Luger
Prof. John Egan
Prof. Paul Ryan
Amparo Lallana
David Willey
Dr. Steven Quigley
Darren Tysoe
Belinda Beckmann
Prof. Mark Allinson
Jonathan Strauss
Tatiana Doronina
Asif Ali-Kann
Dr. Isabel Canto de Loura
Dr. Olaf Jubin
Tristan Tull
Dr. Victoria Pastor Gonzalez
Liz Beavers
Rachel Azzopardi

Deputy Vice Chancellor (alt) (Chair)
PVC / Dean of BaM (alt)
Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of HASS
Director of RILC (alt)
Chief Operating Officer
Registrar
Chief Information Officer and Director of Information Services
Finance Director (alt)
Head of Academic and Educational Development
Director of Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions
President of the Student Union
Representative of BaM (alt)
Representative of BaM
Representative of HASS
Representative of HASS
Representative of RILC
Representative of Professional Services Staff
Representative of Professional Services Staff

In attendance

Richard Reger
Jenny Bannocks

Head of Governance (Secretary)
Governance Advisor & Secretary to Committees (Minutes)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Prof. Aldwyn Cooper, Prof. Simon Jarvis (Prof. Michael Luger as alternate), Josef Mueller (Amparo Lallana as alternate), Carl Teigh (Belinda Beckman as alternate), Adrian Thornley (Asif Ali-Kann as alternate), and Sue Shutter. Prof. John Egan attended as alternate to the PVC / Dean of BaM, who took the role of Chair.

2. Declaration of interests

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

3.1. Minutes of the meeting on the 06th February 2019

3.1.1. Accuracy

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting on the 06th February 2019.

Action Updates:

Senate 18/19 – 2.1 The Secretary to correct the Senate minutes of the 14th November 2018, prior to publication.

The Secretary confirmed that this had been completed.

Status: Closed

Senate 18/19 – 2.2 The Head of Governance to review risk LT.1 ‘Poor academic standards and quality assurance and enhancement’, to consider if the QAA Monitoring report can be added as an additional control.

The Head of Governance confirmed that this had been reviewed and the report had been added as an additional control.

Status: Closed

Senate 18/19 – 2.3 The Chief Information Officer to investigate if a dashboard of metrics, relating to University KPIs as well as those the University will be assessed on externally, can be created and presented to Senate at future meetings.

The CIO reported that a draft set of metrics was now available, and agreed to circulate these to Senate members following the meeting. He requested that members provide their feedback, in order that a dashboard might be prepared in time for presentation at the next meeting of Senate in July 2019.

Status: On-going

Senate 18/19 – 2.4 The PVC / Dean of BaM to investigate when the MA Experience Management programme will be presented for review and validation, and to report back to the Registrar.

The Chair confirmed that the Senate Portfolio Scrutiny Panel would meet on the 01st May 2019 where this programme proposal would be reviewed. He noted that this had been reported to the Registrar and the action could be closed.

Status: Closed

Part A: Items for Discussion and/or Approval

4. Student matters

The Student Union President reported that there were no issues to report to Senate at the current time, as any matters were currently being discussed with colleagues outside the meeting.

The committee **noted** the update.

5. Chair’s Report including any Chair’s Actions

5.1. Chair’s Report

The Chair presented the report and the committee noted the following:

- Members noted a correction to point 1, in that the TEF Submission was *noted* (not approved) by the Board of Trustees, however this had been approved by the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee and Directorate, prior to submission on the 17th January 2019.
- The development of the strategic plan has identified 3 immediate priorities as noted in the report, however long term priorities will be defined following the arrival of a new vice chancellor, once appointed. Members commended the strapline ‘developing tomorrow’s global leaders’ in the mission statement.
- [REDACTED]

- A trial of SEAtS will take place in the summer 2019, with a full launch in September 2019. This will inform the JISC learning analytics software which will continue to be trialed over the next year.
- Academic misconduct is a concern across the sector, and PVC / Faculty Deans have sent out communications to students highlighting the consequences of plagiarism and using 'essay mills'. Members noted that many students are also concerned about this practice, and suggested that the Student Union also issue a communication on this. Academic colleagues noted that following up on suspected cases of academic misconduct can be bureaucratic and the process should be simplified, however the committee noted the importance of providing substantive evidence to support allegations against students.

New Action: Senate 18/19 – 3.1. The Student Union President to request that the Student Union issue a communication, noting their concern around academic misconduct and the consequences of plagiarism and using 'essay mills'.

5.2. Chair's Action: Amended Conferment List June 2018 approved 06th February 2019

5.3. Chair's Action: Programme Discontinuation Decision 06th February 2019

A member questioned if the BaM PG Certificate in International Business and Finance had been a 'standalone' programme only and if this could be re-opened if required. The COO confirmed that this had been designed as a 'closed' programme and had not been considered for further use elsewhere; as such the discontinuation request had been accepted by SPSP.

5.4. Chair's Action: Programme Discontinuation MA Fashion (with pathways)

5.5. Chair's Action: Programme Discontinuation Level 3 BA Acting for Stage and Screen

The committee **noted** the report and Chair's Actions.

6. Governance Committee Calendar

The Head of Governance presented the paper, noting that the proposed dates had been checked with various colleagues across the University prior to being submitted to Senate. It was noted that in addition to the proposed dates for the 2019/20 academic year, the committee were also asked to approve these dates being 'rolled forward' to the 2020/21 and 2021/22 academic years, to allow early planning.

A member requested that when rolling the dates forward to future academic years, that attempts are made to avoid Thursday afternoons where possible. The Secretary noted that this is challenging due to the rules around setting the calendar, but it would be considered.

A member requested that the Graduation dates for 2020 are first checked to ensure there is no clash with Senate, prior to publication of the calendar.

Following consideration of the above comments, the committee **approved** the Governance committee calendar.

New Action: Senate 18/19 3.2. The Secretary to publish the Senate Committee dates for 2019/20, following confirmation of the graduation date for 2020, and to roll these dates forward for the next 2 academic years.

7. Senate Terms of Reference and Quoracy

The Head of Governance presented the item and noted that the current quoracy rule states that:

Senate shall not be considered quorate unless at least half its members are present and at least half of those present are academic representatives.

He noted that Senate currently has an equal division of Academic and Professional Services staff. This means that if everyone is present, the committee is quorate, however if one academic member sends apologies (and no alternate), or if an academic member leaves during the meeting, then Senate becomes inquorate and cannot take place / continue. He also noted that the remit of Senate is largely focused on academic issues and decision making, however there are more Professional Services members on the committee when compared to Senates at other Universities.

The Head of Governance asked the committee to consider two questions:

- Should the meeting be allowed to continue with business, even if it is / has become inquorate?
- Is the membership of Senate correct?

The committee fully discussed the item and noted the following:

- Senate does not take many decisions, but colleagues need to explore how these can be taken, in the case where Senate falls inquorate.
- Senate is very large for the size of the institution.
- Around 50% of the current membership are also Directorate members. However, these members are also present as the Chairs of sub-Senate committees and bodies.
- Some members suggested that more academic staff members should sit on Senate.
- Some Senate members could be 'in attendance' rather than 'ex-officio'.
- It was suggested that the Director of Alumni and Development should be included in the Senate membership.
- Some Senate members who are currently noted as professional services staff are more accurately described as 'academic-related' (for example the Registrar).

A member reminded the committee that the issue of quoracy has arisen from problems with attendance, rather than problems with membership and advised to avoid increasing the number of members.

The Chair requested that members vote on the motion for Senate to continue its business, if the meeting is deemed inquorate. All members agreed.

The Chair requested that members vote to review the Senate membership with solid proposals for change at the next meeting in July 2019. All members agreed. He requested that members send their suggestions for changes to the membership of Senate to the Head of Governance, who will review these with the Chair. He informed members that any suggested amendments will be presented to the committee at the next meeting for a vote.

New Action: Senate – 3.3. The Head of Governance to amend the Senate standing orders to allow the committee to continue its business, if the meeting is deemed inquorate.

New Action: Senate 18/19 – 3.4. All members to consider the membership of Senate, and to send any suggested amendments to the Head of Governance prior to the next meeting, for consideration with the Chair of Senate. Any suggested amendments will be presented to the committee at the next meeting of Senate in July 2019.

8. Retention, Progression and Continuation Strategy

8.1. Top Priorities

The PVC / Student Experience presented the paper, reminding members that a working group had been set up by the Board of Trustees in October 2018 to explore and improve this area. He reported that the group would continue to meet to operationalise the strategy and its priorities, however this would now feed in to the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee [as opposed to the Senate Student Experience Committee].

Members questioned if student attendance would feature as a priority in this area, as there is evidence that attendance and progression are closely linked, and current regulations are not sufficiently effective. The PVC / Student Experience requested that colleagues feed these concerns in to the working group, where they can be fully considered and addressed. A member noted that section 2 of the strategy focuses largely on the delivery of teaching, and added that content of teaching is also important. Members agreed that the word 'lively' should be removed from the first bullet point in this section.

The committee **approved** the strategy, noting that there may be further priorities for consideration by the working group as this area develops.

9. English Language Requirements

The COO presented the paper, reminding members that in the previous academic year, Senate had agreed to raise the English Language entry requirements. He informed members that recruitment targets for September 2019 were 'stretch' targets, and the MRA team had proposed measures to mitigate the risk of not meeting these. These had been presented to Directorate and approved, and the COO highlighted the following:

- IELTS requirements for UG entry level 4 would remain as previously agreed by Senate at 6.5. However, a greater level of flexibility in the components would be introduced, subject to no components being less than 5.5.
- English for Academic Purposes (EAP) would now be presented as the norm rather than the exception for entry on to Undergraduate programmes. This will encourage applications from those applicants who may have been deterred from applying, however for those students who do have a 6.5. IELTS, they will be able to choose another module.

The COO reported that these mitigation measures have now been implemented and clearly marketed, and these would be reviewed following the September 2019 and January 2020 intakes. He added that they do not dilute existing requirements, but allow students to reach the required level, with the support of the University. The Chair added that the existing English Language Requirements were correct to ensure a good student experience, however these measures were necessary in the current climate.

Members noted that these changes would need to be included in the Academic Regulations.

The committee **noted** the update.

New Action: Senate 18/19 – 3.5. The Secretary to add English Language Requirements to the agenda of the next meeting of the Academic Regulations Scrutiny Panel on the 16th May 2019.

10. Review of the Risk Register for Academic / Student Experience Related Risk

The Head of Governance reported that there had been no changes to the risk register since the last meeting of Senate, and asked members if they would like to raise any new issues.

Members discussed concerns around student attendance and noted the following:

- Tier IV students who do not attend 75% of classes are reviewed by a panel and may be suspended. For non-tier IV students, their attendance data is presented to progression boards who can determine if they are allowed to progress. Progression boards now have the authority to exit students who do not attend classes, although this is a relatively new initiative.
- There are cases where students do not attend classes, but present assessment work, which must be marked. This creates suspicion of academic misconduct, and can negatively impact and demotivate other students in the class.

- Systems such as personal tutors, and the new SEAtS technology allow monitoring of attendance, but there are no repercussions for offending students.

The Chair summarised that members agreed this was an area for concern, but further discussion was needed on how it can be addressed. Members suggested that this issue should be discussed at the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee to consider the impact on educational results, with full representation from academic colleagues.

New Action: Senate 18/19 – 3.6. The Secretary to add ‘student attendance and impact on educational results’ to the SLTC agenda for its meeting on the 06th June 2019.

Part B: Items for Noting

11. Minutes of the Senate Committees and Standing Bodies

- 11.1. Academic Regulations Scrutiny Panel – 5th February 2019
- 11.2. Senate Quality Assurance and Enhancement – 21st February 2019
- 11.3. Senate Learning and Teaching Committee – 27th February 2019

The Head of Academic & Educational Development highlighted that the committee had endorsed a proposal to reduce the number of assessment attempts from 4 to 3, as students were not motivated to pass the first time. This will be presented to the ARSP at its meeting in May 2019 for inclusion in the 2019/20 Academic Regulations.

- 11.4. Senate Research Committee – 20th March 2019
- 11.5. Senate Student Experience Committee – 13th March 2019
- 11.6. Senate Portfolio Scrutiny Panel – 28th February 2019

Senate **noted** the minutes of the Senate Committees and Standing Bodies.

12. Reports from the Faculty and Institute Executive Committees

- 12.1. Business and Management

The Chair informed members that the validation events for MSc Finance and Investment and MA Enterprise programmes had taken place and both had been approved subject to conditions.

- 12.2. Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences
- 12.3. Regent’s Institute of Languages and Culture

A member questioned if the modules on the ‘Business plus English’ summer course would be taught by BaM teaching staff. The Director of RILC (alt) noted that this was being explored, but would ensure that any teaching requirements were communicated and built into faculty planning to ensure availability.

Senate **noted** all reports from the Faculty and Institute Executive Committees.

13. Conferment Lists

- 13.1. Finalist Board – 17th January 2019
- 13.2. Finalist Board – 29th January 2019

The Registrar presented the conferment lists noting that an updated version had been circulated 2 days before the meeting, to ensure an accurate version was presented to the committee. Members noted that, compared to the sector, the University had a good spread of awards, and the Registrar assured the committee that this is monitored by the Senate Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee, using HESA data for comparisons.

Senate **noted** the conferment lists.

Closing Items

14. Confidentiality

No items of confidentiality were raised.

15. Risk management update

No items of risk were raised.

16. Any other business

16.1. The Registrar welcomed the comments received from academic colleagues at the meeting, and noted concerns raised around attendance. He added that SMG are currently reviewing business processes, and it would be important to hear further feedback to understand how initiatives are working and any further suggestions. Members noted issues with SITS at previous exam boards, and the CIO reported that these had been resolved, and requested that any further issues are reported to him and the Head of MIS as soon as they occur, for prompt resolution.

16.2.

[REDACTED]

New Action: Senate 18/19 – 3.7.

[REDACTED]

17. Next meeting

- Wednesday 3rd July 2019, 14.00 – 16.00

Item	Action Required	Staff responsible	Due Date
New Actions:			
Senate 18/19 – 3.1.	The Student Union President to request that the Student Union issue a communication, noting their concern around academic misconduct and the consequences of plagiarism and using 'essay mills'.	SU President	ASAP
Senate 18/19 – 3.2.	The Secretary to publish the Senate Committee dates for 2019/20, following confirmation of the graduation date for 2020, and to roll these dates forward for the next 2 academic years.	Secretary	ASAP
Senate 18/19 – 3.3.	The Head of Governance to amend the Senate standing orders to allow the committee to continue its business, if the meeting is deemed inquorate.	Head of Governance	July 2019
Senate 18/19 – 3.4.	All members to consider the membership of Senate, and to send any suggested amendments to the Head of Governance prior to the next meeting, for consideration with the Chair of Senate. Any suggested amendments will be presented to the committee at the next meeting of Senate in July 2019.	All members	ASAP
Senate 18/19 – 3.5.	The Secretary to add English Language Requirements to the agenda of the next meeting of the Academic Regulations Scrutiny Panel on the 16 th May 2019.	Secretary	16 th May 2019
Senate 18/19 – 3.6.	The Secretary to add 'student attendance and impact on educational results' to the SLTC agenda for its meeting on the 06 th June 2019.	Secretary	06 th June 2019
Senate 18/19 – 3.7.	████████████████████ ████████████████████ ████████████████████ ████████████████████	██████	██ █████ ████
On-going Actions:			
Senate 18/19 – 2.3	The Chief Information Officer to investigate if a dashboard of metrics, relating to University KPIs as well as those the University will be assessed on externally, can be created and presented to Senate at future meetings.	Chief Information Officer	3 rd April 2019
Closed Actions:			

Senate 18/19 – 2.1	The Secretary to correct the Senate minutes of the 14 th November 2018, prior to publication.		
Senate 18/19 – 2.2	The Head of Governance to review risk LT.1 'Poor academic standards and quality assurance and enhancement', to consider if the QAA Monitoring report can be added as an additional control.		
Senate 18/19 – 2.4	The PVC / Dean of BaM to investigate when the MA Experience Management programme will be presented to SPSP for review and to report back to the Registrar.		