

Key Messages from the Meeting of

Senate on 15 November 2016

Selected items from the Vice-Chancellor's Business

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| <p>A number of Senate members were appointed to key Senate committees</p> | <p>University Engagement Committee – Dr Joan Harvey University Internationalisation Committee – Professor Nigel Harkness University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee – Dr Phil Ansell University Research Committee – Professor Caroline Austin</p> |
| <p>The Vice-Chancellor advised Senate of the University's response to a forthcoming Home Office consultation on a proposed reduction in international student numbers</p> | <p>The Home Secretary had promised a consultation on reductions in international student numbers, differentiated by reference to the quality of the course and the quality of educational institution. In response to this development, Universities UK had invited HEIs to send a letter to their local MP, LEP Chair, local Chamber of Commerce leader and business leaders on their governing body. A joint letter had been signed by the Vice-Chancellors from the four regional universities which is available on the Brexit webpage: https://internal.ncl.ac.uk/prd/eu/news/</p> |

Strategy Consultation/Strategic Progress Reports

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| <p>Senate agreed that the University should participate in Year Two of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)</p> | <p>Senate was advised that, were the University to decide not to participate in the TEF or were it to achieve a poor result, then it would be prevented from considering fee increases in line with inflation. Based on a consideration of the metrics to be used in TEF Two, it was considered that the University would achieve a reasonable result. For these reasons, Senate agreed that the University should participate in TEF Two.</p> |
| <p>Senate were advised of plans in relation to the development of Degree Apprenticeships</p> | <p>From April 2017 all large employers would be required to pay an Apprenticeship Levy. For the University, the estimated cost of this levy would be £1.1m. In order to ensure the University obtained a return on this levy, Senate agreed that the degree apprenticeships programme that was proposed by Executive Board should be developed.</p> |

Reports

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| <p>Senate received an update on the Science and Engineering Excellence Project</p> | <p>Senate was advised that the Faculty name would remain as 'Science, Agriculture and Engineering' but that the titles of the Schools had yet to be identified. Internal adverts would soon be issued for the Heads of Academic Units. Senate requested further detail on the consultation process that had been followed and the subsequent response. It was agreed that a paper detailing the secondary structures would be submitted to Senate in due course.</p> |
| <p>Senate received a report from Honorary Degrees Committee</p> | <p>Senate approved nominations for the award of Honorary Degrees in July 2017.</p> |

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| Senate agreed the appointment of a Public Orator | Senate approved a recommendation from Honorary Degrees Committee that Professor Selina Stead, Professor of Marine Governance and Environmental Sciences, School of Marine Sciences, should be appointed as the University's third Public Orator. |
| Senate received the Students' Union's Impact Report for 2015-16 | Senate received an informative report on the work of the Students' Union during the 2015-16. The Sabbatical Officers were commended on their achievements. |
| Senate approved the Faith Space Policy | At its meeting on 31 October 2016, Council had approved the Faith Space Policy that HEFCE had required the University to prepare. Council had requested that Senate should be asked to consider and endorse the policy prior to its submission to HEFCE as part of the University Prevent Annual Report. |
| Senate received a report from the University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (ULTSEC) | Noted that a consultation exercise on possible changes to the University Regulations had identified a lack of differentiation between good candidates in the University's present classification system. It was noted that this linked to previous discussions that had taken place at Senate around the need to provide degree transcripts. Revisions to ULTSEC's terms of reference were approved. |
| Senate received an update on the work of University Research Committee | URC had considered Research Council UK success rates, as ranked by the Times Higher Education. For 2015/16 Newcastle University had been ranked 13 th overall by award value and 18 th by number of awards. At the November meeting the issue of internal and external quality assessment had been considered. A paper on this would be prepared for presentation to Senate in due course. |
| Senate received an update on the work of University Engagement Committee | Senate was informed that the 50 th anniversary celebrations for Dr King's Honorary Degree at Newcastle University had progressed significantly in recent months. The project had been awarded £600k from Arts Council England's Ambition for Excellence fund, which would be used to fund a city wide engagement programme culminating in a mass participation event on the quayside and enable partners, Northern Roots, to deliver a three year programme to support diverse employability in the creative industries. A celebratory event had taken place on 11 November 2016 to launch the Freedom City 2017 programme to coincide with the 49 th anniversary of Dr King's visit. |
| Senate received an update on the work of University Internationalisation Committee | A re-evaluation of the University's institutional level partnerships had been undertaken. The final list would provide key information to help focus financial resources, time and travel. A multi-functional international travel calendar was now available on the internal webpages which was intended to provide a more coordinated approach for travel by faculties, Executive Board, advancement office and international recruitment and relations teams. |

Lizzie Taylor
Executive Officer (Governance)
25 November 2016