UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

SENA TE

17 January 2006

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair), Professor O R Hinton, Professor O F W James, Professor T F Page, Professor C B Riordan, Professor E Ritchie and Professor A C Stevenson (Pro-Vice-Chancellors), Professor T Anderson, Dr P E Andras, Professor J B Batchelor, Dr H M Berry, Professor R J Boys, Mr D Bulmer (Education Officer), Dr S Cholerton, Dr E G N Cross, Professor A M Dickinson, Professor G J Docherty, Professor M Goodfellow, Professor G R Hammond, Dr S D Hogg, Professor C R Harwood, Dr T B Kirk, Dr L Y J Liu, Professor D A C Manning, Dr S McHanwell, Professor A G O’Neill, Professor P P Powrie, Mr A Robson (Communications Officer), Professor R A Seymour and Ms S White (Welfare Officer).

In attendance: Dr J V Hogan (Registrar), Mr H B Farnhill (Bursar), Mrs C M Harvey (Academic Registrar) and Miss A Shuker (Widening Participation Officer).

Dr C Bleasdale attended the meeting for item 28.

M I N U T E S

PART A : STRATEGIC ISSUES

24. SCIENCE CITY
(Minutes 89, 5.7.2005 & 4, 8.11.2005)

Received:

(i) A presentation from Professor T F Page on overall progress to date with the Science City Project.

(ii) Presentations from Professor O R Hinton, Professor O F W James and Professor C B Riordan on progress in their particular areas.

[Copies of the slides used in the presentations are filed in the Minute Book and are available on the web at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/internal/sciencecity/]

Noted that:

1. Science City was a highly complicated, iterative process which presented an outstanding opportunity for the University.

2. The Science City partnership, comprising the University, One North East and the City Council, had purchased the Science Central site in December 2005.
3. Communication of the objectives of the project, and its progress, remained difficult given the scale and complexity but much of the project’s evolution would depend upon the availability of funding.

4. The importance of engaging with local schools, to encourage a greater awareness of, and interest in, science. The International Centre for Life and the combined museum had roles to play in the promotion of science and steps were being taken to work with the Regional Science Learning Centre at Framwellgate Moor School. Consideration would also be given to increasing the awareness of school governing bodies about the Science City project.

5. Care would need to be taken over the physical development of the Science Central site to ensure that the development was conducted in such a way so that it contributed to the science base of the University and did not increase operational difficulties or merely substitute activity currently taking place on the King’s Campus site.

6. The partnership with business and industry was a particularly important part of the Science City initiative.

7. Care would need to be taken to keep the Science City initiative in balance with other key projects within the University. The capital investment required for the various capital projects which formed part of Science City would need to be managed in conjunction with other capital investment requirements.

8. The possibility of a significant increase in funded student numbers was being considered as part of the project. However, this would need to be handled with care, given some of the current difficulties in the delivery of a high quality experience to students. In particular, the University would need to improve the staff:student ratios in some areas.

9. Further work would need to be undertaken to ensure that the Science City vision could help to support and improve our undergraduate student recruitment process.

10. The possibility of looking specifically at the promotion of the public understanding and awareness of science was being considered as part of the project.

Resolved that Professors Page, Hinton, James and Riordan be thanked for their informative presentations.

PART B : GENERAL BUSINESS

25. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 8 November 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed.
26. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

(a) **Progress of business**

Received a business tracking form.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document B. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

(b) **Honorary Degree candidates**

(Minute 8, 8.11.2005)

Reported that:

(a) The following candidates had accepted Senate’s invitation to have conferred on them the honorary degrees shown at the congregation ceremony to be held on 5 May 2006:

- Lord Stevens     DCL
- Ms Mary Briggs    DCL
- Mrs Elizabeth Hammill DCL
- Sir David King    DSc
- Dr Alan Reece     DSc

(b) Further consideration would be given to a special congregation concerned with world poverty.

(c) **Working Group on the Effectiveness of Senate**

(Minute 7, 8.11.2005)

Received an oral report from the Vice-Chancellor.

Considered the appointment of a Chairman and members to serve on the Working Group on the Effectiveness of Senate.

*Resolved that the following be appointed to serve on the Working Group:*

- *Professor A C Stevenson (Chairman)*
- *Professor T Anderson*
- *Miss R C Gilroy*
- *Professor G R Hammond*

27. **VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

(a) **Deaths**

Received a report on deaths recently announced by the University.

[Details filed in the Minute Book.]

*Resolved that Senate record its deep regret and sympathy for the relatives concerned.*
(b) **New Year’s Honours 2006**

Reported that the following had been awarded OBEs in the New Year’s Honours List 2006:

Dr U Wariyar  
Professor T Van Zwanenberg

(c) **Queen’s Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education**

Noted that:

1. In November, it had been announced that the University had been awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education for our pioneering mine water remediation research programme, which was led by Professor Paul Younger (Civil Engineering and Geosciences).

2. The Queen’s Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education were the equivalent of the Queen’s Awards for Industry in the nation’s Honours system. They were awarded biennially to HE and FE institutions for work of exceptional quality and of broad benefit nationally or internationally.

3. The award recognised the outstanding contribution that Professor Younger and his colleagues had made to solving the problem of mine water contamination.

4. Established in 1992 as a community-based project involving an experimental wetland creation scheme in the former mining village of Quaking Houses, County Durham, the programme had grown in scope, influence and reputation to the extent that the academic research which underpinned the project now lay at the heart of the national and international effort to combat the grave environmental threat posed by polluted mine waters. The University was now widely considered to be one of the world's leading centres of expertise in the field of mine water pollution.

(d) **Corporate Visual Identity**

Noted that:

1. The University was undertaking a project to develop its CVI, and to make its use easier and more consistent across the University. There was a lot of support for the University to retain the current logo, especially for official documentation, but a particular issue was the name of the University, which was one of the longest of any UK higher education institution. This constrained the use of the logo in many contexts, so the University was looking at ways of how best to present its name together with the logo. Whilst the official, registered name of the University was expected to remain ‘University of Newcastle upon Tyne’, consultations so far indicated that we might adopt ‘Newcastle University’ as our brand name as part of our revised CVI.

2. The issue of how to present the University’s name was a serious one, given the potential for confusion with the University of Newcastle in Australia and the potential
confusion caused during citation counts by having a name which could be presented in at least three different ways.

(e) **Access Agreement**  
(Minute 58, 26.4.2005)

Noted that the Office for Fair Access had invited the University to resubmit its Access Agreement in the light of the Government’s decision to increase the number of students who would be eligible for financial support from the Government. As a result of these changes, the University was proposing to continue to allocate approximately 18-19% of its full fee income to students in the form of bursaries. In order to achieve this, the University would have to substitute the existing bursary scheme (£1,300 for those in receipt of full Government support and £1,000 for those in receipt of partial Government support) to the following scheme:

- **Full Government support**: annual bursary of £1,200
- Students with annual household income of between £17,500 and £25,000: annual bursary of £900
- Students with annual household income of between £25,000 and £30,000: annual bursary of £600

This, together with the other elements of the expenditure in the Access Agreement, maintained the University’s overall commitment at 24% of the additional fee income.

(f) **Pay issues**

Noted that the AUT were currently balloti ng members on two different pay issues. The first was in respect of local pay modernisation proposals. The proposals had been developed by Staff Committee, which comprised the Registrar and Pro-Vice-Chancellors of the Faculties, in order to meet the criteria of the National Framework and Memorandum of Understanding and local requirements for a competitive pay structure and long-term affordability. The proposals were competitive when compared with our closest comparators in the Russell Group. Staff Committee would, of course, keep the structure under review during the first few years to ensure that the University was able to recruit and retain the best staff.

The second ballot had been called by AUT in respect of this year’s national pay negotiations. The ballot asked members to indicate whether they were prepared to take industrial action in support of their pay claim. It was very unfortunate that the AUT were not prepared to continue in serious constructive negotiations with the employers association (UCEA). The University was considering carefully how it would respond to the outcome of the ballot.

28. **REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE**

Considered a Report from the meetings of University Teaching and Learning Committee held on 1 November and 6 December 2005.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document C. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]
University Qualifications and Credit Framework

After noting that:

1. The proposed Qualifications and Credit Framework formalised some assumptions which had been in place for a while. The Quality Assurance Agency, during the 2005 institutional audit, had asked for the Framework to be clearly articulated and adopted.

2. There was still some disagreement about how best to apply the Framework to higher degrees and consultation was ongoing about this matter.

Resolved that the Qualifications and Credit Framework, set out in Appendix I of Document C, be formally adopted.

The remaining items in the Report were noted.

29. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY 2004-05

Received the University’s Annual Report for 2004-05.

[Circulated with the Agenda. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

30. REVIEW OF THE LATEST PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AS PUBLISHED BY THE HIGHER EDUCATION STATISTICS AGENCY (HESA)

Received a report from Mr S Frater (Director of Planning).

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document D. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. The report was based on the latest set of comparative data available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency. This was for 2003-04 and was presented against our comparator universities.

2. As part of the review of our governing structures, careful consideration had been given to the use of key performance indicators. The problem with the HESA data was that it was at least eighteen months out of date and some of the data seemed to be presented inconsistently between various institutions. As a result, the Planning Office had prepared a document on key performance indicators which would be considered at the next meeting of Council.

3. More detailed information behind all of the indicators included in the paper were available, on request, from the Planning Office and Executive Board had been presented with a more comprehensive document.

4. Concern was expressed about the level of research income per academic staff FTE and research income per academic staff cost, given that these measures were of importance for the Research Assessment Exercise. The Research Committee had been asked to give detailed consideration to this matter and would do so after it had completed the current round of pre-RAE visits. The more detailed analysis of our research performance would,
in turn, be presented to Senate and Council. It was recognised that there was a difference between the award of new research grants and the income reported in the HESA statistics and it was these sorts of issues that would need to be understood more fully and presented in a more comprehensive fashion to Senate and Council.

5. It was recognised that key performance indicators needed to be measured over a period of time to give a better indication of the sense of direction for the institution.

Resolved that a more detailed analysis of the University's performance on research grant income be prepared and presented to Senate during the course of the current academic year.

31. MEMBERSHIP OF SENATE

Reported that:

(a) The membership of Senate comprised, inter alia, ‘eighteen members elected by and from the professors, readers, lecturers and research staff of the University as determined by the senate ......’.

(b) Senate had determined that research staff Grade 1A and above should be eligible for election.

Considered a recommendation that, from the date of the implementation of the pay modernisation proposals, research staff whose pay was linked to points above the bar on Grade F or above be eligible for election to Senate.

Resolved that the above recommendation be approved.

32. MEMBERSHIP OF ACADEMIC BOARD

Reported that the membership of Academic Board included all staff on academic, administrative, library and computer, and other related scales, research associates and demonstrators grade 1B and above, and all part-time and hourly-paid teaching staff, as designated by Senate.

Considered a recommendation that, from the date of the implementation of the pay modernisation proposals, the membership of Academic Board be redefined as all staff on Grade F and above.

Resolved that the above recommendation be approved.

33. STRATEGY BOARD

Reported that:

(a) The Working Group on Governance, in preparing its final report to Council, had been mindful of the need to permit Council to contribute to the development of the mission and the strategic vision of the University and it sought to do this in part by reducing the number of committees reporting directly to Council and by recommending that Strategy Board should be abolished and instead Council itself
should take on the responsibility for consideration of strategic items at its meetings.

(b) Council, at its meeting on 12 December 2005, had approved the recommendation of the Working Group that Strategy Board should be abolished with immediate effect, subject to the agreement of Senate.

Considered the recommendation of the Working Group on Governance and Council that Strategy Board be abolished with immediate effect.

Resolved that the above recommendation be approved.

34. SCHOLARSHIPS SUB-COMMITTEE

Considered a recommendation from the Working Group on Governance and Council that the Scholarships Sub-Committee should, in future, report directly to Executive Board.

Resolved that the above recommendation be approved.

35. ETHICS COMMITTEE

Reported that Council, at its meeting on 12 December 2005, had resolved that the recently established Ethics Committee should be a joint committee of both Senate and Council.

Considered revised constitution and terms of reference of Ethics Committee.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document E. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Resolved that the constitution and terms of reference of Ethics Committee, as set out in Document E, be approved, subject to the agreement of Council.

36. PUBLIC LECTURES COMMITTEE

Received the Annual Report of the Public Lectures Committee for 2004-05.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document F. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

37. REPORTED BUSINESS

Received a report of action taken in accordance with agreed procedures, approved where necessary by the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of Senate and/or the Chairman of Council on behalf of Council, and by other University bodies and Chairmen.

[Circulated with the Agenda as Document G. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]
PART C : RESERVED BUSINESS

38. THE VICE-CHANCELLORSHIP
(Minute 20, 8.11.2005)

Reported that:

(a) The following had been elected by Senate to serve as the Senate appointed members on the joint Committee for the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor:

   Professor J B Goddard
   Professor M Goodfellow
   Professor T B L Kirkwood
   Professor E Ritchie

(b) Council had appointed the following members to the joint Committee:

   Mr L M Aviss
   Sir Leslie Elton
   Sir Miles Irving
   Ms K Priestley

(c) The Chairman of Council, acting with the Registrar and the Director of Human Resources, had appointed Heidrick & Struggles as the search consultants. This firm would wish to take soundings from a wide range of individuals concerning the appointment process early in the New Year.