NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

SENATE

7 March 2017

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair), Professor Tony Stevenson (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Professor David Burn, Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Professor Julie Sanders, Professor Phillip Wright, Professor Nick Wright (Pro-Vice-Chancellors), Dr Phil Ansell, Professor Caroline Austin, Dr John Appleby, Professor Paul Christensen, Professor Nicola Curtin, Mr Mike Davison, Dr Stuart Dawley, Mr Christopher Duddy (Education Officer, Students’ Union), Dr Lindsey Ferrie, Dr Ruth Graham, Professor Nigel Harkness, Dr Joan Harvey, Professor Peter Jorgensen, Dr Sara Maioli, Professor Patrick Olivier, Professor Jane Pollard, Mr Patrick Rosichuk (Student Representative), Professor Chris Seal, Mr Jack Taylor, (President, Students’ Union) and Dr Ruth Valentine.

In attendance: Mrs Lesley Braiden (Academic Registrar), Dr John Hogan (Registrar), Mrs Lizzie Taylor (Executive Officer, Governance) and Miss Janice Trewick (Development Officer).

Apologies: Mr Wayne Connolly, Mr Richard Dale, Professor Richard Davies, Dr Emma Foster, Miss Rachael Kitching (Welfare & Equality Officer, Students’ Union), Dr Lindsay Pennington, Professor Klaus Schoefer, Professor Jackie Leach Scully, Mrs Judith Whitaker (Executive Director of Human Resources).

M I N U T E S

55. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 24 January 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document A. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

56. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Teaching Excellence Framework (Minute 29, 15.11.16 & Minute 41, 24.01.17)

Received the Teaching Excellence Framework Provider Submission that was submitted to HEFCE on 25 January 2017.

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

Noted that:

1. 299 higher education institutions had participated in the second phase of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), including all 19 Russell Group institutions in England.

2. There was a possibility that the government might review the metrics in the TEF following criticisms from the sector. It was considered that there was scope to improve the metrics used within the NSS through the use of threshold metrics.

3. Senate was advised that the House of Lords had voted to decouple inflationary fee increases from the TEF result.
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(ii) **Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research (Minute 49, 24.01.17)**

Reported that Senate, at its meeting on 24 January 2017, had resolved that:

(a) Members of Senate should forward nominations for the Senate-appointed members of the joint selection committee to the Registrar by 1 February 2017. Senate would be asked to approve its members of the joint selection committee at the meeting on 7 March 2017.

(b) The job description for the role of Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research should be included on the agenda for the meeting of Senate on 7 March 2017.

Received:

(i) The nominations submitted for the Senate-appointed members of the joint selection committee.

(ii) The job description for the role of Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research.

[Circulated with the agenda as Documents C & D. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

Resolved that the following individuals be approved as the Senate-appointed members of the joint selection committee for the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research:

- **Professor Caroline Austin** – Professor of Molecular Biology, Institute for Cell & Molecular Biosciences
- **Professor Rob Edwards** – Head of the School of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.
- **Professor Julie Sanders** – Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Humanities & Social Sciences

(iii) **Minute is classified as ‘strictly confidential’ (Minute 50, 24.01.17)**

57. **VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT’S BUSINESS**

Received the Vice-Chancellor and President’s report. Highlights of this report are discussed below.

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

Noted:

1. **Deaths**

Received a report on deaths recently announced by the University. The following additional death was reported:

20 February 2017 Mr John Jenkyns. Mr Jenkyns was appointed as Technician in the Department of Agricultural Engineering in the School of Agriculture in 1968. He retired from his post in 1991 and was re-engaged as a Temporary Relief Technician until 1993.

Resolved that Senate record its deep regret and sympathy for the relatives concerned.
2. Professor Tony Stevenson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, had represented the University at a public session of the Education Select Committee held at Northumbria University on the morning of 7 March 2017. The other witnesses on the panel were Shirley Atkinson, Vice-Chancellor, University of Sunderland; Professor Andrew Wathey, Vice-Chancellor, Northumbria University; Alistair Sim, Director, Universities Scotland; Dr Peter Simpson, Director, N8 Research Partnership. The purpose of the committee was to examine the impact of Brexit on universities in devolved nations and English regions. The session focused on the potential implications on the sector's ability to attract students from abroad and the possible consequences for research funding. During the session the need to resolve the residency status for university staff was emphasised as was the need to identify an appropriate alternative to the Erasmus scheme.

3. It was noted that the award of the T.S. Eliot Prize to Mr Jacob Polley and the recent arrival of Professor Sinéad Morrissey at the University meant that the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics could now boast three T.S. Eliot prize winners amongst its staff, the third being Professor Sean O'Brien who was awarded the prize in 2007.

4. With regards to the update that was provided on the transfer of the School of Medicine, Pharmacy and Health from Durham University, it was noted that an excess travel scheme was to be offered to staff to help mitigate issues with physical relocation. The question was raised as to whether a similar scheme would be open to mature students who were unable to relocate easily to Newcastle due to family arrangements. It was agreed that Professor David Burn, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Medical Sciences, would look into this issue.

5. Reports from Senate Committees

**University Research Committee – Professor Caroline Austin, on behalf of Professor Nick Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation:**

In addition to discussing the REF consultation and quarterly accounts, URC received a report on the ongoing work by the Staff Development Unit and HR to ensure the University was complying with the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. In the UK, an organisation called Vitae oversaw awards to ensure the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers was considered. The EC awarded the ‘HR Excellence in Research Award’ to institutions that could demonstrate a commitment to the implementation of the European Charter and Code.

**University Internationalisation Committee – Professor Nigel Harkness, on behalf of Professor Richard Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Engagement & Internationalisation:**

Senate was advised that a new International Directorate had been established, combining the International Student Recruitment team and the International Relations team, led by Alex Metcalfe as Director of International Affairs.

The terms of reference and membership of University Internationalisation Committee were in the process of being modified to incorporate responsibility for international student recruitment. These would be presented to Senate for approval.

Strategic Objective 1: International Presence and Impact. World rankings were an indirect indicator of performance in this area. Professor Richard Davies and Abi Kelly were in the
process of visiting all academic units to bring an increased focus on rankings and reputation with the aim of improving the University’s position in the Times Higher Education and QS rankings. The aim initially was to be in the top 150 for both rankings.

Strategic objective 2: An International Experience, required the University to have a strong recruitment of international staff and students. For international student recruitment a regional approach, which capitalised on adopting models appropriate to the region as a whole, was to be adopted rather than targeting a number of individual countries. Three high priority regional projects outside the EU that offered the greatest potential to meet the international student recruitment and partnership objectives had been identified:

i. China,
ii. Asia Pacific (covering South East Asia and East Asia), and
iii. South Asia (with an initial focus on India).

Recruitment activity would continue in North America, Mid East/North Africa, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the former USSR.

University Engagement Committee – Dr Joan Harvey, on behalf of Professor Richard Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Engagement & Internationalisation:

With regards to Freedom City 2017, the 50th anniversary celebrations for Dr King’s Honorary Degree at Newcastle University, key developments since the previous update to Senate included:

- The delivery of a project by the Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal and Newcastle Humanities Research Institute to show that the award of Dr King’s honorary degree, was not an isolated event, but that it formed part of a larger and longer history of the city’s and region’s engagement with protest and civil rights. This project would present that history in an innovative format – as a series of comic strips – with the aim of reaching a large public audience which would not usually engage with historical research.
- The development of a programme of events, talks, workshops and screenings to facilitate exchange and dialogue on key contemporary issues and encourage activism at Tyneside Cinema in partnership with the Institute for Social Renewal and Institute for Sustainability. An artist would be commissioned for a moving image/performance practice to respond to Freedom City 2017 programme between October and November.
- The International Development Society had held the Martin Luther Who? Conference on campus on 18 February 2017. The conference was opened by Chi Onwurah MP and was well attended creating interesting and through provoking debate on contemporary issues of war, poverty and racism.
- A series of videos with alumni who were present at Dr King’s 1967 ceremony were being planned.

In relation to the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE), progress had been made in developing external facing webpages to ensure that VCSE partners can engage more easily with the University. Learning from the experience of the Business Engagement Committee, a series of short videos would be prepared to illustrate case studies of who the sector could work with in the University. A fund to support collaborative projects with the VCSE sector was also being developed.
The NewcastleGateshead Initiative had recently won a bid to host the Great Exhibition of the North. Eric Cross, Dean of Cultural Affairs would lead on this for the University and would report to University Engagement Committee and Professor Richard Davies.

Resolved that:

(i) Senate approve the nomination of the University Librarian to the Farrell Archive Board of Trustees.

(ii) Senate approve the appointment of Professor Richard Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Internationalisation, as a member of Honorary Degrees Committee with immediate effect until 31 July 2019.

(iii) Senate approve the recommendation from Executive Board that Professor Eileen Kaner be appointed as Co-Chair for Public Lectures Committee with effect from 1 August 2017 until 31 July 2020.

58. SUMMARY REPORT FROM COUNCIL, 6 FEBRUARY 2017

Received a summary report from the meeting of Council that took place on 6 February 2017.  [Circulated with the agenda as Document G. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

59. FACULTY STRATEGIC PROGRESS REPORTS

Received the strategic progress reports:

(a) The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences from Professor Julie Sanders, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Humanities and Social Sciences, on behalf of Executive Board.

(b) The Faculty of Science, Agriculture & Engineering from Professor Phillip Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Science, Agriculture & Engineering, on behalf of Executive Board.

(c) The Faculty of Medical Sciences from Professor David Burn, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Medical Sciences, on behalf of Executive Board.  [Circulated with the agenda as Documents H-K. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

Received PowerPoint presentations from each of the Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors.  [Copy of presentation slides filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

HaSS Faculty

1. Further information was requested on the future plans for the Business School. It was suggested that work should be undertaken to help its perception within the region. [It was noted that maintaining the triple accreditation was key as was the need to develop an 'interconnected' Business School]. The process for appointing a new Director was underway and whilst this was an important appointment, the future of the School would largely be determined by its existing staff. Work would be done to develop links with other research groups and subject areas across the University. Transport and logistics was one area identified where this work was already underway.

2. As part of the process to recruitment the new Director of the Business School a mind map had been prepared and it was agreed that this would be shared with members of Senate for information.
3. It was noted that the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences (ECLS) was in a difficult position as it was subject to changes in government policy. It was considered that the ECLS would benefit from streamlining its offer with a view to enhancing its distinctiveness.

4. A review of the Faculty’s offer could be undertaken to allow informed decisions to be made about future strategic investment.

5. The subjects of migration, development studies and anthropology might prove suitable areas from which applications to the Global Challenges Research Fund could be made. Due to the fact that the lead in time for applications to the Global Challenges Research Fund was short it was important for the University to ensure that it was in the best possible position to respond at the point at which the next call for applications was issued. It was noted that Professor Richard Davies was leading a cross-University group to develop the University’s response to the Global Challenges Research Fund.

6. Student recruitment within the Faculty during 2015-16 had been particularly strong. The future of EU funding was uncertain and modelling for this risk was underway. The Faculty’s KPIs would be reviewed as part of the development of the University’s new strategy.

7. There were a number of issues around estate capacity which needed to be addressed. It might be possible to resolve some of the issues through alternative approaches to the timetable. It was important to consider what the student of the future might require and to undertake modelling for this. There was a particular issue around the availability of large lecture spaces which would not be resolved until the Learning and Teaching Centre became available.

SAgE Faculty

8. The intention to enhance cross-faculty working was welcomed and further information on how this might work in practice was requested. The identification of potential areas and the needs associated with these areas would be the starting point following which the practicalities would be worked out. It was proposed that the KPIs for Heads of Schools should include a target to increase cross-faculty working.

9. A creative approach to degree programme development would be undertaken to identify gaps in the current offer. It was thought that international postgraduate taught students were attracted to courses that offered an element of personal development. It was also necessary for the SAgE Faculty to identify and develop programmes that would appeal to female students. It was agreed that more outreach work could be done with schools to encourage applications from female students. As well as attracting new female students it was also important to put structures in place to ensure their retention.

10. It was confirmed that the Faculty’s risk register had been updated to include the risks associated with the Science and Engineering Excellence project.

11. It was possible that the University’s undergraduate teaching in Singapore could come to an end on conclusion of the current 5-year collaborative agreement with the Singapore Institute of Technology. This might require the University to increase its investment in Singapore. The University’s research presence in Singapore was being enhanced and business cases for future developments were being prepared. It was acknowledged, however, that there was a risk that the University might not achieve an independent research position in the next 5 years.
Faculty of Medical Sciences

12. The Faculty’s performance in relation to the Global Challenge Research Fund required improvement and it was proposed to do this by increasing awareness of the fund amongst Principal Investigators and also the application process.

13. Both the Faculty and the University could be proud of its regional engagement and it was noted that this should be developed to ensure both were regionally relevant and globally present.

14. The Faculty’s strategic progress report (Document K) noted that ‘greater efficiency will be sought in the research and teaching support structures’. It was confirmed that would involve a consideration of how better use could be made of existing staff rather than necessarily any job losses.

General Comments

15. It was proposed that the arrangements for the introduction of new programmes should be streamlined. In particular, a light touch process should be introduced for new programmes that were based on a new combination of existing modules. It was important to invest in market intelligence to ensure the right programmes were being developed.

16. When seeking to develop more cross-faculty or inter-disciplinary programmes consideration should be given to the implications this might have for the timetable.

17. The University had ambitious plans but it was noted that space on the central campus was at a premium. The faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors now met regularly with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to develop a co-ordinated approach to estates issues. A greater role for Senate in determining future academic priorities and the allocation of space and resources was requested.

18. In terms of teaching space per student, the University was positioned in the middle of the Russell Group at University level, although it was acknowledged that the average position did not highlight the local pressures.

Resolved that:

(i) Senate should be presented with an initial list of project priorities and benchmarking data at a future meeting;

(ii) Professor Tony Stevenson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, should deliver a presentation on the ‘Size and Shape of the University’ at the meeting of Senate on 27 June 2017.

60. TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE OFFER

Received a report on the Taught Postgraduate Offer from Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning & Teaching, on behalf of Executive Board

[Circulated with the agenda as Document L. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. Following the success of the Undergraduate Offer it was considered desirable to develop an equivalent for Taught Postgraduate students. It was hoped that this would help to halt the decline in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey results that had been witnessed
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in recent years and also the decline in taught postgraduate international student recruitment.

2. The proposal included the introduction of peer mentoring and further information was requested on how this might work in practice. Consideration was being given to using PGR students as mentors for PGT students and also to using home PGR students as mentors for international PGR students. It was suggested that information on peer mentoring and professional development opportunities should be presented to PGT students as part of their induction.

Resolved that the Taught Postgraduate Offer as set out in Document L be approved.

61. ANNUAL REPORT ON STUDENT CASEWORK

Received the Annual Report on Student Casework from Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning & Teaching, on behalf of Executive Board.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document M. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:

1. The number of formal academic appeals had reduced by 76% since the previous year which could be attributed to improved procedures that were intended to bring about early resolution wherever possible.

2. There had been a significant rise in disciplinary cases, the majority of these being cases of anti-social behaviour, which was unhelpful for the University’s relations with the local community. Work was underway to address this.

3. The report did not include information on the time taken to deal with complaints and appeals and it was requested that this detail should be included in future reports.

4. Reported cases of sexual harassment and assault were considered to be low which could be an indication that such incidents were underreported. A University-wide working group had been established to consider the recommendations arising from a recent UUK report on this issue and to address any gaps in the University’s current approach to dealing with violence, harassment and hate crime.

5. Changes to the Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PEC) procedure had been implemented and it was suggested that a review should be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of the new arrangements and also the impact upon academic units. It was proposed that this could be done at the end of the current academic year.

62. SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE PROJECT UPDATE

Received:

(a) An update report on the Science and Engineering Excellence Project from Professor Phillip Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Science, Agriculture & Engineering, on behalf of Executive Board.

(b) A paper submitted by some of the elected members regarding the Science and Engineering Excellence project.

[Circulated with the agenda as Documents N & O. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

Noted that:
1. It was agreed that the heads of the four new academic units should be invited to attend the next meeting of Senate.

2. Efforts had been made to diversify the methods of obtaining feedback on the SEE project. From the feedback received to date, ensuring the visibility of distinct subject areas had emerged as a key consideration.

3. The questions submitted by members of Senate (Document O) would be addressed as part of the business plan to be considered at the meeting on 2 May 2017. It was requested that a diagram should be prepared to be displayed at the next meeting which showed how existing units would be incorporated into the new structures.

   **Resolved that the Science and Engineering Excellence project would be the main strategic item for discussion at the meeting on 2 May 2017.**

63. **REPORT FROM HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE**

   Senate approved the recommendation in the attached report from the Honorary Degrees Committee.

   [Circulated with the agenda as Document P. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

   **Resolved that the recommendation in Document P be approved nem. con.**

64. **ACADEMIC DISTINCTIONS – TITLE OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS (STATUTE 29(4))**

   In accordance with Statute 29(4), Senate may accord the title of Professor Emeritus on professors retiring from the University.

   Considered a proposal from the Vice-Chancellor following consultation with the relevant faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor, for the conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus.

   [Circulated with the agenda as Document Q. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

   **Resolved that the title of Professor Emeritus be conferred on:**

   Prof. Mike Coombes with effect from 1 April 2017
   Prof. David Saunders with 1 September 2017

65. **MINUTES FROM COMMITTEE OF SENATE**

   The following meetings of Senate committees had taken place and the minutes from each committee were provided for information:

   (a) University Research Committee: 16 January 2017
   (b) University Internationalisation Committee: 16 February 2017
   (c) University Engagement Committee: 15 February 2017

   [Circulated with the agenda as Documents R-T. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

66. **INTO ANNUAL REPORT**

   Received the INTO Annual Report from Professor Tony Stevenson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Executive Board.

   [Circulated with the agenda as Document U. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

67. **ANNUAL REPORT FROM PUBLIC LECTURES COMMITTEE**

   Received the Annual Report from Public Lectures Committee for 2015-16.
68. **ANNUAL REPORT FROM ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Received The Annual Report from Ethics Committee for 2016.

Resolved that Senate approve the revised Ethics Policy for Research, Teaching and Consultancy as set out in Appendix I to Document W.

69. **DATES OF MEETINGS 2017-18**

Reported that Senate would meet at 2pm on the following dates in 2017-18:

- Tuesday 3 October 2017
- Tuesday 21 November 2017
- Tuesday 23 January 2018
- Tuesday 6 March 2018
- Tuesday 1 May 2018
- Tuesday 26 June 2018

In addition to the above, there would be a joint lunch and meeting with Council on 16 April 2018. The lunch would start at 1pm and the meeting would follow at 1.45pm.

The venue for all meetings would be confirmed at a later date.

70. **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 Chair of Council on behalf of Council, and by other University bodies and Chairs.

Resolved that Senate approve the revised Ethics Policy for Research, Teaching and Consultancy as set out in Appendix I to Document W.