

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

SENATE

12 April 2011

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair), Professor E Ritchie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Professor S Cholerton, Professor C P Day, Professor C Harvey, Professor O R Hinton, Professor A C Stevenson and Professor N G Wright (Pro-Vice-Chancellors), Dr S Ali, Dr P E Andras, Dr J C Appleby, Dr D R Bell, Professor A V Boddy, Professor V G Bruce, Professor S J Bull, Professor I M Clarke, Ms E Collingham (Education Officer), Professor E G N Cross, Professor D Ford, Ms J Henderson, Professor J R Hentschke, Professor B H Hirst, Dr D J Kennedy, Professor J A Kirby, Professor F Myles, Mr J O'Sullivan (student member), Professor D Parker, Professor D J Roddy, Dr C L Rowe, Professor A Tanaka, Professor P Watson and Dr K Wolff.

In attendance: Dr J V Hogan (Registrar), Mrs V S Johnston (Executive Director of Human Resources), Mrs J Strachan (Academic Registrar) and Miss E M Niven (Administrative Officer).

Mrs M O Grant (Chair of Council) and Mrs L Braiden (Director, Marketing and Communications Directorate) attended for item 59.

Dr S Ali was not present for item 82.

MINUTES

55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

56. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 11 January 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed.

The Minutes of the joint meeting of Senate and Council held on 7 February 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed.

57. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Progress of business

Received a business tracking form.

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

Noted that, regarding the national pay negotiations item that was included on the business tracking form, it was reported that the three working groups set up following the 2009-10 pay negotiations had now concluded. The reports prepared by each of the working groups were available on the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) website.

(ii) Honorary Degrees : December 2011 (Minute 37(ii), 11.1.2011)

Reported that:

- (a) The following had accepted the University's invitation to be awarded an honorary degree to mark the end of a year-long programme of events on the theme 'Sustainability'. The following degrees would be awarded at Congregation ceremonies on 12 December 2011:

Professor Sir John Beddington	Doctor of Civil Law
Mr David Nussbaum	Doctor of Civil Law
Sir Jonathon Porritt	Doctor of Civil Law

- (b) A reply was awaited from one candidate.

58. **VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BUSINESS**

Received the Vice-Chancellor's report.

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

(a) Deaths

Reported the following deaths:

23 February 2011 : Mr John Myers, Senior Engineer in the Design Unit from 1987 until his retirement in 2005.

30 March 2011 : Mr Steve McKay, University Engineer in the Estates Office from 1992 until his early retirement in 2007.

March 2011 : Mr Mike Dwan, Lecturer in Pure Mathematics from 1967 until his retirement in 1997.

Resolved that Senate record its deep regret and sympathy for the relatives concerned.

(b) Regional Growth Fund

The outcome of the first round of submissions to the Regional Growth Fund had been announced. No application emanating from the public sector in the North East had been successful, including the application made jointly by the City Council and the University for infrastructure developments and the Gateway Building which would have accelerated the pace of developments of the Science Central site. Feedback from the application process was awaited.

(c) Sports News: Lottery Funds

It was clarified that it was the Students' Union rather than the University that was to receive the £124,596 of lottery funding to increase students' participation in sport. The student representatives thanked the University and staff in the Students' Union for their assistance in preparing this bid.

(d) Pay and Pensions

Reported that:

1. There was a possibility that members of the UCU could take further strike action over the issue of pay as the union remained in dispute over the pay award of 0.4% which had been implemented.
2. Discussions over the proposed changes to the USS were ongoing. The UCU had not attended any of the recent meetings held to discuss the proposed changes, therefore it had not been possible to implement any changes from 1 April, as had originally been intended.
3. A ballot would be conducted before any further strike action took place.

59. **TUITION FEES** (Minute 54, 7.2.2011)

[Confidential Minute filed in the Minute Book.]

60. **ANNUAL REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

Received the Annual Report from URC for 2009-10.

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

Noted that:

1. Many areas within the University were performing well in relation to research activity but there was some cause for concern in the area of research awards. Flat or downward trends had been noted in some areas. Steps had been taken to protect research culture in response to this.
2. It was considered helpful for details of outlier research, which could have the effect of distorting the data presented, to be identified in the report. It was agreed that this would be added to future versions of the report.

61. **OVERVIEW REPORTS**

Reported that the Working Group on Governance had recommended that Executive Board should ensure that at least once a year Council and Senate should receive overview reports on the key strategies within Vision 2021, in addition to the current reports on finance.

Received a report from Professor Tony Stevenson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Planning and Resources on behalf of Executive Board.

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

(i) Performance of the Estate Support Service

Noted that:

1. The report presented an overview of the Estate Support Service itself and gave clear indications of the performance of the University against its strategy.

2. A number of significant achievements were noted in relation to the University's environmental sustainability agenda including the proportion of staff travelling to work by car being reduced to 22%. The University's recycling rates had increased to 93% having previously been 20% only three years earlier.
3. The report referred to 'tonnes of carbon' and 'tonnes of CO²' interchangeably but it was noted that these were two different measures and the report should be amended to ensure all references were consistent.

(ii) Information Technology and Resources Review

Noted that:

1. Responses to the 'access to IT' question included in the National Student Survey had shown a decline in satisfaction amongst students. This was considered to be disappointing since performance in relation to this question had been strong in previous years. Steps were being taken to make improvements in this area.
2. Availability of and access to computers with appropriate software was a critical issue. The speed of access to specialist software was often the subject of complaints from students, particularly those undertaking design projects. It was suggested that action should be taken to improve these aspect of the University's information systems.
3. An IT Expert Group had been established to consider how the University could harness developing technologies to improve the IT experience for students and staff. Mobile learning technologies provided good opportunities to introduce improvements but would require a culture change from staff and students. Improved communication of the latest IT developments was also required. For example, it was noted that access to the University's wireless network had been improved but this message had not been circulated widely. It was important for the University's IT systems to reflect developments in the external IT environment whilst remaining secure.
4. It had been established that students tended to use only those clusters with which they were familiar. This often meant that there were computer clusters in parts of the University which were in high demand whilst others were underused. Steps were being taken to improve information about cluster availability.
5. It was suggested that scrutiny of IT and other student services would increase once the new fees regime was introduced. If the profile of the student body was to change as a result of the success of the University's widening participation activities, it was possible that the proportion of students able to afford their own laptops could decrease which could have implications for the University's IT provision.

62. EFFICIENCY OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES (Minute 29, 9.11.2010)

Received a paper from Dr John Hogan, Registrar on behalf of Executive Board, prepared in response to a paper submitted to the meeting of Senate on 9 November 2010 by Dr Peter Andras.

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

Noted that:

1. The system for the approval of new programmes had been identified as an area where improvements could be made. There were external requirements which the University had to meet which meant that any streamlining of this process could only go so far.
2. Changes had been made to the Personal Extenuating Circumstance (PEC) procedure during the last academic year which had transferred responsibility to schools. Feedback suggested that these changes had not produced the expected results in all areas as some schools were finding that their workload had increased rather than decreased. The changes were to be reviewed.

63. NUMed CAMPUS IN MALAYSIA

Reported that Council, at its meeting on 7 February 2011, had approved recommendations in a progress report from Professor Chris Day, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Medical Sciences and Mr Richard Dale, Executive Director of Finance on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Received an extract from Council Minutes of 7 February 2011 on Council's discussion of this item.

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

64. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CENTRES

Considered a report from Professor Nick Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Resolved that:

- (i) Senate approve the re-establishment of the following University Research Centres and the re-appointment of their Directors for a further three years, from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2014:**

Centre for Haemo-Oncology (Director, Professor C Harrison)
Centre for Human Nutrition (Director, Professor J Mathers)
Medical Toxicology Research Centre (Director, Professor P Blain)
Centre for History of Medicine (Director, Dr T Rutten)
Centre for Learning and Teaching (Director, Professor D Leat)
Centre for Urban and Regional Development (Director, Professor J Tomaney)
The Global Urban Research Unit (Director, Professor G Vigar)
Centre for Knowledge, Innovation, Technology and Enterprise (Director, Professor J Hayton)
Policy, Ethics and Life Sciences Research Centre (Director, Dr J McLaughlin)
The Centre for Rural Economy (Director, Dr G Garrod)

- (ii) Senate approve the establishment of the Research Centre in Film and Digital Media for three years from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2014 with Professor G Austin as Director for the same period.**

- (iii) Senate approve the discontinuation of the North East Regional E-Science Centre with immediate effect.**

65. **SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS AND READERS**

Received a report from Mrs Veryan Johnston, Executive Director of Human Resources on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that it was agreed that point 3 of the constitution of appointment committees should be re-worded as follows 'Committees should never ordinarily be comprised of one gender.' If necessary a female member of Human Resources staff could be included as a full member of an appointment committee to ensure this requirement was met.

66. **PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR SAGE**

Reported that in accordance with Senate Standing Order X:

1. The Vice-Chancellor may recommend to Senate and Council the appointment of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor and any establishment of, or appointment to, a Pro-Vice-Chancellor post.
2. If Senate and Council approve the recommendation, a selection committee shall be established comprising:

The Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair)
Three members appointed by Council
Three members appointed by Senate

3. On the occasion of the committee being established to appoint a Pro-Vice-Chancellor for a faculty, at least three of the members of the committee must be members of the relevant faculty.

Considered recommendations from the Vice-Chancellor that:

- (a) A Pro-Vice-Chancellor SAgE be appointed from 1 January 2012 in succession to Professor Oliver Hinton.
- (b) The three members of the committee from the Faculty should be the three members appointed by Senate.
- (c) Following consultation with the Faculty, the Vice-Chancellor be given delegated authority to appoint the members on behalf of Senate.

Noted that:

1. Soundings had been taken within the Faculty to identify possible candidates for the Senate-appointed members of the committee. It was suggested, however, that it was desirable for soundings to be taken more widely and that Heads of Academic Units within the faculty should also be consulted.
2. The timescale for the appointment process was tight and it was therefore desirable for the Vice-Chancellor to be granted permission to appoint the Senate-appointed members of the committee on behalf of Senate.

Resolved that:

- (i) The recommendation in (a) above be approved, subject to the agreement of Council.**
- (ii) Subject to Council's approval of the recommendation in (a), and further consultation with the Heads of Academic Units within the faculty, the recommendations in (b) and (c) be approved.**

67. NEWCASTLE SCIENCE CITY

Received:

- (i) A briefing paper from Professor Nick Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation on behalf of Executive Board.
- (ii) A progress report from Professor Nick Wright on behalf of Executive Board.
[Circulated with the agenda as Documents R & S. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

68. SINGAPORE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (SIT) : GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Received a report from Professor Oliver Hinton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor SAgE on behalf of Executive Board.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document T. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

69. ANNUAL REPORT FROM REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE

Received the Annual Report from Redundancy Committee.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document U. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

70. GREAT NORTH MUSEUM BOARD

Received the Annual Report from the Great North Museum Board.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document W. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Considered proposed changes to the membership and terms of reference of the Great North Museum Board.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document V. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Resolved that the changes to the membership and terms of reference be approved.

71. EXECUTIVE BOARD : CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOLLOWING THE GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Considered proposed amendments to the membership and terms of reference of Executive Board.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document X. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Resolved that the changes to the membership and terms of reference be approved, subject to the agreement of Council.

72. STATUTE CHANGES (Minute 89, 15.6.2010)

Reported that the Privy Council had approved the amendments to the University Statutes, subject to the following minor change recommended by the Privy Council advisers:

3.(2) The object of the University is, for the public benefit, to ~~promote~~ **advance** education, learning and research.

73. FEES SCHEDULE 2011-12

Considered the Fees Schedule for 2011-12 which had been endorsed by Executive Board and Council.

Received a report from Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching detailing the categories of student exempt from the new tuition fee regime to be applied in September 2012.

[Circulated with the agenda as Documents Y & Z. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

Resolved that the Fees Schedule 2011-12 be approved.

74. REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Received reports from the meetings of UTLSEC held on 26 January and 9 March 2011.
[Circulated with the agenda as Documents AA & BB. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

75. HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE : CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP

Considered the following proposed change to the membership of the Honorary Degrees Committee:

Delete: Three Pro-Vice-Chancellors appointed by Senate
Substitute: Three from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellors appointed by Senate

76. REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY/UNION SOCIETY PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Reported that it had recently been confirmed that having completed all the requirements for registration with the Charity Commission, the Union Society's legal status had successfully been changed and a new independent charity had been formed. To coincide with this change, the Union Society had decided to rename and would now be known as Newcastle University Students' Union (NUSU). The name of the Committee and its sub-groups would be updated to reflect this change.

77. CORPORATE GIFTS

Received a report from Dr John Hogan, Registrar on behalf of Executive Board.
[Circulated with the agenda as Document CC. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

78. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY REQUEST : CHARITABLE TRUSTS

Reported that Council, at its meeting on 28 March 2011, had approved a recommendation in a report from Dr John Hogan, Registrar on behalf of Executive Board that the Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO) be given concurrence authority to manage applications from Newcastle University for charitable benefactions to all charitable trusts and foundations.

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

79. DATES OF MEETINGS 2011-12

Reported that Senate would meet at 2 pm on the following dates in 2011-12:

4 October 2011
8 November
10 January 2012
28 February
24 April
12 June

80. SENATE DINNER

Reported that Senate Dinner would be held at 7 for 7.30 pm on 8 November 2011.

81. 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.

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

R E S E R V E D B U S I N E S S

82. REPORT FROM THE STATUTORY COMMITTEE ON PROMOTIONS TO PERSONAL PROFESSORSHIPS AND READERSHIPS

Considered a report from the Statutory Committee on Promotions to Personal Professorships and Readerships.

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

Resolved that the recommendations in Document P be approved, subject to the agreement of Council.

[Note: The Chair of Council had subsequently taken Chair's action and approved the recommendations on behalf of Council.]

83. REPORT FROM FACULTY APPOINTMENT BOARDS

Considered a report from Faculty Appointment Boards.

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

Resolved that the recommendation in Document Q be approved, subject to the agreement of Council.

[Note: The Chair of Council had subsequently taken Chair's action and approved the recommendations on behalf of Council.]