NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

SENATE

5 March 2019

Present: The Vice-Chancellor and President (in the Chair), Professor Julie Sanders (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Professor David Burn, Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Professor Richard Davies, Professor Nigel Harkness and Professor Phillip Wright (Pro-Vice-Chancellors), Dr Phil Ansell, Professor Caroline Austin, Mr Mike Davison, Professor Gwyneth Doherty-Sneddon, Professor Stephanie Glendinning, Mr Jack Green (Welfare and Equality Officer, Students' Union), Mr Jonny Hall (Education Officer, Students' Union), Dr Joan Harvey, Dr Carmen Hubbard, Dr Helen Jarvis, Dr Phillip Lord, Mr Raff Marioni (President, Students' Union), Dr Nick Megoran, Dr Julie Morris, Dr Andrew Pike, Professor Jackie Leach Scully, Professor Daniel Siemens, Dr Joanne Smith-Finley, Professor David Thwaites, and Professor Aad van Moorsel.

In attendance: Mrs Lesley Braiden (Academic Registrar), Dr John Hogan (Registrar), Ms Abi Kelly (Executive Director of Corporate Affairs), and Dr Simon Meacher (Governance Manager).

Mrs Jo Geary (NU London Project and Change Manager) for Item 40
Mrs Jane Richards (Programme and Change Manager) for Item 42
Mrs Naomi Oosman-Watts (Assistant Director, Career Management) for Item 44

Apologies: Miss Lucy Backhurst, Mr Richard Dale (Executive Director of Finance), Dr Stacy Gillis, Professor Peter Jorgensen, Miss Martha King, Professor Jane Pollard, and Professor Brian Walker.

MINUTES

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

39. MINUTES

That, subject to minor amendments to the list of attendees, the minutes of the meeting of Senate on 22 January 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed.

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

40. 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 B. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

Reported:

1. Brexit

The government had set out the arrangements that would apply to EU and European Economic Area nationals arriving after 29 March in the event of no deal. The Russell Group had expressed concern that the arrangements would not be appropriate for any
students planning to start a 4 or 5 year course, for PhD students, and for 3 year courses as the 3 years leave to remain in the UK could expire before graduation.

The government had also announced that it would not underwrite Erasmus+ funding for students due to go abroad in 2019-20 in a no deal scenario and where the UK government was unsuccessful in negotiating access to the programme. The University had announced that it would cover the costs of its 2019/20 outgoing students so that they would receive the same level of funding as under Erasmus+. This would help to minimise disruption to its exchange programmes and ensure that Newcastle students would not run into financial difficulties while they were abroad. The University had written to European partner institutions with the aim of building support for reciprocal arrangements for student exchanges beyond 2020 should Erasmus+ cease to be available.

2. Campus for Ageing and Vitality

At its meeting on 11 February 2019 Council had approved the University's purchase of the former Newcastle General Hospital site. The University’s vision for the site was for the development of three zones: a ‘Discovery Crucible’ housing laboratories and clinics, allowing NHS patients to be seen by experts across all disciplines and as part of University research projects; a centre of excellence in dementia care; and a residential zone with potential for business development encouraging small and medium sized enterprises and commercial partners as well as opportunities for creative arts.

3. Global Research Hubs

The University was to lead two Global Research Hubs addressing pressing issues around future water security and the safeguarding of river deltas and their communities. These awards demonstrated the University’s commitment to partnership across national borders and academic disciplines via our Global Challenges Academy to help deliver the UN Sustainable Development Goals. UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is investing £200M across 12 global research Hubs. Newcastle was the only university to be awarded leadership of more than one of the Global Research Hubs.

4. Centres for Doctoral Training

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) had announced that the University would lead three new Centres for Doctoral Training in Geospatial Systems, Power Electronics for Sustainable Electric Propulsion and Molecular Sciences for Medicine. The centres, worth £18m, would train around 180 researchers. Newcastle was also a key collaborator in three further CDTs led by Northumbria University, Cranfield University and the University of Hull.

5. Dean of Engagement and Place

Jane Robinson had been appointed as the University's first Dean of Engagement and Place with the title Professor of Practice. Jane was previously Chief Operating Officer at Durham University and Chief Executive of Gateshead Council, and would bring years of experience in the worlds of higher education and the public sector to her new role. She had also held positions in the cultural sector, including Director of External Relations at Arts Council England. Her focus would be to look at how the University's world-leading research and expertise could be used to drive excellence, creativity and impact in the North East region and beyond.

6. The Chancellorship
The Chancellorship Working Group, chaired by Mr Antony Jones (Chair of Convocation), had met on two occasions to consider suggestions for the next Chancellor from the whole University community, including students, staff, alumni and lay membership of University committees. The Working Group would bring forward a recommendation to the joint meeting of Court and Senate on 10 May 2019.

7. **Academic Year Dates**

The University is required to publish term and semester dates three years in advance therefore dates for 2021/22 needed to be agreed. A review of the shape of the academic year beyond 2022 was taking place and Senate would be consulted on proposed changes in due course.

*Resolved that Senate approve the proposed term and semester dates for 2021/22.*

8. **Membership of Senate committees**

More than one member of Senate had expressed an interest in becoming a member of University Research Committee and it was therefore necessary for Senate to decide on its representative on this committee.

One expression of interest had been received for University Education Committee and University Engagement and Place Committee prior to the meeting. One expression of interest was received for the Rankings and Reputation Special Interest Group at the meeting.

*Resolved that:*

(i) *Professor Gwyneth Doherty-Sneddon be appointed as a member of University Education Committee;*

(ii) *Dr Helen Jarvis be appointed as a member of University Engagement and Place Committee;*

(iii) *Dr Carmen Hubbard be appointed as a member of the Rankings and Reputation Special Interest Group;*

(iv) *Following a ballot conducted at the meeting, Professor Stephanie Glendinning be appointed to University Research Committee;*

(v) *The period of appointments in all cases listed above, should match each individual’s membership of Senate.*

9. **Committee on Climate Change Adaptation**

Professor Richard Dawson, Professor of Earth Systems Engineering, had been appointed to the Committee on Climate Change Adaptation. Professor Dawson was an expert in researching and analysing climatic impacts on the UK’s catchments, cities, and infrastructure. Appointed by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Professor Dawson would take over from Professor Jim Hall, a Visiting Professor at Newcastle University who had played a pivotal role in determining how well the UK was preparing for, and building its resilience to, the effects of a changing climate.

10. **Reports from Committees of Senate**

*University Education Committee (UEC) – Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education*
The Committee had considered how current activity aligned with the commitments implicit in the University’s status as a signatory of the Magna Charta Universitatum. In particular, it was suggested that the reference within the Charta to teaching and research being inseparable allowed for a broad interpretation including scholarship as it was understood by the University, and that this should be taken into account in the promotions structure and career paths for Teaching and Scholarship and Teaching and Research staff.

**University Engagement and Place Committee (UEPC) – Professor Julie Sanders, Deputy Vice-Chancellor**

The Committee was reviewing its ways of working and membership in light of the new Engagement and Place Strategy, for which Key Performance Indicators were being developed. A revised terms of reference for the Committee would be brought to Senate for approval.

**University Internationalisation Committee (UIC) – Professor Richard Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Global**

The Committee had been focusing on international student recruitment and on University brand-building visits to China, India and South East Asia. A University delegation to Pittsburgh would take place in the near future.

11. **NU London**

The University, together with INTO University Partnerships, had been discussing the operation of the joint venture over the last 18 months. A recommendation regarding the future of the joint venture would be considered by Council at its meeting on 1 April. Any academic implications of Council’s decision would be brought before Senate at a future meeting.

41. **SUMMARY REPORT FROM COUNCIL, 11 FEBRUARY 2019**

Received a summary report from the meeting of Council that took place on 11 February 2019.

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

42. **FACULTY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES REVIEW**

Received a paper from Professor David Burn, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Faculty of Medical Sciences, on behalf of Executive Board.

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

Noted that:

1. Although the Faculty of Medical Sciences was performing well on many measures, based on extensive consultation it was widely accepted that the Faculty could do better in its research performance and some aspects of education, strengthening the links between both in the process. A review of shifts in the external landscape, internal performance and University-wide transformational initiatives as part of the new Vision and Strategy had led to a proposal to revise the academic structure of the Faculty and design a new professional services model to co-deliver strategy.

2. The Faculty needed to better position itself to make the most of opportunities for increasing tranches of research income; grow international student participation, particularly with regard to postgraduate courses; improve the strategic planning of
teaching; and improve the engagement of some Teaching and Research staff with teaching.

3. The Faculty aimed to establish visible international leadership in areas of research excellence that triangulated with extant and developing strengths, horizon scanning of the challenges prioritised by funders, and local and national healthcare priorities. This would largely be represented by centres of research excellence commonly crossing Faculty boundaries. Additional cross-cutting research themes would provide more explicit translation of research findings from laboratory into the wider population.

4. The proposed model would reduce the number of research institutes from seven to three. With the exception of Biomedical Sciences, school names and number would remain unchanged. All academic staff would continue to have an academic unit as their home and would be line-managed by a Dean as Head of one of the three research institutes, or by a Head of School. It was proposed that the name of the School of Biomedical Sciences should be changed to School of Biomedical, Nutritional and Sport Sciences, in order to represent more clearly the breadth of disciplines within the school.

5. Equality, diversity and inclusion was embedded within the project design and implementation. The Faculty was seeking to make equality, diversity and inclusion a collective responsibility and to use the restructure as an opportunity to demonstrate institutional leadership on this agenda.

6. Senate was being asked to approve proceeding with the work on the restructuring proposals. Council would be asked to consider endorsing Senate’s decisions at its meeting on 1 April – and to approve the change of School name.

7. It was suggested that the proposals could be clearer on: the strategic objectives of the restructure, as well as alignment with the University’s Vision and Strategy; the way in which research institutes and research themes would interact; the formation and purpose of the proposed research-led education grouping, or federation.

8. Concerns were expressed about teaching loads and the implementation of the workload allocation model within the Faculty more generally.

9. With regard to the reduction in the number of research institutes, further clarity was requested on the advantages of having a smaller number of larger institutes, drawing on examples of how this model has worked at comparator universities.

10. Whilst there was broad support for the aspiration of carrying out more translational research, it would be helpful if the proposals provided more information about how translational working had been successful in supporting career progression at other institutions.

11. A small number of Senators voiced concern that the consultation and feedback process for the review had been flawed. After discussion, a motion was proposed and seconded to convene a Board of Faculty meeting in the Faculty of Medical Sciences to determine a decision about proceeding with the proposed academic structure. Following a ballot by a show of hands the motion was defeated by 17 votes to 5.

Resolved that Senate:

Following a ballot by a show of hands:

- approve proceeding with the proposed academic structure by 16 votes to 8;
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- approve proceeding with the design of a new professional services delivery model to co-deliver the strategy by 17 votes to 5;
- approve the change in School name of Biomedical Sciences to School of Biomedical, Nutritional and Sport Sciences, effective from 23 September 2019 by 25 votes to 0.

43. FACULTY STRATEGIC PROGRESS REPORTS

Received the strategic progress reports from:

a) The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, from by Professor Nigel Harkness, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Humanities and Social Sciences, on behalf of Executive Board.

b) The Faculty of Medical Sciences, from by Professor David Burn, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Medical Sciences, on behalf of Executive Board.

c) The Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering from by Professor Phillip Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Science, Agriculture and Engineering, on behalf of Executive Board.

[Circulated with the agenda as Document E-G. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Noted that:

1. During 2017-18 the Faculty had continued to explore and develop opportunities around School X in collaboration with colleagues in SAgE and Medical Sciences, planning work for a new interdisciplinary undergraduate Liberal Arts and Science offer.

2. A number of Schools had started reviews of their undergraduate and postgraduate provision. A full postgraduate taught portfolio review had been undertaken in the Business School. Collaboration between faculties would also provide opportunities for building a greater focus on quantitative data skills into the Faculty’s degree programmes. The Faculty was seeking to provide students with an educational experience that embraced student and staff diversity and differing perspectives and backgrounds.

3. There had been a steady increase in Faculty research income over the past three years, including an increase in research council income, and awards over the past two years were promising of further growth. Large awards reflected the Faculty’s commitment to building connectivity and supporting interdisciplinary research.

4. The Faculty worked with partners to co-design solutions for pressing social and economic needs, one example being its long-standing partnership with regional arts organisations to offer creative arts interventions for people living with dementia and their careers. Existing partnerships in China would be built on to develop further networks to ensure the Faculty could capitalise upon UKRI and British Council grants with China, particularly in the field of the creative economy.

5. Significant contributions to two Global Challenges Research Fund bids had been examples of the types of transformative research that the Faculty was able to undertake in collaboration with global partners.

Faculty of Medical Sciences

Noted that:
1. The Faculty had had a number of significant successes during 2017-18, including the award of Athena SWAN Silver status, the development of Plot 4 on the Richardson Road site to plan more effectively for student number growth, and large research grant success for two NIHR Policy Research Units.

2. Following an external review and extensive consultation exercise, the Faculty had approached Senate with a formal request to restructure as discussed earlier on the agenda.

3. The Faculty was developing a BSc in Dietetics that would complement its BSc Nutrition related programmes and better align the provision with strategic aims.

4. Following the creation of a new medical school in Sunderland, the Faculty had worked constructively with Sunderland University, together with local partner trusts and schools, to reaffirm Newcastle’s position as a regional medical school and ensure its offer was distinctive and of the highest quality.

5. Due to expanding student numbers NUMed was considering alternative venues for assessment from June 2019, and was awaiting approval of a bid to provide new research laboratory space, and exploring the feasibility of delivering PhD programmes.

Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering

Noted that:

1. Implementation of the Science and Engineering Excellence vision had been the main priority of 2017-18. The new Faculty structure was embedding and some challenges remained, but there had also been examples of collaboration and join-up across the Faculty enabled by the reorganisation.

2. Key challenges for the forthcoming year were addressing the recognition and requirement for culture change, promoting a team-based approach to drive excellence, increasing research and teaching income, and building the Faculty’s external profile and reputation.

3. All Schools were engaged in portfolio and curriculum review with the aim of enhancing the attractiveness and relevant of degree programmes to an international market.

4. Significant research achievements included valuable research partnerships with the Alan Turing Institute, Faraday Institute and UK Collaboratorium for Research on Infrastructure and Cities and projects funded by the EPSRC.

5. The Faculty had appointed a Dean of Engagement and Internationalisation to develop strategy and define what engagement with non-academic organisations should be established.

6. It was the Faculty’s aim to accelerate progress with raising its international profile. Areas of strength such as data, energy and water would be given particular emphasis. The Faculty was also seeking to establish the University in Singapore as a regional hub for South East Asia with a reputation for excellence in research and teaching and a strong record of engagement with Singapore’s top universities and industry.

44. GRADUATE FRAMEWORK

Received a paper from Professor Suzanne Cholerton.

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

1. Senate had initially considered the Graduate Framework at its meeting on 20 November 2018. Following discussion by the Committee, and further consideration of the Framework by University Education Committee and Environmental Sustainability Committee, a number of revisions to the language used and underpinning research had been made. Senate confirmed that its earlier suggestions, including the addition of specific mentions of academic freedom, had been satisfactorily addressed.

Resolved that Senate approve the Graduate Framework.

45. ANNUAL REPORT ON STUDENT CASEWORK

Received a paper from Professor Suzanne Cholerton.

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

Noted that:

1. There had been a steady increase in Formal Academic Appeals over three years, from 75 in 2015-16, and 92 in 2016-17, to 102 during the 2017-18 academic year. This was possibly as a result of more academic queries being concluded locally at Level 1 of the procedure within schools, with the student continuing to pursue their concerns to Level 2. The overall total of Level 1 appeals had increased from 264 in 2016-17 to 435 in 2017-18. This could be a result of the impact of Industrial Action which took place in the second half of the 2017-18 academic year, seeing more students questioning their results.

2. A total of 47 formal complaints had been received in 2017-18, which was an increase on the 33 received in 2016-17. Many of these were increasingly complex, taking a considerable amount of time to investigate. Factors beyond the control of the Student Progress Service had an impact on the timeliness of complaint outcomes, such as delays in responses from the complainant and school or professional service.

3. There had been a significant increase in the total number of PEC applications during 2017-18, from 9024 the previous year to 12704. The sizeable increase was due in part to a considerable number of students submitting a PEC application for a Board of Examiners’ rating, possibly as a ‘just in case’ application. This may also have been exacerbated by the impact of the Industrial Action in 2017-18.

4. The number of cases referred to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) was 12 in 2017-18, down from 13 the previous year. No cases had been justified, although 3 remained ongoing. Only 1 case had been partly justified, although this outcome was a result of the length of time taken to investigate the student complaint as opposed to a failure of the University to follow its own procedures. The OIA outcomes demonstrated that the University’s procedures were robust and fair and that no particular concerns had been raised in respect of cases reviewed by the OIA.

5. An important point of the University’s learning from casework experiences was the need to prioritise the continuing availability of experienced staff to hear academic complaints.

46. EXTERNAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE

Received a paper from Dr John Hogan.

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

1. The University had engaged Advance HE to conduct a review of governance. This had been the first time that a University governance review had been carried out by an external body. The report of the review had been received by Council at its meeting on 11 February 2019, and a small working group had been established to consider a management response to the recommendations made in the report.

2. The report recommended a reduction of the overall number of members of Council, and in order to do this it was recommended that the number of academic staff members should be reduced from five to three, with two academic members elected by Senate, and two members of staff (one academic, one from professional services) appointed through an interview process.

3. There was concern among Senators that a reduction in the overall size of Council and restriction on the ability of Senate to appoint members of Council would be a retrograde move.

4. The report had also recommended that the standard report to Council from Senate should provide more detail than at present.

47. OPEN SPACE

Noted that:

1. It had been proposed that Senate reserve space on the agenda of future meetings for discussion of topics suggested by elected members. This would enhance the ability of the Committee to react to issues that were felt to be important in a timely way. Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors could be asked to respond on how a particular issue was approached within each Faculty.

2. Members of Senate suggested a number of potential discussion topics for the next meeting including academic workload models, the nature of the academic contract, and sabbatical leave.

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

Reported that, 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 and President following consultation with the relevant Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor, for the conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus.

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

Resolved that the title of Professor Emeritus be conferred on:

Professor Ann Le Couteur, effective from 1 April 2019
Professor Mike Catt, effective from 1 April 2019

49. MINUTES FROM COMMITTEE OF SENATE

The following meetings of Senate committees have taken place and the minutes from each committee are provided for information:
(a) University Education Committee: 30 January 2019  
(b) University Engagement and Place Committee: 30 January 2019  
(c) University Internationalisation Committee: 22 November 2018  
[Circulated with the agenda as Document M-O. Copies filed in the Minute Book.]

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

Received the annual report to Senate from Public Lectures Committee.  
[Circulated with the agenda as Document P. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

51. **UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT AND PLACE COMMITTEE**

Received revised terms of reference for University Engagement and Place Committee.  
[Circulated with the agenda as Document Q. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

52. **NORTHUMBRIAN UNIVERSITIES MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Received revised terms of reference for the Northumbrian Universities Military Education Committee.  
[Circulated with the agenda as Document R. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]

53. **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 S. Copy filed in the Minute Book.]