

Summary Report of Senate 1: 21 October 2020

The University Senate held a meeting via Microsoft Teams on 21 October 2020.

New and existing members were welcomed to their first meeting of the Senate for the academic session 2020/21. The Chair also welcomed a representative from the University's Internal Auditors, RSM, who was observing the meeting as part of the internal audit that was being undertaken on academic governance and to three lay governors who had been invited to observe the meeting to support Council's role in ensuring the effective operation of academic governance and in their understanding of the work of the Senate

This paper provides a high-level summary of the business considered by the Senate, which will be published on the University website. This is not a formal record of the Senate meeting but presents a high-level update on matters discussed at the meeting.

Professor Shirley Congdon
Vice-Chancellor and Chair of Senate

Senate **recommended** the following report for consideration by Council:

1 Annual Assurance Report to OfS on Conditions B1-B5

Senate considered in detail a report on the University's current framework and processes for managing the quality of learning, teaching, and academic standards, specifically in relation to the Office for Students Conditions B1 to B5.

Following a robust discussion, Senate **approved** the report as assurance:

- of the robustness of the University's current management of quality and standards;
- that the risks associated with the new and emergent regulatory framework, quality assurance regime, and compliance assessment methodology were understood and mitigated, and;
- that priority actions had been identified and were appropriate. These would be taken forward in 2020/21 and would ensure the University was able to adjust to the new external regulatory environment whilst supporting its internal strategic objectives.

Senate also **endorsed** the report for consideration by University Council in November 2020 (Document C12/20-21 refers).

2 Honorary Degrees Committee

Senate **approved** the recommendation to confer one Honorary Award as detailed in the Honorary Degrees summary report (Document C23/20-21 refers).

Senate **approved** the following and agreed to draw these items to the attention of Council:

3 Lecture Capture Policy

Senate received a report on the Lecture Capture Policy which outlined the University's approach to implementation of a lecture capture system. Following a meeting with the University and the Union (UCU), a number of revisions, clarifications and additions were recommended, and a revised Policy was circulated in advance of the Senate meeting.

Senate discussed the policy and clarification was requested relating to amendment of transcripts, use of the lecture recordings, and staff training. The Policy has been designed during the phase of the installation and implementation of the Echo360 Platform, and it was intended to support the pilot stage of the project.

Senate **approved** the 'Echo 30 (Lecture Capture policy)' and the associated EIA and EDIA and noted the policy would be reviewed in light of implementation of other learning technology platforms.

4 Application(s) and Extension(s) for Honorary, Visiting, Emeritus and Professors

- The Honorary Visiting Professor (extension of appointment), FoEI.
- The Emeritus Professor (extension of appointment), FoMLS.

Senate received and **discussed** the following reports:

5 Annual Report of Senate 2019/20

Senate received and noted the annual report of the business undertaken by Senate on behalf of Council during 2019/20. It would be presented to the Council in November 2020 as part of the assurance process of the robustness of the University's academic governance arrangements (attached as Appendix B).

6 Student Recruitment

Senate considered a report on the current student recruitment position, noting that the Home undergraduate recruitment target had been exceeded; this aligned with the extensive work that had been undertaken to enhance Home undergraduate recruitment. Additional January starts for programmes in the Faculties of Management, Law and Social Sciences and Engineering and Informatics would provide opportunities to recruit additional students during the cycle. The international market remained challenging, but this had been mitigated by approving the majority of PGT programmes to accept students for a January 2021 start. International recruitment teams continued to work hard to maximise the number of enrolments up to the close of recruitment cycle on 9 November. Faculties were thanked for their agility and flexibility in developing dual intakes.

A brief update on the emerging financial position following enrolment was provided. The continued need for vigilant financial management was noted.

7 Draft Business and Community Engagement Sub-Strategy

Senate considered the draft Business and Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025, a sub-strategy of the new overarching University Strategy. The draft, which aligned to the Research and Innovation Strategy, described a vision in which Bradford would be a university city that shared knowledge in order to strengthen health, wealth and confidence across the many communities in which students, staff and alumni participated.

Senate welcomed the draft strategy, noting that a final version would be presented to the Council in November 2020, for approval (Document C9/20-21 refers).

8 Student Mental Health Strategy Update

Senate received an update on the work being undertaken to develop a Student Mental Health Strategy, noting that it was being designed with students and would be delivered in partnership with the Students' Union. The University's commitment to supporting the mental health of its students and to promoting an environment which fostered inclusivity, care and wellbeing was strongly welcomed by Senate. The draft Student Mental Health Strategy would be presented to Senate in January 2021, for approval.

9 KEF Narrative

The University had submitted three narrative statements under the Knowledge Exchange Framework on the 16 October 2020 and these were discussed in the Senate.

10 REF Update

Senate noted the progress made by the University in its preparations for the forthcoming submission to the next Research Excellence Framework exercise. Research England had confirmed the revised submission date would be 31 March 2021, and that the staff census date of 31 July 2020 remained in place.

11 Update on Student Complaints Related to COVID-19 Pandemic

This report provided an update on complaints received during the COVID-19 pandemic. The University had received 28 individual complaints which mentioned COVID-19. Two complaints were ineligible for consideration, seven complaints related to a module in the Faculty of Engineering and Informatics which were considered partially justified. No complaints had to date been escalated to the OIA, as none had reached the stage of completion of procedures letters

being issued. Reports from formal stage investigations indicated significant levels of support being offered to students to support them with studying through the COVID-19 pandemic.

12 Senate also **discussed** the following reports and noted the work being undertaken in the following areas:

- League Table and Rankings;
- National Student Survey 2020 Results;
- Longitudinal Education Outcomes;
- Graduate outcomes survey report 2017/18;
- Graduate outcomes key actions.

13 Research Degrees Sub-Committee 2019/20 review

A one-year review following the implementation of the revised a Research Degrees Sub-Committee in 2019-20 was undertaken. It was noted that the Sub-Committee had met on five occasions, and the establishment of this Committee to oversee matters relating to postgraduate research had enabled the time and space to discuss the postgraduate developments and provided a more consistent approach to overseeing postgraduate research.

Senate discussed the following reports and noted the content for **information**:

14 Report from the Chair

The Chair recorded her continued appreciation to staff and the Students' Union for the work that had been undertaken during the pandemic and in welcoming, supporting and teaching students in the current unprecedented and exceptional times. Senate's role in overseeing the academic activities of the University, and in the approval of the emergency academic regulations was also acknowledged.

15 Report on Chair's Actions

Senate noted six Chair's actions that had been taken:

- **approval** of Honorary Visiting Professor (extension of appointment), FoLS.
- **approval** of Honorary Visiting Professor renewal (new appointment), FoLS.
- **approval** of Honorary Professor, FoHS (new appointment).
- **approval** of exceptions to the Emergency Academic Regulations and the subsequent **rescinding** of the Emergency Academic Regulations.
- **approval** of the BeOne Foundation Gift Agreement.
- **approval** of the outstanding actions which related to the Bradford Academic Career Journey as agreed by Senate in April 2020.

16 Business from Committees of Senate

Senate **noted** summary reports from Learning and Teaching Committee, Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy Committee and Faculty Board on issues discussed since the last meeting of the Senate.

17 Senate also received the following reports, for information:

- Minutes from the Senate meeting held on 24 June 2020.
- Access and Participation Plan update.
- Prevent update.
- Draft Senate 2 agenda – 27 January 2021.
- Senate terms of reference and membership 2020/21.
- Senate schedule of business for 2020/21.

18 Senate noted the deferral of the following report for future reporting to Senate:

Maternity, Paternity and Parent Policy for Students - This item was removed from the agenda and would be presented at the next meeting of Senate in January 2021.

19 Conclusion and Recommendation

Members of Council are invited to receive and note this report and ensure the onward communication of its contents as appropriate.

20 Date of next Senate meeting:

Wednesday 27 January 2021