

**SENATE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2024**

<b>Members:</b>	Professor Shirley Congdon (Chair)	Professor Prathivadi Anand	Professor Harris Beider (to end of item M71)
	Professor Felician Campean	Professor Maryann Hardy	Alison Hartley
	Zak Hughes	Faiz Ilyas	Mozalfa Ilyas
	Professor Zahir Irani	Professor Rob James	Dr Ben Jennings
	Yakubu John	Dr Rhys Kelly	Hamza Khan
	Bryan Lightowler	Professor Fiona Macaulay	Jonathan Marsden
	Dr William Martin	Dr Anne Miller	Professor Iqbal Mujtaba
	Hafsah Munir	Colin Pickles	Professor Martin Priest
	Amit Rana	Abdus Samad Bin-Sarfraz	Professor Amir Sharif
	Tim Squire-Watt	Iqra Tabassum	Dr Pete Twigg
Paul Watson	Elaine Wilkinson	Professor Andrew Wilson	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Steve Gilley	Director of Infrastructure	
	David Harris	Director of People Culture and Wellbeing	
	Andrew Lang	Chief Finance Officer	
	Professor Sankar Sivarajah	Dean, School of Management	
	Matt Stephenson	Acting Associate Director, Governance Legal and Risk	
Katherine Wass	Committee Secretary		
<b>Observer:</b>	Ash Mehta	Lay Member of University Council (to end of M75)	
<b>Apologies:</b>	Professor Udy Archibong	Professor Marina Bloj	Dr Emma Brown
	Immar Khan	Dr Jing Li	Arsheel Muhammad Ansari
	Louise Wem	Professor Alastair Wood	

67.23-24 **Welcome and Apologies (Oral report)**

- 67.1 The Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting including the new members, Hafsah Munir, Abdus Samad Bin-Sarfraz, Arsheel Muhammad Ansari and Immar Khan. The Senate also welcomed Ash Mehta from University Council who was observing the meeting.

67.2 The Vice-Chancellor thanked Professor Harris Beider for his contribution to the University, noting this would be his last meeting of Senate prior to his departure to assume a new role at Birmingham City University. The Senate wished him well in his new role.

68.23-24 **Vice-Chancellor update report (Document SEN069/23-24)**

68.1 The Vice-Chancellor provided an update to Senate noting that at the previous meeting there had been a discussion about the 3+9 financial forecast. The Chief Finance Officer also provided an update on the university's financial position (**M75 refers**).

68.2 The Vice-Chancellor advised that although the 6+6 forecast reflected an improvement in the position following changes in operational costs there was still work to be done and all colleagues needed to be aware of expenditure and take a collective responsibility for budget savings.

68.3 The Vice-Chancellor noted the media coverage over the number of universities experiencing a difficult time and stressed the importance of taking control of the situation at Bradford. The external challenges faced by universities included the static undergraduate fee and a decline in student recruitment on a national level. When these combined with cost pressures there was a need to ensure the university had appropriate responses in place. The Vacancy Control Group remained in place and was appointing to business-critical posts only. There was a reiterated desire to remain positive throughout this period and to deliver on the university's ambitions albeit at a slower pace.

68.4 The Vice-Chancellor provided a recruitment update advising that there was a meeting with recruitment partners for a new Chair of the University Council w/c 18 March. The new University Secretary, Martin Conway, started in April and recruitment for the two Dean vacancies was ongoing. It was also confirmed that Anne Miller was remaining as Interim Academic Registrar until September 2024.

68.5 Good news points related to the Swandro-Orkney Archaeology Project which won Rescue Project of the Year at the Current Archaeology Awards. The School of Management distance learning MBA had been voted best value for money in the world based on a range of indicators. All involved in these activities were thanked for their contribution to these achievements.

69.23-24 **Minutes of the meeting on 31 January 2024 (Document SEN070/23-24)**

69.1 The Vice-Chancellor advised that some comments had been received on the minutes that would be resolved outside the meeting.

69.2 The Committee **approved** the minutes subject to this action.

69.3 SECRETARY'S NOTE: The updated approved minutes of the meeting in January were available from: [SEN070-2324-Minutes-31Jan2024-v1a.pdf](#)

70.23-24 **KPI report (Document SEN071/23-24)**

- 70.1 The Chief Finance Officer advised that the report included the top 30 KPIs across the university updated on a quarterly basis. It was noted that there had been slight change to a number of the measures, specifically there had been some improvement associated with the research income KPI. The Senate was advised that the KPIs were aligned to the relevant strategy owners.
- 70.2 The Senate discussed the KPIs.
- 70.3 The Director of Infrastructure advised that there was a need to refresh the sustainability measures to reflect things such as energy consumption more accurately.
- 70.4 The Director of People Culture and Wellbeing advised that a provider for a new staff listening platform had been selected ahead of a staff survey being developed and undertaken. There had also been a strong focus on the vacancy rate KPI which remained above target.
- 70.5 Senate welcomed the news that a staff survey was to be undertaken. The Senate was advised that response levels to surveys had previously been very good, it was expected this would continue to be the case. The timing of the survey was discussed and it was agreed that the best time would be before Graduation.

71.23-24 **Valuing the past to shape our future: Towards a progressive and practical research strategy (Document SEN072/23-24)**

- 71.1 The PVC Research, Innovation and Engagement presented the report advising that Senate was being asked to endorse the vision and plan for the research ecosystem.
- 71.2 The Senate was advised that this approach had been developed following consultation with around 600 staff from across the university and was underpinned by 4 pillars that would be supported by a 5 year business plan that would bring people across the different faculties together and ensure that research centres were delivering research based outputs that would positively impact on the next REF outcomes.
- 71.3 The overall approach had been discussed at the Senate informal briefing on the 19 February.
- 71.4 The Senate was advised that the strategy had been endorsed by the Research and Innovation Committee and should Senate endorse it, it would be submitted to Council for approval. A business case would then be developed for 2024/25 to ensure that research and associated support was being delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- 71.5 The Senate had a significant amount of discussion about the strategy and challenged some aspects of this in relation to its clarity and implications, particularly in relation to the academic workload model and the changes to research centres. The level of consultation was also discussed along with the need to more explicitly embed equality impact elements.

- 71.6 The Senate also discussed the proposals made in light of the change in PVC Research Innovation and Engagement.
- 71.7 The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the university would be seeking a strong leader to become the new PVC Research Innovation and Engagement and that consideration was being given to arrangements to recruit to the post.
- 71.8 Senate **did not endorse** the strategy noting that it would therefore not progress to Council for approval.
- 71.9 The Senate agreed that there was a need to explore the areas identified in the report that Research and Innovation Services would focus the development of guidance on supporting the creation of new Research Institutes and consolidating and supporting Research Centres and the overarching institutional approach to innovation.

72.23-24 **Strategy update on faculty priorities (Document SEN073/23-24 – SEN076/23-24)**

- 72.1 The Vice-Chancellor introduced the reports requesting that Senate provide feedback and observations on the RAG ratings and KPI information they included.
- 72.2 The PVC Learning Teaching and Student Experience advised that it was clear from the reports where progress was being made and that the ongoing curriculum review would have positive impact on KPIs. The faculties were central to the delivery of the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy and the levelling up of variability in outcomes across and within faculties. It was recognised that the current format of the reports did not necessarily reflect the level of complexity of activity being undertaken.
- 72.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor advised Senate that each faculty was at different stages in the programme review process and in some cases, this included a revisioning of activity to better align to strategic priorities. A review of the workload model was being undertaken to help ensure all areas of activity were appropriately included.
- 72.4 The Senate discussed the reports and agreed that the reports should be revised to provide greater clarity on objectives and associated KPIs, including closer alignment to the prioritisation exercise currently being undertaken by Executive Board. This would help support the development of measurable outputs and enhance the reports received.
- 72.5 **ACTION: Review reports from faculties to Senate in the context of the prioritisation work being undertaken. Deputy Vice- Chancellor**
- 72.6 The Vice-Chancellor thanked Professor James for overseeing two faculties and advised that it was hoped an appointment to the vacant of Dean of Health Studies post would be made soon.

73.23-24 **Student Recruitment update (Document SEN077/23-24)**

- 73.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor presented the report thanking colleagues who had supported the late arrivals process after the deadline for enrolment had been extended by a week. In total 429 students had enrolled in the most recent intake.
- 73.2 Senate was advised that the UCAS dashboard provided daily updates on performance against the sector including a select number of competitor institutions in relation to the September intake. The most recent data showed a slight increase on the number of applicants against the same time last year and that the university was performing slightly ahead of both its competitors and the sector albeit not significantly better than the same time last year.
- 73.3 The Senate was advised of a range of interventions that were taking place at different points in the recruitment cycle some of which were expected to have an immediate impact, with others making a difference in 2025.
- 73.4 The Senate was advised there had been significant increase in Undergraduate outreach activities with schools and colleges which had resulted in an increase in applications. These activities were taking place over a broader geographic area to build on the diversity of our student population.
- 73.5 For postgraduate home recruitment open days were taking place noting it was an early point in the cycle. Current application levels were expected to increase.
- 73.6 Senate was advised that the international market was increasingly competitive and there had been a review of the scholarships on offer and the resources that were in place in country. CAS letters had started to be issued and the impact of interventions would continue to be monitored.

74.23-24 **University of Bradford International College (UBIC) recruitment update (Document SEN078/23-24)**

- 74.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor presented the report noting that for the January intake the deadline for international students had been extended to be consistent with that offered to the university's direct applicants. Senate was advised that UKVI had conducted additional interviews for visas and learner support had been put in place to support the late arriving students. Thus far 274 CAS letters had been issued.
- 74.2 Senate was advised that 54 students were now expected to enrol on full masters programmes and that the UBIC Joint Academic Board would be monitoring pass rates for UBIC students as they progressed through their programmes.
- 74.3 Following a visit to Pakistan there was evidence of a good market for a one-year international law programme and this was being developed with a view to recruiting from September.

- 74.4 Senate discussed the report and received confirmation that income from UBIC went to OIEG while students were with them. While they did utilise some university space this formed an important part of the future pipeline and access to the OIEG agent network.
- 74.5 Senate was advised that the most significant area of risk related to engagement as this linked to both success rates and the UKVI visa requirements. Engagement was continually being monitored and supported. A mock UKVI visit was being planned to ensure that the university and UBIC were ready in the event of a real visit.
- 74.6 Senate queried the impact of the UBIC initiative and was advised that it had not yet reached the point where a UBIC student would have graduated from a university programme. The students who entered via this route could be identified so it would be possible to monitor the effectiveness of this approach could be measured over time.
- 74.7 Senate was also advised that OIEG were currently applying for group registration with the Office for Students and the university was involved in this process along with others in the group. In addition to this a contract and performance review was being undertaken to help reaffirm the relationship between OIEG and the university. Zak Hughes highlighted that this should include an assurance that staff working conditions were in line with the expectations of the university. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor acknowledged this and that this was something that could be discussed with TUUG.
- 74.8 The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged the level of interest in UBIC and recommended it be the subject of a Senate informal briefing in 2024.
- 74.9 **ACTION: Arrange a Senate informal briefing on UBIC in 2024. DVC/PVC LTSE**

75.23-24 **Financial update (Presentation)**

- 75.1 The Chief Finance Officer provided Senate with an update on the university's financial position (a copy of the presentation can be found [here](#) ).
- 75.2 The Senate was advised that the presentation had been based on the most recent financial data following the completion of the 6+6 forecast. The forecast showed some improvement in the financial position however a shortfall did remain.
- 75.3 The forecast highlighted that there had been a reduction in student numbers just as staff numbers (FTE) had increased due to a previous increase in student recruitment. The early indications of what this would mean were due to be discussed with the Finance Committee at its upcoming meeting. The focus on cost control remained essential to deliver the forecast outcome. The need to ensure that banking covenants were met was also noted.
- 75.4 The Senate discussed the presentation including the desire for staff to make suggestions for both income generation and cost savings. SharePoint would be regularly updated with FAQs and the Operations Group had been tasked with reviewing suggestions that were submitted.

This will be made as visible as possible. It was acknowledged that it had taken slightly longer than expected to put everything in place.

75.5 The Vice-Chancellor stressed the need to ensure that all colleagues were aware of the current situation and their role in helping to address the challenges and to reduce costs.

75.6 The Senate also discussed:

- Ratio between academic and non-academic staff approximately 60/40 which was not unusual for a smaller university.
- The impact of the Vacancy Control Group particularly in relation to reviewing existing vacancies.
- Investment in the AMP and Library as a one-off expense that would improve student experience.
- The positive impact of changes in pension provision had been built into the forecast.
- Changing student behaviour and approach to the delivery of programmes.
- Changes in competitor behaviour in relation to tariff and recruitment.
- Reshaping the estate to create a better staff and student experience.

75.7 The Vice-Chancellor advised Senate that conversations similar to this were happening across the sector and there was a need for everyone to understand that this was a challenge the university needed to come out of in the best position possible. It was important to act to serve our stakeholders in the best and most efficient way possible.

#### 76.23-24 **Institutional Growth and Sustainability Plan (Document SEN079/23-24)**

76.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor advised Senate that the plan remained on track and had been repackaged to align with the university priorities as outlined in the project charters being developed by Executive Board.

76.2 The Senate was advised that a total of 23 programmes were progressing through different stages of the new gateway process. New interventions had been added to the 'figure 8' diagram that related to home and international recruitment and an international recruitment and partnership strategy to underpin this would be presented to Executive Board at a later date.

76.3 The Senate was advised that the UK recruitment campaign was being aligned to the new brand identity and it was expected that clearing would be a very competitive time.

76.4 The Senate discussed the report and queried whether sustainability and growth were appropriate terms to use in the current climate. The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged the point and advised that while there was a slowing down of ambitions to ensure a realistic picture the language being used would be kept under review.

77.23-24 **Curriculum simplification and rationalisation plan 2024/25 (Document SEN080/23-24)**

- 77.1 The PVC learning teaching and Student Experience presented the report noting it formed an element of the implementation of the Learning Teaching and Student Experience strategy that continued to develop the Bradford Curriculum and evolving delivery model.
- 77.2 The simplification and rationalisation plan presented formed an interim step to support the continuing improvement in the quality and efficiency of the portfolio. The faculties had thus far proposed the withdrawal of some route titles for the 2024/25 session, and these were being presented to Senate for approval. Noting that all applicants would be offered cognate alternative programmes for 2024 entry.
- MChem Chemistry
  - MChem Biological and Medicinal Chemistry
  - BA Graphics for Games
  - BSc Film and Visual Effects Technology
  - MSc Automotive Systems Engineering
- 77.3 The Senate was advised that Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) were in progress for the programmes it was proposed to withdraw, and these would be circulated to members once they had been completed.
- 77.4 The Senate discussed the proposal and noted that this represented a full withdrawal of these programmes and that current students would be supported to completion and that these recommendations followed the normal process albeit within a different timeframe.
- 77.5 The Senate **approved** the recommendations **subject to completed equality impact assessments**.
- 77.6 **ACTION: Circulate completed EIAs on the programmes for withdrawal to Senate. PVC Learning Teaching and Student Experience**

78.23-24 **Academic Calendar 2024/25 onwards (Document SEN081/23-24)**

- 78.1 The Interim Academic Registrar presented the report noting that the model for the academic calendar from 2024/25 had been approved by Senate at its meeting in June 2023. The paper used that structure to propose academic calendars for the three years from 2024/25 together with a communications plan that ensured one year would be available externally and longer-term information would be available internally to support planning.
- 78.2 The Senate discussed the proposal noting the developments. There was concern raised from some members about the use of generative AI systems that they considered should be addressed by not more examinations rather than less. The importance of having clear guidance for staff and students about the appropriate use of Generative AI (or GenAI) systems in learning and assessment was highlighted by the Chair.



It was agreed that the decision made in 2023 would not change and the principles on which it was based did provide a simplified approach for the 12-week blocks of teaching did enable flexibility of delivery.

78.3 **ACTION: Provide an update on guidance for the use of Generative AI systems in Learning & Assessment at the next meeting of Senate. PVC, LTSE**

78.4 It was acknowledged that space and technical support for a 1-week exam block did represent a challenge particularly in relation to the availability of computer labs during this period. It was agreed that alternative arrangements needed to be explored and the Interim Academic Registrar would facilitate this.

78.5 **ACTION: To review requirements for the exam week in January and ensure contingency arrangements are in place to facilitate it. Interim Academic Registrar**

78.6 SECRETARY'S NOTE: Arrangements for additional venues for computer examinations were made within a week of the meeting taking place.

78.7 The Senate **approved** the academic calendars for 2024/25, 2025/2026 and 2026/27 and the principles proposed within the paper.

79.23-24 **Annual report on Student Conduct 2023-23 (Document SEN082/23-24)**

79.1 The Acting Associate Director Governance, Legal and Risk presented the report advising it related to student conduct and fitness to practice cases only, a separate report on academic misconduct, appeals and complaints having been discussed at the previous meeting of Senate.

79.2 The Senate was advised that the number of cases had increased by a third on the previous year. This had been driven by a range of factors that included enhanced reporting mechanisms. There had been 3 expulsions during the reporting period all of which were related to the student receiving a custodial sentence for a serious offence.

79.3 The Senate was advised that a number of process improvements had been implemented and the current area of focus related to student behaviours in the library and in relation to 'swiping' which impacted on attendance monitoring.

79.4 Further enhancements to the approach taken had been developed and increased support was to be made available to all faculties following a successful pilot in the Faculty of Health Studies. This would be further complemented by training and SharePoint site.

79.5 The Senate was advised that benchmarking with the sector was being undertaken to help provide context, and the analysis of protected characteristics was to be enhanced. Both elements would help inform the further development of this report.

79.6 The Senate discussed the report and the need to ensure the Student Union were involved in work related to student behaviours. The need for an updated and supportive framework was clear but would only take things so far, it was considered important that whatever was put in place was appropriately resourced and complemented existing processes.

79.7 The Senate received and noted the report.

80.23-24 **Corporate Risks - Quality, Research and Student Experience (Document SEN083/23-24)**

80.1 The Acting Associate Director Governance Legal and Risk presented the report noting it highlighted all the academic related risks being faced by the university and that any feedback would be appreciated.

80.2 The Senate was advised that Risk Management would be the subject of the informal briefing on the 17 April 2024.

81.23-24 **Applications for Honorary, Visiting and Emeritus Professor (s) (Document SEN084/23-24)**

81.1 Senate considered and **approved** the renewal of the Honorary Professor appointment for Professor Mel Pickup in the Faculty of Health Studies for a period of three years and 7 months (extended to include an elapsed period) with effect from the 1 July 2023.

81.2 Senate considered and **approved** an application for the Emeritus Professor appointment for Professor Diana Anderson in the Faculty of Life Sciences for a period of three year with effect from the 1 May 2024.

81.3 Following a brief discussion and some objections the Senate agreed that the application for the Honorary Professor appointment for Kersten England in the Faculty of Management Law and Social Sciences for a period of three year with effect from the 1 March 2024 would be circulated for members to vote following the meeting.

81.4 **ACTION: Circulate Honorary Visiting Professor application for Kersten England to Senate for consideration. Committee Secretary**

82.23-24 **Safeguarding & prevent update 2023-24 (Document SEN085/23-24)**

82.1 The PVC Learning Teaching and Student Experience presented the report noting there were no areas of concern. The Freedom of Speech Policy was being reviewed and would progress through to the appropriate channels for approval.

83.23-24 **People Matters (Document SEN086/23-24)**

83.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

84.23-24 **Research and Innovation Committee (Document SEN087/23-24)**

84.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

85.23-24 **Learning & Teaching Committee (Document SEN088/23-24)**

85.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

86.23-24 **Ethics Committee (Document SEN089/23-24)**

86.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

87.23-24 **Faculty Board report – Faculty of Health Studies (Document SEN090/23-24)**

87.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

88.23-24 **Matters arising and action tracker (Document SEN091/23-24)**

88.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

89.23-24 **Health Studies (Document SEN090/23-24)**

89.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

90.23-24 **Matters arising and action tracker (Document SEN091/23-24)**

90.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

91.23-24 **Register of Interests (Document SEN092/23-24)**

91.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

92.23-24 **Terms of reference and membership 2023-24 (Document SEN093/23-24)**

92.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

93.23-24 **Schedule of Business 2023-24 (Document SEN094/23-24)**

93.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

94.23-24 **Draft agenda for the meeting on 1 May 2024 (Document SEN095/23-24)**

94.1 The Committee received and noted the report.

95.23-24 **Any other business**

95.1 There was no other business for this meeting.

Secretary: Katherine Wass, Governance and Projects Officer

Date: 09 April 2024