

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2019 IN ROOM CH1.14 CAVENDISH HOUSE, 101 NEW CAVENDISH STREET.

PRESENT:	Dr Peter Bonfield (Chair) Mr John Begg Ms Vedia Can Mr John Cappock Dr Simon Courtenage Dr Paul Curley Professor Roland Dannreuther (Deputy Chair) Mr Adrian Dutch Professor Alex Hughes (Deputy Chair) (from 18.29)	Ms Lubaba Khalid Professor Malcolm Kirkup Professor Terry Lamb Ms Caroline Lloyd (from 18.28) Professor Graham Meikle Miss Lareb Naseem Professor Jonathan Stockdale Ms Jane Stonestreet Dr Stefan van Dellen Dr Leigh Wilson
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr Tony Burke (items 18.27 and 18.28) Mr David Burt (Clerk) Mr Chris Hinge (item 18.29) Mrs Elaine McMillan (Secretary) Professor Brendon Noble (Observer) (items 18.27 and 18.28)	Ms Bharti Patel (Observer) Mrs Lin Phillips (Observer) Mrs Emma Standen
APOLOGIES:	Professor Andrew Linn	

18.27 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 18.27.1 The Chair welcomed all members, observers Brendon Noble, Bharti Patel, Lin Phillips and presenter Tony Burke to the meeting. The Chair also welcomed Director of the Graduate School, Leigh Wilson, to her first meeting.
- 18.27.2 Apologies were noted as detailed above.
- 18.27.3 No interests were declared.
- 18.27.4 The Chair agreed to requests from members to discuss starred agenda item 2.3b Research Committee terms of reference (Minute 18.30).
- 18.27.5 The Chair agreed a request to discuss a matter raised by a College representative under 'Any other business' (Minute 18.34.2).

Chair's report

Academic calendar

- 18.27.6 The Chair confirmed to members that under delegated authority from Council he approved implementation of the 2019-20 calendar agreed by Council in February 2018. The Chair explained that the difference introduced in the 2019-20 calendar is the addition of a third week for 'assessment, moderation and ratification' towards the end of the period.

18.27.7 He informed members that he made the decision having heard a summary of discussions with the academic trade union – UCU - from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) with responsibility for liaison with UCU, and having reviewed the decision made by Council in February 2018.

18.27.8 The Chair explained the reasons behind his decision, noting that the additional week will:

- reduce stress for colleagues involved in the process – academics and those in Professional Services;
- impact positively on colleague wellbeing; and
- improve the quality of the assessment, moderation and ratification processes.

18.27.9 A member asserted that the decision has implications for the academic staff contract and recorded their objection to the decision.

18.27.10 The Chair stated that he is confident that the academic contract is not impacted and invited the member to raise any issues they may have relating to the Guidelines for implementation of the academic contract with the PVC with responsibility for liaison with UCU.

18.27.11 The Chair informed members that the PVC with responsibility for liaison with UCU will be meeting with UCU representatives to discuss the 2020-21 and provisional 2021-22 calendars prior to consideration by Council at the next meeting.

18.27.12 A member asserted that line managers expect the same staff to support Clearing in August each year and do not care about the stress and wellbeing of those staff. The Chair advised the individual to discuss the matter with the PVC with responsibility for liaison with UCU.

Terms of reference and responsibilities

18.27.13 The Chair reminded members of the terms of reference for Academic Council.

18.27.14 The Chair referred to the dissatisfaction expressed by one member (during the roundtable discussion on the refreshed University strategy held 23 January 2019) with the decisions taken by former members of Council. He reminded members that their actions, decisions and contributions materially impact the success of the University going forward, and that the Council collectively – and members individually – ensure Council does its very best to fulfil its duties and responsibilities as the supreme academic deliberative and decision making body.

18.27.15 The Chair referred also to a further comment from the discussion asking how we (Academic Council) know whether or not we are being successful. The Chair stated the importance of monitoring and reviewing the outcome of decisions to gain assurance that Council made the right decisions, and to consider adjustments if necessary.

18.27.16 Referring to our core value of being responsible, the Chair invited members to volunteer to work with the Academic Council Secretary to explore whether a Code of Conduct (or similar) would be beneficial and, if so, to draft a Code for members to consider and sign up to at a future meeting.

18.27.17 The Chair reminded members of the development session on 27 March exploring academic governance and the University's values.

18.27.18 The Chair invited Lin Phillips to lead the informal meeting evaluation at the end of the meeting, to identify areas of good practice and areas for change to support continuous improvement.

18.27.19 Members did not raise any questions for the Chair.

18.28 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT INNOVATIONS

18.28.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Education introduced the topic for discussion and highlighted the University's commitment to developing excellent courses.

APPROVED

- 18.28.2 Tony Burke, Senior Lecturer in the Centre for Teaching Innovation (CTI) and author of the discussion paper (Document AC 190206A), presented the key points and priorities, and reflected on his experience as Chair of the Course Validation Standing Panel and previously as Chair of Validation and Review Panels.
- 18.28.3 Members wholeheartedly welcomed and praised the paper, considering it an exemplar for papers for consideration by Council.
- 18.28.4 Members held a broad discussion on the topic, offering a variety of comments and queries, which will be considered and implemented as appropriate into a paper for Council to approve at a future meeting.
- 18.28.5 The Chair reminded members that learning and teaching is one of the University's top objectives and the University therefore will work to enable colleagues to have the right time, support and space to achieve this.

18.29 TIMETABLING POLICY

- 18.29.1 The Director of Estates Planning and Services presented the revised policy (Document AC 190206B), which is recommended by the Timetabling Working Group.
- 18.29.2 The Director informed members that the document is based on the current Space management and timetabling policy; however, the Working Group is developing a separate Space management policy (covering primarily office space).
- 18.29.3 Members held a broad discussion on the policy raising a number of enhancements around tone and clarity of the language used.
- 18.29.4 Members discussed the constraints on the timetabling system and offered some potential solutions. Members acknowledged that the more constraints placed on the system the less efficient and effective it will be.
- 18.29.5 Members gave examples of timetabling issues currently experienced and stressed the importance of the system being student-centred, noting that the University's students have diverse needs and different groups of students have more or less time available for their studies.
- 18.29.6 Members discussed the timeline for implementation of the new system and noted that whilst it is a long-term project, the timeline is conservative and the project team will prioritise key elements and outcomes.
- 18.29.7 **APPROVED** Members approved the Timetabling policy subject to a review by the Working Group of the comments and queries raised at the meeting and enhancements being made to the policy as necessary. The Working Group will resubmit the policy for approval prior to implementation if, having undertaken the review of this discussion, they identify any substantive changes to the policy.
- 18.29.7.1 **ACTION Academic Council Secretary** to provide the Working Group with a detailed summary of the discussion.

18.30 SUB-COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Academic Enterprise Committee

- 18.30.1 The PVC (Marketing and Knowledge Exchange), who is Chair of the Committee, presented the revised terms of reference (Document AC 190206C), recommended by the Academic Enterprise Committee.

APPROVED

- 18.30.2 Members heard that the key changes are to the name of the Committee – from Academic Enterprise to Knowledge Exchange; recognition of the introduction of the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF); and the proposed membership.
- 18.30.3 **AGREED** The Committee membership is to include the Head of the Research Office, who will provide a link with the Research Committee.
- 18.30.4 **AGREED** The terms of reference should clarify the Committee's remit with regards to apprenticeships to avoid crossover or duplication of work undertaken by other committees.
- 18.30.5 **APPROVED** Revised terms of reference to be implemented with immediate effect, subject to the amendments noted above.
- 18.30.6 The Chair, Knowledge Exchange Committee accepted the Chair's invitation to brief Academic Council on the KEF at a future meeting.

Research Committee

- 18.30.7 Members received the revised terms of reference (Document AC 190206D), recommended by the Research Committee.
- 18.30.8 A member raised a concern about the change in the membership status of early career researchers from elected to nominated, proposing that the University could agree its own definition for the group in order to hold an election.
- 18.30.9 **AGREED** Chair, Research Committee to confirm a definition for 'early career researcher' and instruct the Committee Secretary to hold an election for this constituency. Should the Chair resolve that it is not possible to define the constituency then the terms of reference should include clarification on who nominates these members.
- 18.30.9.1 **ACTION Academic Council Secretary** to refer the query to the Chair of the Research Committee.
- 18.30.10 **APPROVED** Revised terms of reference to be implemented with immediate effect, subject to clarification of the membership status for early career researchers.

18.31 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

- 18.31.1 **AGREED** Minutes of the Academic Council meeting held on 18 December 2018 (Document AC 190206E) are an accurate record of the meeting.
- 18.31.2 Members received and noted an update on actions from previous meetings (Document AC 190206F).
- 18.31.3 **Academic misconduct (Actions 18.3.5.1 and 18.3.6.1):** The Secretary circulated the Academic Registrar's update about essay mills and the plagiarism reporting process to members by email on 20 December 2018.
- 18.31.4 **Admissions policy (Action 18.20.3.1):** The Director of Student and Academic Services agreed to provide an update to the Secretary for circulation to members by email.
- 18.31.5 **Regulations update (Action 18.21.2.1):** Members noted there is an explanation in the Table of Penalties for the boundary of '10-50% of the work' with relation to plagiarism.
- 18.31.6 **Calculation of degree classifications (Action 18.26.1.1):** Members noted that an analysis of awards made under the new algorithm show that they are comparable to those prior to Learning Futures and, as a result, discussions concluded that no change is required to the degree algorithm.

- 18.31.7 **Intellectual property policy (Minute 17.22):** The PVC (Marketing and Knowledge Exchange) reported that the revised policy is with UCU, the Graduate School Board and the Research Committee for comment and will be submitted to the next meeting for approval.

18.32 SUB-COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 18.32.1 Members received a report on the business conducted at meetings of the following sub-committees since the last meeting (Document AC 190206G):

- i. Academic Enterprise Committee – 11 December 2018
- ii. Course Validation Standing Panel – 12 December 2018
- iii. Graduate School Board – 23 January 2019

18.33 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 10 April 2019
Wednesday 26 June 2019

Provisional dates 2019-20
Wednesday 23 October 2019
Wednesday 4 December 2019
Wednesday 12 February 2020
Wednesday 1 April 2020
Wednesday 24 June 2020

All meetings take place from 1.45pm in Room CH1.14 Cavendish House, 101 New Cavendish Street.

18.34 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Research misconduct procedure – staff

- 18.34.1 Members noted an amendment to the secretariat for formal investigation panels (Document AC 190602H), as approved by the University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer.

Research communities – leadership roles

- 18.34.2 A member raised a concern that the new research leadership roles do not include any allocation of time to execute the responsibilities of the role.

- 18.34.2.1 **ACTION Academic Council Chair** to refer the matter to the University Executive Board for consideration and inform the member who raised the concern of the outcome.

Evaluation of the meeting

- 18.34.3 The Chair invited Lin Phillips to lead an informal evaluation of the meeting and she invited each member to comment on their view of the meeting.

- 18.34.4 Members comments included the following:

- Open and frank discussion/respecting each person's opinion
- Anyone who wanted to say something about any of the papers was able to do so – resulting in inclusivity and satisfaction
- Members did not get 'bogged down' in minutiae/operational detail
- The discussion on curriculum innovation was very helpful and brought forward diverse opinions
- The Chair could blog on the purpose and activities of Academic Council to inform all staff about the work of Council
- Happy to see that predominantly members' concerns were about the students

- A well organised, deliberative meeting
- Brilliant papers and a very productive meeting
- A really effective example of social constructivism – the discussion brings new ideas
- Many thought that the curriculum innovation paper was great
- Generally positive meeting
- Lively and enjoyable – sufficient time to devote to the subjects under discussion
- Focused on some big issues and really engaging proposals
- Constructive meeting and starting to think what is happening in the wider policy sector and government, and how that impacts on what we are doing
- Good meeting and all conversations were at the right level for what is the supreme academic committee of the University
- The difference in tone from last year is marked/level of discussion and openness today is very different from 4-5 years ago and that is very welcome/sense of a step change that is very welcome
- Because of the contributions on the topics we have discussed our students, colleagues and our university are better off
- Consideration of the wellbeing of staff and students and looking at the outside market is really good

18.34.5 The governor observer suggested that members do not wait for policies to be reviewed to raise concerns or issues but to read the policies and address any queries at the earliest opportunity.