A meeting of the Senate was held in The Nike Theatre, Agriculture Building, Earley Gate, on Wednesday 3 December 2014 at 2.15 pm.

Present:

The Vice-Chancellor

Professor Matthew Almond
Dr Karen Ayres
Dr Laura Bennett
Professor Dianne Berry
Ms Helen Bilton
Dr Ian Bland
Professor Susan Breau
Professor Gavin Brooks
Professor Laurie Butler
Professor Peter Byrne
Professor Simon Chandler-Wilde
Professor Ben Cosh
Professor Alison Donnell
Ms Christina Duckett
Professor Judi Ellis
Professor Richard Ellis
Dr Carol Fuller
Dr Clare Furneaux
Professor Ginny Gibson
Professor Roberta Gilchrist
Professor Andy Goodwyn
Professor Suzanne Graham
Professor Stuart Green
Mr Bruce Howell
Professor Yelena Kalyuzhnova
Dr Orla Kennedy
Professor Paul Luna
Dr Elizabeth McCrum
Professor Annalisa Marzano
Professor Roger Matthews

Dr Emma Mayhew
Professor Steve Mithen
Mrs Sue Mott
Dr Steve Musson
Dr Ben Potter
Dr Daisy Powell
Mr Enzo Raimo
Professor Ros Richards
Professor Patricia Kiddell
Professor Virginie Ruiz
Professor Françoise Le Saux
Dr Libby Schweber
Mr David Stannard
Dr Catherine Tissot
Professor Hugo Tucker
Professor Robert Van de Noort
Professor Sue Walker
Professor Adrian Williams
The University Secretary

Students:

Ms Natalie Harper
Ms Sara Chandran
Ms Chloe Bartlett

In attendance:

Ms Louise Sharman

The Vice-Chancellor paid tribute to the following who had died since the last meeting of the Senate:

Mr David Charles Large, a Warden of St. Patrick’s Hall from January 1, 1962. He was also a part-time Lecturer in the Department of Geography. He retired on 30 September 1987.
Professor Simon Dentith, who joined the University in 2007 as a Professor of English and became Head of Department in August 2008. He retired from the University in 2014.

14/70 The Minutes (14/47-14/62) of the meeting held on 22 October 2014 were confirmed and signed.

Arising on the Minutes:

Minute 14/54: Report of the Vice-Chancellor

REDACTED – S.43

14/71 Report of a Committee of Selection (Item 2a)

The Senate received the following Report of the Committees of Selection for a Lecturer/Associate Professor in Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine.

14/72 Report of the Vice-Chancellor (Item 3)

The Vice-Chancellor addressed the Senate (copy inserted in Minute Book), referring in particular to:

a) REDACTED – S.43

b) Recent research grant successes:
   - A Doctoral Scholarships grant of £1,050,000 over 60 months for Climate Justice: Ethics, Politics, Law to be managed by Professor Catriona McKinnon, Department of Politics and International Relations. This grant would fund 15 Doctoral Scholarships.
   - A grant of £77,373 over 18 months for How individual is individual choice: Exploring team reasoning in context to Dr Nicolas Bardsley, School of Agriculture, Policy and Development.
   - A grant of up to £196,249 over 36 months for The first real estate bubble? Land prices and rents in Mediaeval England 1200-1550 to Professor Chris Brooks, ICMA.
   - A grant of up to £264,705 over 30 months for Extending Histories: from Medieval Mottes to Prehistoric Round Mounds to Dr Jim Leary, Department of Archaeology.

c) A recent visit to South Africa to attend the Henley graduation.

d) The Chancellor of the Exchequer’s announcement earlier in the day of state-backed loans of up to £10,000 for postgraduate study across all disciplines. In less positive news the Chancellor had warned of substantial cuts to public spending in the period ahead.

e) The Minister for Higher Education who would be visiting the University on 18 December 2014.
f) HEFCE’s publication of the evidence it received through its recent consultation on the use of metrics in research assessment. In total, 153 submissions were received, over half of which expressed scepticism about the further introduction of metrics into research assessment, just under a fifth were supportive and a quarter were ambivalent. A final report on the use of metrics would report in summer 2015.

14/73 Presentation on the Research Strategy

The Senate received a presentation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (copy inserted in Minute Book) on the University’s research position and plans to enhance research standing to 2020.

14/74 Presentation on the Access Agreement

The Senate received a presentation from the Dean of the Faculty of Science (copy inserted in Minute Book) on the University’s approach to the Access Agreement.

14/75 Reform of the Charter, Statutes and Ordinances (Item 6)

At its meeting on Friday 21 November 2014, the Council resolved on the first occasion, subject to any changes which the Privy Council should require in agreement with the Council:

1. “That a revised Charter of Incorporation, now submitted, be approved for communication to the Senate and to the Standing Committee of Convocation;”

2. “That, contingent on (a) above, a proposal to abolish the Statutes of the University be approved for communication to the Senate and to the Standing Committee of Convocation;”

3. “That, contingent on (a) and (b) above, revised Ordinances, now submitted, be approved subject only to any comment that the Senate may have on the matter.”

The Senate received the following documents, exactly as submitted to the Council:

1) Paper setting out the progress of the project to reform the Charter, Statutes and Ordinances and the resolutions that the Council was requested to make and subsequently made at its meeting.

2) The draft Charter of Incorporation.

3) The draft Ordinances.

4) A table showing the provisions of the current Charter, Statute and Ordinances, with detail of where each item is covered in the draft Instruments of Governance.

5) The following draft employment policies:
6) A table showing the comments received as a result of the all staff consultation, with responses.

7) Email from UCU to members of the Council.

The Senate were invited to formulate any comments that they would wish to see recorded in their minutes for communication to the January meeting of the Council.

Members of the Senate raised two comments. The first was to seek reassurance that UCU would be involved in whatever process was established to review draft employment policies. The Senate was informed that the policies as drafted prescribed such involvement not only of UCU but also of the Staff Forum. The second comment was in regard to UCU’s letter. It was noted that some of the comments quoted showed significant concern. Reassurance was given that this would form part of continuing discussions between the Director of HR and Director of Legal Services, and UCU and the Staff Forum.

The Senate were informed that Convocation would be consulted with and that a second resolution would be submitted to the Council on 23 January 2015.

14/76 Report of the University Executive Board (Item 7 b)

The Senate received a Report of the meetings of the University Executive Board held on 13 and 27 October, 10 and 24 November 2014 and approved the recommendations contained therein.

In regard to items 3 and 4 (Reports of the English and History Project), the Vice-Chancellor commended the work undertaken by the Schools involved.

It was noted that Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Van de Noort) was currently undertaking a project with the Department of Film, Theatre & Television.

14/77 Report of the University Board for Teaching and Learning (Item 8 a)

The Senate approved the Report of the meetings of the University Board for Teaching and Learning held on 15 October and 3 November 2014.

In regard to item 2 (Student Surveys) Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Brooks) informed the Senate that the overall picture for the National Student Survey (NSS) was encouraging with overall satisfaction of 89%, consistent with the 2013 score and maintaining the ranking of 37 out of 156 institutions. The University remained above the sector average of 86%, with Electronic Engineering, Meteorology, and Environmental science achieving a 100% satisfaction rate. Some areas showed
decreasing satisfaction rates and continued to compare poorly within the sector. Particular focus was being given to those Schools/Departments through action plans and support through the School Planning and Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (SPELT) Process. The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey was also encouraging; the overall high level of satisfaction of 89% compared favourably with the sector average of 83%.

In regard to item 4 (Penalties for late submission) it was noted that the Board had approved minor amendments to the Policy on Penalties for Late Submission, together with additional guidance for staff and students which clarified the definition of a working day. The Board had agreed that, in principle, public holidays would be defined with reference to the country where the relevant campus was situated.

In regard to item 5 (Black and Minority Ethnic Attainment Gap) it was reported that the Final Report of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Attainment Gap Project had recommended a series of 27 recommendations to address the disparities in attainment between white and BME students, 26 of which had been agreed.

14/78 Report of the University Board for Research and Innovation (Item 8 b)

The Senate approved the Report of the meeting of the University Board for Research and Innovation held on 19 November 2014.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Professor Mithen) informed the Senate that work was progressing well with the Institute for Environmental Analytics with a number of staff appointments already made.

14/79 Report of the Management Board of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science (Item 8 c)

The Senate approved the Report of the meetings of the Management Board of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science held on 16 October and 12 November 2014.

The Dean shared the good news that in the QS World Rankings, Arts and Humanities had risen to 136 in the world and 22 in the UK.

It was reported that good progress had been made in relations with five partner institutions within Europe.

14/80 Report of the Management Board of the Faculty of Life Sciences (Item 8 d)

The Senate approved the Report of the meetings of the Management Board of the Faculty of Life Sciences held on 28 October 2014 and a meeting of the Board held jointly with the Management Board of the Faculty of Science held on 13 November 2014.

The Dean reported that concerns had been expressed within the Faculty around the implementation of the Unconditional Offer scheme and suggested that the title ‘Academic Excellence Scheme’ was inappropriate.

14/81 Report of the Management Board of the Faculty of Science (Item 8 e)
The Senate approved the Report of the meetings of the Management Board of the Faculty of Science held on 17 September and 9 October 2014.

14/82 Report of the Management Board of the Henley Business School (Item 8 f)

The Senate approved the Report of the meetings of the Management Board of the Henley Business School (HBS) held on 13 November 2014.

The Deputy Dean referred to the notable success of Henley Business School in several business school rankings. It was also reported that the Association of MBAs had formally confirmed its re-accreditation of the Business School for a further period of five years.

14/83 Report of the Research Ethics Committee for 2013-14 (Item 8 g)

The Senate received, and for its part approved, the Report of the Research Ethics Committee for 2013-14.

14/84 Other Retirements (Item 9 a)

The Senate agreed to recommend to the Council that each of the following be accorded the title of Honorary Fellow for a period of five years with effect from the date indicated:

Ms Carol Prior (1 September 2014)
Mrs Kay Dickinson (12 October 2014)
Miss Celia Ayres (1 November 2014)

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Student representatives withdrew from the remainder of the meeting
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