University of Suffolk

SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16 June 2021 at 14:00 hours via Zoom

Chair:	Professor Helen Langton (Vice-Chancellor)
Present:	Dr Suha Al-Naimi (School of Engineering, Arts, Science and Technology, Vice-Chancellor nominee), Professor Emma Bond (Director of Research), Holly Bowen (Admissions Manager), Dr Ellen Buck (Director of Learning and Teaching), Aaron Burrell (Head of Learning Information and Environments, Vice-Chancellor nominee), Adam Clayden (School of Engineering, Arts, Science and Technology representative), Professor Mohammad Dastbaz (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Dr Paul Driscoll-Evans (Dean, School of Health and Sports Sciences), Fiona Fisk (Academic Registrar and Director of Student Life and Registry Services), Daniel Goulborn (President, Students' Union), Rachel Heathershaw (University wide representative, School of Health and Sports Sciences), Professor Gurpreet Jagpal (Pro-Vice-Chancellor Business and Entrepreneurship), Dr Wendy Lecluyse (School of Social Sciences and Humanities representative), Professor Brian McCook (Dean, School of Social Sciences and Humanities), Dr Stuart McErlain-Naylor (School of Health and Sports Sciences representative), Robert Price (Suffolk Business School representative), Reilly Willis (University wide representative, School of Social Sciences and Humanities)
Apologies:	Stuart Agnew (Representative, University and College Union), Dr Sam Chenery-Morris (University wide academic representative (School of Health and Sports Sciences)), Dr Daba Chowdhury (University wide academic representative (Suffolk Business School)), Marianne Flack (Director of Quality, Teacher Development, Student Progress and Foundation Learning, Suffolk New College), Stephanie Nye (Students' Union School Officer, Health and Sports Sciences), Kerry Payne (Head of Higher Education and Access, East Coast College), Thomas Swain (Students' Union School Officer, Social Sciences and Humanities),
Secretary:	Alison McQuin (Head of Quality (Committee and Validation))
In attendance:	Polly Bridgman (Director of External Relations), James Nial (Head of Planning and Management Information), Deborah Odell for Stuart Agnew, Katie Tyrell (Research Associate) for item 5 APP Research

Minutes shown in bold italics should be treated as confidential and will be removed from the published set on the University website.

[Secretary's note: The meeting was not quorate and so it was agreed that additional comments and indication of approval would be sought electronically from members.]

Minutes of previous meetings held on 3 March 2021 and the sub-group meeting on 30 March 2021

20/159   The minutes of the meetings held on 3 March and 30 March 2021 were approved as an accurate record to be published on the website.

Matters arising

20/160   All matters arising items were either completed, deferred or due for completion at a later date.

20/161   It was reported that the Quality team were working closely with the Director of Learning and Teaching and the Associate Deans on the streamlining quality processes project.

Students' Union report

20/162   The Students' Union report was received, noting the achievements of the Students' Union over a difficult year with Covid. Work on the 'Good Night Out' and student bystander campaign would continue next academic year.

20/163   Members thanked the Students' Union President and School Officers for their contribution to Senate, noting that this was their last meeting.

Chair's report

20/164   The Chair's report was received, noting that Amanda Tiller, Student Life Assistant, won the Hero of the Year at the Students' Union awards.

20/165   A further 'all staff update' would be issued following the recent Prime Minister's announcement on Covid-19. While the deadline for exiting lockdown had been delayed, it was not expected to affect the start of the autumn term. The Recovery Planning Group had developed three scenarios for course delivery in 2021/22, dependent on government Covid-19 restrictions in place.

Access and Participation Plan (APP) research

20/166   The APP research explored the factors influencing students' decisions to come to the University of Suffolk, the student experience of seeking additional support and the experience of developing employability skills.

20/167   The research was completed using quantitative data as well as the use of focus groups. In the future, qualitative research would be completed prior to the survey, to help inform questions. In addition, the team would engage in large scale data mapping to identify any gaps, noting that a wealth of rich data was available from some smaller focused projects.

20/168   The impact of Covid-19 on progress with the APP was discussed, noting that some benefits included extending the geographical reach through online activities; developing a new range of tools and techniques; and creating an online and elongated induction that led to better engagement with online learning. However, Covid-19 had inhibited access to schools and made it harder to reach some groups due to digital poverty. A new digital support fund had been set-up to help existing students with costs towards digital technology.

20/169   It was confirmed that the final report would be provided at the next Senate meeting.

Agreed action: The Director of Learning and Teaching to submit the final APP report to the next Senate meeting for discussion.

Policies and procedures

Framework and Regulations for Higher National Awards
20/170   Minor amendments were proposed to the Framework and Regulations for Higher National Awards to ensure its continued alignment with Pearson, the awarding body.

20/171   It was agreed that paragraph 3 should be updated to include the terms 'programme' and 'unit' leader to reflect the terminology used by Pearson. While it was suggested that paragraph 12 be updated to show that all units should be attempted it was agreed that this was sufficiently covered within paragraphs 9 and 10 and the programme specification.

Outcome: Approved.

Framework and Regulations for Undergraduate Awards; Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards; Framework and Regulations for Integrated Masters Awards
20/172   All the Framework and Regulations had been reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy and procedure reviews.

20/173   Following discussion at Quality Committee, it was proposed that no changes would be made to the undergraduate awards classification algorithm until further detail from the OfS consultation had been released along with further analysis of University data to assess impact. The Assessment Regulations Working Group, along with Quality Committee, had agreed the removal of third attempts, with no exceptional circumstances under which these could be granted. It was confirmed that the financial penalty referenced within paragraph 76 was not imposed for defers.

Outcome: Approved.

20/174   Members noted that communications to staff and students were needed. It was agreed that the Academic Registrar would co-ordinate this to include dissemination to staff, student guides and training specifically to support Assessment Board Chairs and Secretaries.

Agreed action: The Academic Registrar to co-ordinate dissemination of the changes to the assessment regulations to staff and students prior to the beginning of the 2021/22 academic year.

20/175   Members thanked those involved in the Assessment Regulations Working Group, which included both academic and professional service representation.

Regulations for the Preparation and Conduct of Examinations
20/176   Minor changes were proposed to the regulations, including a title change to Regulations for the Preparation and Conduct of Invigilated Examinations, to reflect that this covered a specific assessment type. Further assessment discussions were being held within the Centre of Excellence for Learning and Teaching (CELT) and the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee (LTAC) following lessons learned during Covid-19.

Outcome: Approved.

Student Representation and Student Voice Policy

20/177   The existing Student Representation Code of Practice was reviewed in collaboration with the Students' Union. It was confirmed that students were able to opt out of joining the Students' Union during enrolment and that further supporting documentation would be developed to ensure the policy was accessible to all students.

Outcome: Approved.

Support for Study Procedure

20/178   The Fitness to Study Procedure was reviewed as part of the cycle of policy and procedure reviews. The review had shown that the procedure was broadly in line with the sector, but changes were proposed, including a title change to Support for Study Procedure.

20/179   Members noted that some small corrections were needed, including showing that partner institutions would retain the existing Personal Tutor role, but supported the changes in principle.

Agreed action: The Academic Registrar to update the procedure with the following:
- Update appendix 2 to reflect the revised title
- Add 'or equivalent at partner institution' to stage 1 and in reference to the Personal Academic Coach role

The revised procedure should be updated prior to publication in August 2021.

20/180   It was noted that case review groups would take place at all partners in the future and that training would be made available to institutions.

Work-based and Placement Learning Framework

20/181   The proposed changes reflected the latest sector guidance. Where necessary, requirements from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) would take precedence to the principles outlined in paragraph 16.

Agreed action: The Academic Registrar to update paragraph 16 to show that the process/criteria for selecting and approving placement settings could be adapted to the requirements of PSRBs. To be completed prior to publication in August 2021.

20/182   It was suggested that the role of the placement co-ordinator should be recognised within the workload allocation model.

Lecture capture

20/183   The principles of lecture capture for 2021/22 was presented, building on the implementation during Covid-19 as this was enthusiastically received by students.

20/184   It was noted that technology would be employed within rooms on campus to support lecture capture and that further guidance and training for staff would be available.

20/185   A Lecture Capture Policy was being developed that would relate to existing student policies, such as the Student Disciplinary Procedure. It was noted that the Lecture Capture Policy would need to go to the Policies and Procedures Committee prior to coming forward to Senate approval.

Personal academic coaching

20/186   The personal academic coaching model was presented, which would replace the current personal tutor role at Ipswich. This new approach was developed by a task and finish group with representatives from all Schools and from discussions with students.

20/187   Where possible, the first academic coaching session with a student should take place face-to-face, to start building trust, but can take place either online or in-person thereafter.

20/188   Training and guidance would be provided to staff along with additional online guidance through the Course Blueprint and the development of a CPD hub.

Senate election results

20/189   It was confirmed that the elections for vacant Senate positions had been completed with Dr Ross Kemble elected as the Suffolk Business School representative and Dr Rachael Martin and Sean Preston elected as University wide academic representatives. New members would be provided with a briefing prior to the first Senate meeting of 2021/22.

20/190   Members thanked Dr Sam Chenery-Morris, Robert Price and Dr Daba Choudhury for their contribution to Senate, noting that their term of office had ended.

Apprenticeships

20/191   Since the Ofsted Monitoring Visit in February, the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) were re-written and shared with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The ESFA commended both documents for being more robust than previous iterations that clearly demonstrated progress.

20/192   Regular meetings were now in place between key members of the Senior Leadership Team along with six-weekly meetings between the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Business and Entrepreneurship), the Academic Registrar and the ESFA to ensure that improvements were being made.

20/193   Members noted that further work was still required before additional apprentices were recruited and prior to a return visit from Ofsted.

Student withdrawal update

20/194   The expected increase in withdrawals after Covid-19 hadn't taken place, with some exceptions at course level.

20/195   Further detailed reports against key performance indicators were provided to School Executives. It was recognised that Course Leaders may have more detailed knowledge for the reasons for students withdrawing and this should be discussed at School level.

20/196   Partner dashboards on Qlik were being developed and it was confirmed that both the London School of Commerce (LSC) and the Global Banking School (GBS) now had access to the data on Qlik. It was reported that it was more beneficial to look at cohort withdrawal data rather than annual data figures for partners that had multiple cohort intakes within an academic year.

Student recruitment

20/197 The difficulty in comparing recruitment figures to previous years was discussed, noting the different environment and deadline dates due to Covid-19. It was confirmed that a RAG rated list for conversion rates was provided to Deans and the Portfolio Oversight Committee.

Agreed action: The Director of External Relations to provide comparative student recruitment data for 2019/20 and 2020/21, where it was meaningful to do so, for the next Senate meeting.

20/198 It was reported that the Clearing campaign had started and that Course Leaders could contact External Relations should they want support for targeted course campaigns.

Covid-19

20/199 It was agreed that all sub-committees of Senate would be requested to include an item on capturing good practice that had occurred during Covid-19 at their next meeting so that any common themes can be identified.

Agreed action: The Chair and Secretary to request that all Senate sub-committees include an item on good practice during Covid-19 at their next meeting.

REF and RDAP

20/200 An update was provided to members on progress with REF and RDAP.

Partnerships

Partnerships update
20/201 An update on existing and new partnerships was provided to members.

Partnerships register
20/202 The University's register of partnership arrangements was received.

Course proposal forms

20/203 The list of course proposal forms approved since the last meeting was received.

Course suspension and discontinuation forms

20/204 The list of approved course suspension and discontinuation forms was provided to members.

Course validation/re-approval outcomes

20/205 The list of courses that were approved/re-approved so far in 2020/21 was provided to members.

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) reports

20/206   The recent reports received from PSRB was shared with members.

Reports from sub-committees

Academic and Appointments Promotion Committee (AAPC)
20/207   The minutes from the AAPC meeting held on 29 April 2021 were received.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee (LTAC)
20/208   The minutes from the LTAC meeting held on 27 January and 5 May 2021 were provided for information.

Quality Committee
20/209   The minutes from the Quality Committee meeting held on 17 February and 19 May 2021 were provided for information.

Research and Enterprise Committee
20/210   The minutes from the Research and Enterprise Committee held on 17 February 2021 were provided for information.

School Academic Committee
20/211   The minutes from the School Academic Committees were provided for information.

Any other business

20/212   There was no further business.

Date of next meeting

20/213   The next meeting is to be confirmed.

Alison McQuin
Head of Quality (Committee and Validation)