

University of Suffolk

## SENATE

**Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15 March 2023 at 14:00 hours in room Seminar Room, Atrium Building**

**Chair:** Professor Helen Langton (Vice-Chancellor)

**Present:** Professor Emma Bond (Pro Vice-Chancellor Research) (until APP update), Dr Ellen Buck (Director of Learning and Teaching), Jo Campbell (Head of People, People and Organisational Development, Vice-Chancellor's nominee), Dr Sam Chenery-Morris (University wide representative, School of Health and Sports Sciences), Sam Clarke (Students' Union Officer, School of Social Sciences and Humanities), Professor Mohammad Dastbaz (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Fiona Fisk (Academic Registrar and Director of Student Life and Registry Services), Deana Hazeldene (School of Health and Sports Sciences representative), Professor Gurpreet Jagpal (Pro-Vice-Chancellor Business and Entrepreneurship), Dr Ross Kemble (Suffolk Business School representative), Dr Rachael Martin (University wide representative, School of Social Sciences and Humanities), Professor Alistair Mathie (Dean, School of Engineering, Arts and Science and Technology), Professor Brian McCook (Dean, School of Social Sciences and Humanities), Dr Judith McLeod (University wide representative, School of Health and Social Sciences), Abigail Morgan (OSACC Manager) (Professional Services representative), Felix Ngobigha (Lecturer, School of Engineering, Arts, Science and Technology, Vice-Chancellor's nominee), Sean Preston (University wide representative, School of Engineering, Arts, Science and Technology), Dr Pallawi Sinha (School of Social Sciences and Humanities representative), Reilly Willis (University wide representative, School of Social Sciences and Humanities)

**Apologies:** Associate Professor Stuart Agnew (Director, Centre for Academic and International Partnerships), Dr Adam Clayden (School of Engineering, Arts, Science and Technology representative), Dr Paul Driscoll-Evans (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Health and Wellbeing), Alex Gooch (Students' Union President of Education), Tim Greenacre (Chief Operating Officer), Dean McGeachie (Students' Union Officer, Suffolk Business School), James Nial (Head of Planning and Management Information), Shannon Pilsworth (Students' Union Officer, School of Engineering, Arts, Science and Technology), Jamie Steele (Students' Union Officer, School of Health and Sports Sciences),

**Secretary:** Alison McQuin (Head of Quality)

**In attendance:** John Cavani (Interim Director of External Relations), Dr Chris Huggins (Associate Dean for Learning, Teaching and Student Experience), Stuart Lipscombe (Representative, University and College Union), Laura Pennie (Deputy Academic Registrar)

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 of Senate was not quorate, items approved in principle at the meeting would be circulated to all members to ratify.

### **Minutes of previous meetings held on 12 October 2022 and 23 November 2023**

22/075 The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2022 and 23 November 2023 were approved as an accurate record to be published on the website.

### **Matters arising**

Terms of reference – Senate (from minute 22/016)

22/076 It was confirmed that the additional Senate election had been completed and members welcomed Dr Judith McLeod as the new Senate elected representative.

### **Students' Union report**

22/077 Members noted the full and comprehensive report provided by the Students' Union (SU). It was queried whether the SU could cope with the increase in access to the advice centre, it was explained that new staff had been appointed but there were still vacancies that needed to be filled. It was suggested the late appointments available on Wednesday afternoon could be moved to an alternative day to allow students access to the full range of other student activities.

### **Chair's report**

22/078 Members were notified that the University had been nominated for three Whatuni awards, in the career prospects, postgraduate and submission award categories. The results would be announced on 26 April 2023.

22/079 The results of the Students' Union election were shared, noting that only 7 out of the 17 positions had been filled. Lewis Woolston had been elected as President of Education and Katie Pickard as President of Activities and Wellbeing. Members congratulated the School's Officer for Social Sciences and Humanities on their re-election.

22/080 Work was ongoing to explore the timelines to gain General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) approval for the pharmacy provision.

22/081 The required National Student Survey (NSS) response rate had already been achieved but members were asked to continue to encourage students who had yet to complete the survey.

22/082 An update on the University's involvement in Ipswich gaining city status was provided. Members were also informed there were University representatives on each of the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPS) sub working groups.

### **Academic Integrity/ChatGPT**

22/083 A presentation was provided to members on the use of ChatGPT and Artificial Intelligence (AI) with group discussion on the potential risks and opportunities for its used.

22/084 The presentation highlighted how the University could mitigate the risks including early conversations with students, reimagining assessment, review of policies and practices and through skills development.

22/085 Members discussed the opportunity this provided to review the University's approach to assessment, agreeing that overarching assessment principles should be developed at an institutional level, to be implemented by course teams to ensure they met the differing needs of the subject.

**Agreed action:** The Director of Learning and Teaching to initiate University wide discussion over the next 18 months regarding the assessment strategy, with revised policies and procedures to be approved by the end of 2023/24.

22/086 It was recognised that evaluation of any changes needed to take place and noted this would be covered by existing quality assurance processes such as the annual monitoring process.

### Policies and procedures

#### Academic Misconduct

22/087 The Academic Misconduct Policy was updated to make explicit that use of AI was considered a form of contract cheating. Other minor amendments to job titles and terminology were also proposed. Further guidance on AI detection would be developed through the work of CELT.

22/088 It was agreed that further updates to the policy would be made including referencing professional behaviours in paragraph 8, expanding reference to poor practice in paragraph 19; referencing collaboration within paragraph 21; to include the PVC Research and the term 'normally' within paragraph 64.

**Agreed action:** The Deputy Academic Registrar to update paragraphs 8, 19, 21 and 64 following member suggestions. The revised policy should be submitted by 31 March for circulation to Senate members.

22/089 Following discussion, it was agreed that a percentage threshold for Turnitin reports should not be included within the policy as it may lead to confusion for staff and students. Further advice about how to read a Turnitin report would be included in the guidance developed by CELT.

22/090 It was confirmed that failing a DBS clearance was covered within other policies and so would not be included within the Academic Misconduct Policy.

#### Disability Statement

22/091 The Disability Statement was reviewed as part of the cyclical review process, with minor amendments proposed. Subject to the removal of the duplicated 'please check eligibility criteria' on page 11, members were supportive of the changes. It was confirmed that Student Services would be exploring how best to highlight the Disability Statement to applicants and students at the beginning of their course.

**Agreed action:** The Academic Registrar to remove the duplicated 'please check eligibility criteria' on page 11. The revised statement should be submitted by 31 March for circulation to Senate members.

22/092 It was suggested that the Disability Statement could be expanded to include staff.

**Agreed action:** The Head of People to work with the Assistant Director of Student Life to explore either a joint or separate Disability Statement for staff. An update should be provided at the June 2023 Senate meeting.

22/093 It was confirmed that the Student Services team were experienced with working with course teams to set alternative assessments where required.

Framework and Regulations for ITT (Lifelong Learning Sector) Awards

22/094 Members were supportive of the changes proposed to the Framework and Regulations for Initial Teacher Training (Lifelong Learning Sector) Awards.

**Outcome:** Approved in principle.

Framework and Regulations for SCITT Awards

22/095 The Framework and Regulations for School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) Awards was reviewed as part of the cyclical review process. The review process included input from SCITT partners and the academic link tutor.

22/096 It was confirmed that information concerning code of conduct and responsibilities of the placement setting were not included within the regulations as this was covered in other documentation and policies.

22/097 The SCITT partners had their own fitness to practise procedure as the professional elements of the course contributed to the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), which was awarded by a separate body. It was felt that it was more appropriate therefore to be dealt with by the partner, but would be approved at any future (re)approvals.

22/098 Only one submission opportunity on retake was offered as SCITT partners felt that as a professional qualification they wanted to ensure the trainees were of a suitable calibre to enter the teaching profession.

**Outcome:** Approved in principle.

Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards

22/099 It was proposed to revise the Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards to include a new Master of Fine Arts (MFA) award. Discussion had already taken place at the Quality Committee to ensure that the 300-credit structure was suitable for all Schools.

22/100 Members supported the proposal but requested that rounding of dissertation grades was made more explicit in paragraph 76 and 77 and the award be updated from Master of Art to Master of Arts.

**Agreed action:** The Deputy Academic Registrar to update the regulations to include reference to rounding of dissertation grades and to correct the typographical error in the award title. The revised regulations should be submitted by 31 March for circulation to Senate members.

Framework and Regulations for Undergraduate Awards delivered in partnership with Unitas

22/101 Members were supportive of the changes proposed to the Framework and Regulations for Undergraduate Awards delivered in partnership with Unitas, noting that bespoke regulations were required for the undergraduate provision due to Ministry of Justice requirements. Currently, there were no plans to develop bespoke regulations for the postgraduate provision at Unitas as they did not operate under the same external constraints.

**Outcome:** Approved in principle.

22/102 It was confirmed that extensions to assessment deadlines were managed locally by Unitas.

#### Research Misconduct Policy

22/103 The revised Research Misconduct Policy was provided to members. It was confirmed that it was standard practice for all allegations of research misconduct to be considered solely by the awarding university. As a result, the University's Office for Student Appeals, Complaint and Conduct (OSACC) team would not be involved in this process, however discussion would take place with OSACC regarding record keeping.

22/104 A number of minor grammatical and terminology corrections were provided by members in advance of the meeting, which would be implemented.

**Agreed action:** The PVC (Research) to update grammatical and terminology errors and submit by 31 March for circulation to Senate members.

#### Research Ethics Governance Framework

22/105 The revised Research Ethics Governance Framework was provided to members. It was confirmed that there was a separate Guidance for using Incentives for Participation in Research document. It was agreed that it should be made clear within the Framework that where a student or staff member were involved with research outside of the University, that the relevant organisation's procedures would be followed.

**Agreed action:** The PVC (Research) to update the Framework to make explicit the Guidance for using Incentives for Participation in Research document and that research with a separate organisation would be dealt with by the relevant organisation's procedures. The revised Framework should be submitted by 31 March for circulation to Senate members.

22/106 It was confirmed that the Research Ethics Committee does not investigate any allegations of research and a separate Investigative Officer would be appointed.

#### Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

22/107 The Student Attendance and engagement Monitoring Policy was reviewed as part of the normal cycle of reviews and incorporated external sector requirements. It was confirmed that the updates to paragraph 37 aligned with changes with Home Office policy but retained the flexibility for different delivery models.

**Outcome:** Approved in principle.

22/108 It was confirmed that there was the ability to track engagement with Panopto and Brightspace for students who had reasonable adjustments and were allowed to live-stream sessions.

22/109 A new attendance monitoring system was being piloted at Ipswich with full implementation from the 2023/24 academic year.

22/110 Members noted the need to balance the number of timetabled sessions on campus, to encourage attendance for students who required to travel, with promoting the holistic approach to courses, to encourage students to engage with other on-campus activities, such as use of the Library, in-person group work or peer support.

## Institutional SAR

22/111 The institutional self-assessment report (SAR) was received, with members noting this was a helpful paper and provided some good self-analysis. Each School had also produced a SAR, which supported the development of the institutional document.

**Outcome:** Approved in principle.

22/112 It was queried whether there were any underlying reasons for not recruiting higher numbers of male apprentices from minority ethnic groups. It was noted that this was not a situation that was unique to the University and was a challenge nationally. Members were reminded that employers were responsible for the recruitment of apprentices, with the University interviewing to ensure their suitability for the course.

## Honorary Awards Committee

Honorary awards nominations

22/113 Members supported the proposed honorary nominations, noting these were for information rather than approval.

Honorary Awards Committee terms of reference

22/114 The revised Honorary Awards Committee terms of reference were received and members agreed that point four should be updated to show that the removal of any awards should be taken in consultation with the Academic Registrar who has responsibility of the University's awards.

**Agreed action:** The Chair to update the terms of reference to show that the removal of awards would take place in consultation with the Academic Registrar. The revised terms of committee should be submitted by 31 March for circulation to Senate members.

## Partnerships

Colchester Teacher Training Consortium

22/115 A new partnership was proposed with Colchester Teacher Training Consortium (CTTC). CTTC wanted to move from their existing partnership with the University of Greenwich to the University of Suffolk as they wished to develop a local partnership and access to the University's resources.

22/116 The existing SCITT academic link tutor would take academic responsibility for CTTC, noting they would have capacity as the partnership with Inspiration Trust was ending at the end of the 2022/23 academic year and the three other SCITT partners were merging into a single consortium.

**Outcome:** Approved in principle.

## OSACC report

22/117 Members welcomed the annual OSACC report, noting the importance of the data but queried how academic colleagues were engaging with the report. It was suggested that this topic could form the seminar/discussion item at the next Senate meeting.

**Agreed action:** The Deans and elected members to ensure the OSACC report was shared widely with academic colleagues within their School.

**Agreed action:** The Deputy Academic Registrar to provide key learning points to the next Senate meeting.

- 22/118 It was explained that while OSACC case numbers remained relatively low, the cases submitted were becoming increasingly complex.
- 22/119 Comparison with other institutions was difficult as the data was not available, however limited information from the annual Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) showed that there had been year-on-year increases across the sector.
- 22/120 It was confirmed that SCITT courses would be included within the Ipswich data, as they were aligned to the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, but no cases had been reported by SCITT providers in the 2021/22 academic year. There were also no cases reported by students on Unitas courses in 2021/22.
- 22/121 Members agreed there was a need to be diligent about OSACC matters at informal stage so they don't progress to formal processes, unless required.

### **Access and Participation Plan update**

- 22/122 Members endorsed the recommendation that the University took part in the second phase of the roll out of the new Access and Participation Plan (APP) for 2025 onwards.

### **B3 student outcomes**

- 22/123 Since the B3 student outcomes paper had been produced, further developments, which were outlined in the Chair's report, concerning an OfS audit have taken place.

### **TEF submission**

- 22/124 The University's TEF submission was received for information, noting this was a substantial piece of work undertaken by colleagues.

### **Compliance report**

- 22/125 The 2021/22 compliance report to go to the April Board meeting was received for information.

### **Degree outcomes statement**

- 22/126 The 2021/22 degree outcomes statement, approved by Quality Committee, had been published on the University website and was received for information.

### **Withdrawal data**

- 22/127 The end-of-year withdrawal data was provided to members, noting that while there had been an increase in withdrawal rates in some areas, these were mostly within benchmark.
- 22/128 It was highlighted that, in future, the withdrawal data would need to reflect the OfS algorithm for continuation used within the B3 student outcomes.

### **EE annual report summary**

22/129 Members noted the value of the external examiner annual report summary as external examiners were a critical part of the quality assurance processes.

22/130 It was confirmed there was a list of internal staff who held external examiner appointments at other institutions.

**Agreed action:** The Deputy Academic Registrar to provide a list of internal staff holding external examiner roles to the next Senate meeting.

### **Assessment Board observation**

22/131 The annual observation of assessment board report was received, noting that progress had already been made on the actions.

### **Partnership update**

22/132 The partnership update was received, noting that due to the proportion of students at the partnerships the University was considered as a higher risk by the OfS compared to some other institutions.

### **Partnerships**

Partnerships register

22/133 The University's register of partnership arrangements was received.

### **Course proposal forms**

22/134 The list of course proposal forms approved since the last meeting was received.

### **Course suspension and discontinuation forms**

22/135 The list of approved course suspension and discontinuation forms was provided to members.

### **Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)**

PSRB reports

22/136 The recent reports received from PSRBs were shared with members.

### **Senate activity**

22/137 The items approved since the last full Senate meeting were provided by information.

### **Reports from sub-committees**

Academic Appointments and Promotions Committee

22/138 The minutes from the Academic Appointments and Promotions Committee held on 19 January 2023 were provided for information.

Quality Committee

22/139 The minutes from the Quality Committee meeting held on 14 September 2022, 30 November 2022 and 8 February 2023 were provided for information.



Research and Enterprise Committee

22/140 The minutes from the Research and Enterprise Committee held on 28 November 2022 were provided for information.

EAST School Academic Committee

22/141 The minutes of the EAST School Academic Committee held on 16 November 2022 were provided for information.

HSS School Academic Committee

22/142 The minutes of the HSS School Academic Committee held on 22 September 2022 were provided for information.

**Any other business**

22/143 No further business.

**Date of next meeting**

22/144 The next Senate meeting will take place at 14:00 on Wednesday 14 June 2023 in the Seminar Room, Atrium Building.

**Alison McQuin**  
**Head of Quality**