

Unconfirmed minutes

## The University of Manchester

### SENATE

Wednesday, 4 February 2009

*Present:*

Professor Gilbert (in the Chair for agenda item 3),  
 Professor Rothwell (in the Chair for the other items on the agenda),  
 Drs Allan, Brockhaus-Grand, Professor Brown, Dr Browning, Professors Case, Coombs, Drs Cobb, Davies, Eccles, Professors Esmail, Fagan, Farrell, Georgiou, Gunter, Drs Kitmitto, Lane-Serff, Professors Leudar, Li, Dr Lyte, Miss Medforth, Dr Merriman, Professors O'Brien, Perkins, Rubery, Stirling, Dr Timmermann, Professor Ulph, Dr Vallely, Professor Vincent, and Ms Wilkinson (32).

*For unreserved business:* Ms Davies, Mr Holloway, Mr Jenkinson, Mr Mahalla and Mr Pinfold, Students' Union.

*Invited:* Professor Agnew (School of Environment and Development), Professor Luker (School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work) and Professor Whitehead (School of Chemistry).

*In attendance:* The Head of the Student Services Centre. The Registrar and Secretary (for agenda item 3).

#### 1. Minutes

**Confirmed:** the minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2008 subject to the following amendments:

- (a) The addition of Professor Li to the record of attendees.
- (b) Agendum 5(a) Academic promotions

*Delete:* **Agreed:** To approve the proposal from the meeting that the current titles of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor be retained and assigned to all staff on all three career tracks but that the operation of these titles for the three career tracks be monitored to ensure that teaching-focused staff are not disadvantaged.

*Insert:* **Agreed:** To approve the proposal from the meeting that the current titles of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor be retained and assigned to all staff on the teaching and research and teaching only career tracks and that the current titles of Research Fellow, Senior Research Fellow, Reader and Professor be retained for all staff on the research only career track but that the operation of these titles for the three career tracks be monitored to ensure that teaching-focused staff are not disadvantaged.

#### 2. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

### 3. Statement by the President and Vice-Chancellor

*He provided an oral supplement to his written statement as follows:*

- (a) The current global economic downturn would inevitably have serious implications for the University and higher education in the UK more broadly. The recurrent funding of higher education by Government (both for teaching and research) would almost certainly be tighter and more closely scrutinised than had been the case in the past. There were also increasing signs of pressure on other sources of income. Whatever the outcome of the General Election in 2010 there was every likelihood of increased taxation and a reduction in public expenditure which would impact severely on universities. It was not inconceivable that the next 10 years would be characterised by tight funding and demanding efficiency gains. In the meantime, the indications for publicly-funded capital programmes were more promising, with Capital Investment Framework (CIF) funding from HEFCE seemingly protected by a strong Government inclination to create employment through capital spending. Despite these overall gloomy predictions he emphasized that the key commitment had to be to remain relentlessly strategic and not to allow the difficult choices that would have to be made to deflect the University from its strategic goals. Furthermore, he was reasonably optimistic about the University's ability to cope during the coming period and to out-perform a number of comparator institutions, in the UK and internationally.
- (b) In recognition of the fact that pay negotiations, including the funding of pension entitlements, would be an important issue for UK higher education in 2009 he noted that it would be prudent for the University to prepare for a range of eventualities in relation to the processes and outcomes of those negotiations. To this end Senate was being asked to endorse a paper that had been prepared for the Board of Governors recommending how the University should respond to possible industrial action, including 'action short of a strike'. In considering this matter it was important to note that the proposals reflected the same fundamental principles that had informed the University's handling of 'action short of a strike' in 2006 i.e.,
- that in pursuing institutional, industrial and / or academic ends we must *never* allow the interests of students to be compromised;
  - that we should continue to value collegiality as the defining characteristic of an academic community, recognising that it is always going to be tested in difficult times, but knowing that there is no viable alternative.

During the ensuing discussion it was suggested that Senate should be invited to express its commitment to a final salary pension scheme for academic staff. While it was acknowledged that pension arrangements will be a concern for all staff it was felt that it would be irresponsible to take such a position without full consideration of all the facts and the costs that might be involved.

**Agreed:**

To endorse the *Procedures for Protecting the Interests of Students in the Event of Strike Action and / or Action Short of a Strike* as detailed in the *Appendix* to these minutes.

### 4. Institutional assessment of the RAE results

**Received:** a short presentation by the Deputy President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor on the outcome of the 2008 RAE.

**Noted:**

- (a) That the results of the 2008 RAE published in December were in the form of an overall quality profile for each Unit of Assessment (UoA) made up of three quality sub-profiles relating to outputs, environment and esteem. Based on GPA (i.e., quality alone) and excluding several small specialist institutions, the University was ranked sixth behind Cambridge, Oxford, LSE, Imperial College and UCL. However, based on research power (i.e., GPA \* FTE returned) it was ranked third behind Cambridge and Oxford. It was notable that the University of Manchester had included in its submission a total of just under 2,000 staff across 53 Units of Assessment (UoA). In terms of a 'medals table', based on 4\* indicators the University was place fourth behind Cambridge, Oxford and UCL. It was clear, therefore, that on a number of different measures the University had done very well. Several UoAs had been ranked first with respect to quality (GPA) including Cancer Studies, Dentistry, Nursing and Midwifery, Sociology, Russian, Slavonic and East European Languages and Iberian and Latin American Languages.
- (b) That the principal consideration now was the level of funding that might be allocated on the basis of these results. There had been much speculation in the specialist press, including *Research Fortnight*. In the meantime, the HEFCE funding letter of 28 January 2009 had indicated that the total sum available for mainstream QR had increased above the rate of inflation, which in cash terms was approximately 15%. The volume factor for the calculation of QR for individual institutions would exclude that proportion deemed 1\* and unclassified. The weighting factor for STEM subjects had been changed to ensure no reduction in the proportion of QR assigned to them.
- (c) That the HEFCE funding letter of 5 March 2009 would give the definitive financial outcomes for the University. In the meantime, the internal distribution of QR income was under discussion and while nothing had been agreed it should not be assumed that the formula used by HEFCE would be adopted internally for this purpose.

**5. Teaching and Learning**

- (a) Report from the Vice-President (Teaching and Learning).

**Noted:**

- (i) That following a request at the meeting of Senate on 29 October 2008 a summary statement on the numbers of prizes offered within each Faculty and their average value had been prepared.
- (ii) That the details of the *University Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement* had been finalised in the light of the feedback on the initial proposal discussed at the meeting of Senate on 29 October 2008, including employers who had uniformly welcomed the notion as a means of aiding them to recognise exceptional candidates. Furthermore, they had suggested that the University should do more in this regard, perhaps for students at the end of their second year of study. The first awards would be made at the end of the current academic year to the top 0.5% of graduating students based on academic performance and determined on a *pro rata* Faculty basis. Each recipient would receive £1,000, a personalised glass award and a certificate.
- (iii) That having consulted with colleagues in Schools on the provision of teaching and learning space locally, paying particular attention to those areas where space was felt to be a serious inhibitor to the goals of the Review of Undergraduate Education, it was clear that space for group work, informal study, quiet space for activities such as peer support, space for interdisciplinary learning, and 24/7 access to IT facilities were

common themes. This information would help to influence the Learning Commons project.

- (iv) The view expressed by some members of Senate that the issue of teaching and learning space was not solely a matter for the Learning Commons project but also required greater consideration of the resources that were needed in Schools and that students wanted to see improvements in space and resources both locally and centrally.

(b) Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)

**Received:** a proposal to adopt a Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) prepared by Professor Clive Agnew in his capacity as Chair of the working group established to examine the practicalities of implementing the HEAR.

**Noted:**

- (i) That the introduction of a record of achievement for students on graduation i.e., the HEAR to supplement the classified final award had been a recommendation in the Burgess Report published in 2007. Since then the proposal had been further developed so that it was envisaged that all students graduating in 2010-11 would be issued with a HEAR.
- (ii) That within the University, following preliminary consideration by Task Force 1 of the Review of Undergraduate Education, Professor Clive Agnew had been asked to chair a working group to examine the practicalities of implementing the HEAR. In parallel the University had participated in the UK Trial Pilots for the HEAR along with 17 other institutions. Subsequently, the University has been asked to use English and Life Sciences as examples.
- (iii) That following extensive consultation across the University it was proposed that:
- the HEAR (enhanced transcript) be piloted for undergraduate programmes in Biology, English and Geography for graduation in 2009;
  - the HEAR be extended to all undergraduate programmes for students graduating in 2010;
  - *Campus Solutions* (CS) be used to deliver the HEAR and hence the development of *Campus Solutions* to meet the needs of the HEAR to be prioritised in due course;
  - the suggested Manchester protocols to verify non-credit bearing achievement were fit for purpose;
  - a committee be established to determine the inclusion of specific non-credit bearing activities according to the protocols referred to above;
  - a secure electronic documents system (*Digitary*) be the sole method of presenting the HEAR to students on graduation;
  - the HEAR be further developed to enable the inclusion of comments on student specific academic achievements at module level;
  - the aspirational statement on a Manchester Graduate be re-written as a factual statement.
- (v) That for the HEAR to be adopted Schools would have:
- to upload the results of the Examination Board(s) to *Campus Solutions*;

- to decide, where the programme cohort is less than 20, whether to amalgamate programmes for ranking of performance;
- to upload dissertation titles to *Campus Solutions*;
- to upload the award of prizes to *Campus Solutions*;
- to decide whether the description of programme achievements currently based on academic learning outcomes is suitable for readers of the HEAR i.e., potential employers, or if revision to a discipline statement is required;
- to decide whether to include any non-credit bearing student achievements not listed in part 3 of the HEAR

**Agreed:**

To endorse the proposals for the implementation of a Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) as detailed in (iv) and (v) above.

**6. 2008-09 Student number performance**

**Received:** a report of 2008-09 student number performance prepared by colleagues in the Planning Support Office.

**7. Matters for report to Senate**

(a) Grant of the title of Professor Emeritus/Emerita

Acting on behalf of Senate and the Board of Governors, the President and Vice-Chancellor has approved the conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus/Emerita on the following:

Professor Russell Dobash, Professor of Criminology and Social Policy (in the School of Law in the Faculty of Humanities) *from 30 September 2009*.

Professor Rebecca Dobash, Professor of Social Research (in the School of Law in the Faculty of Humanities) *from 30 September 2009*.

(b) Appointment of Head of School

Acting on behalf of the Board of Governors, and on the recommendation of the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, the President and Vice-Chancellor has approved the appointment of:

Professor Andrew Gibson, as Head of the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, for the period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011.

Professor Christopher Whitehead, as Head of the School of Chemistry in the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, for the period 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2012.

Acting on behalf of the Board of Governors, and on the recommendation of the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, the President and Vice-Chancellor has approved the appointment of:

Professor Simon Guy, as Head of the School of Environment and Development in the Faculty of Humanities, for the period 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2012.

## (c) University Nominated Director of UMSS Ltd

Acting on behalf of the Board of Governors, the President and Vice-Chancellor approved the appointment of Professor Clive Agnew as University Nominated Director of The University of Manchester Superannuation Scheme Ltd from 16 January 2009 to 15 January 2012.

**8. Any other business**

## (a) Closure of courses for the public

**Noted:**

A concern from a member of Senate to have learnt recently of the decision to close Courses for the Public.

**Reported:**

- (i) That at merger in October 2004 managerial responsibility for the Centre for Continuing Education had been assigned to the Faculty of Humanities. At that time, and following the withdrawal of government funding for its activities, the Centre was predicting a significant deficit. Plans were, therefore, implemented which it was envisaged would see the Centre break even in 2009-10.
- (ii) That in parallel with these financial concerns it had increasingly become apparent that the activities of the Centre as they had developed were focused on a niche market that was not consistent with the University's outreach agenda nor was the provision linked to the research outputs of the University.
- (iii) That consequently the Centre was faced with three significant challenges: achieving a break even budget; widening the demographic of the communities it served and ensuring a link between the research in the University and its course provision. The position of the Centre was then further exacerbated by the appointment recently of the Director to a new role within the University which thereby had created a leadership vacuum.
- (iv) That in these circumstances it had been reported to the President and Vice-Chancellor and agreed that Courses for the Public would close. This decision was being progressed through the committee process which would culminate in the meeting of the Planning and Resources Committee (PRC) on 10 February 2009.
- (v) That in the meantime, it should be noted that this decision had been taken on the basis of no compulsory redundancies. Furthermore, this closure did not signal a moving away from public engagement. On the contrary, the Manchester Beacon for Public Engagement was indicative of significant investment that included activities in the Centre for New Writing, the Manchester Museum, the Whitworth Art Gallery, the John Rylands University Library and the Martin Harris Centre. The issue now would be to focus on those activities that had been identified as key priorities. An update on the progress of the Manchester Beacon would be reported to a future meeting of Senate. (*Action:* The Deputy President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

There was no other business.

**The University of Manchester  
Office of the President and Vice-Chancellor**

## **Procedures for Protecting the Interests of Students in the Event of Strike Action and/or Action Short of a Strike**

### **1. Background**

Following the dispute over pay in 2006 the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) has reviewed and revised its negotiating framework for future pay negotiations. As a result, a new JNCHES agreement is in place, having been developed in consultation with all the recognised trade unions. Unfortunately, following a ballot, UCU took the decision not to endorse the new arrangements. UCU thus remains outside of the single table bargaining framework.

UCU now plans to present their 2009 pay claim to UCEA independently. Indications are that the claim will for either (i) RPI as of July 2009 plus 5%, or (ii) 8%, whichever is the greater.

Set in the context of the financial climate facing the nation and sector, and particularly the likelihood of significantly increased costs for the employers (i.e., the universities) in relation to pensions, this claim cannot prudently be met. It is therefore possible – and maybe even likely - that an industrial dispute will arise over the remuneration of academic and academic support staff covered by the UCU.

The University took great care in 2006 to manage the local situation that emerged during national industrial action by the UCU, and wishes to be equally well prepared in the event of a further dispute in future years.

### **2. Principles**

As in 2006, our management of industrial action, should it occur in future, will be guided by two cardinal commitments. The first is the paramount commitment of the University to its students; the second a profound commitment to collegiality as the only authentic basis for managing professional relationships within a university community.

Pursuant to these two commitments, we will:

- 2.1 Endeavour by all proper and legitimate means, even in the regrettable eventuality of wage negotiations leading to industrial action, to preserve within the University community a culture of mutual trust based on respect for shared values about the nature and purposes of higher learning.
- 2.2 Respect the integrity and professionalism of all our staff by deeming a member of staff to be engaged industrial action, including “action short of a strike”, only by asking them and trusting them to inform their line managers of a decision to take such action, and not by otherwise monitoring their activities.
- 2.3 Expect all members of staff who have not indicated to their line manager that they are taking industrial action to discharge all their normal responsibilities as employees.
- 2.4 Take all proper and legitimate steps to protect the rights and interests of our students during any industrial action, and in particular use our best endeavours to ensure that scheduled examinations and other forms of assessment are completed effectively and on time for all students.

- 2.5 Operate on the basis that while individual academic and academic support staff may judge that the issues prompting strike action and/or “action short of a strike” override their ethical and professional obligations to a current cohort of students, *the University at an institutional level has an absolute obligation to safeguard the interests of all its students.*

### 3. Actions

In implementing these principles, the University will put in place the following arrangements and operating protocols.

- 3.1 We will establish a *University Examinations Board* with overall authority and responsibility in relation to all assessment and examination processes within the University, and in particular with the authority to determine student grades in circumstances where normal procedures have, in the judgement of the President and Vice-Chancellor, become unworkable, and to determine all other matters relating to the progression and award or non-award of degrees and other distinctions to students pursuant to their academic studies.

- 3.2 The University Examinations Board shall have the following membership:

President and Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair)  
 Deputy President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor  
 The four Vice-Presidents and Deans of Faculties  
 The Vice-Presidents with policy responsibilities  
 Two professorial members of Senate to be nominated by the President and Vice-Chancellor  
 One member of Senate from each of the four Faculties, elected by members of Senate  
 At least one external examiner  
 Registrar & Secretary (Secretary) or nominee

The Board will have powers to co-opt.

- 3.3 Strike action and/or “action short of a strike” being taken by staff of the University or any other persons that prevents a student from beginning or completing any final examination or other assessment will be deemed to constitute “other sufficient cause” under the provisions of Statute XX, Paragraph 3, and “good cause” under the provisions of Paragraph 33 of the Regulations for Undergraduate Awards; and accept these exceptional circumstances as justifiable reasons for varying conditions relating to the assessment of individual students as permitted under the provisions of General Regulation XII, Paragraph 9.
- 3.4 The University Examinations Board will be empowered to authorise changes or amendments to the requirements for examination, assessment, progression and award or non-award of degrees and other distinctions as set down in the Regulations for Undergraduate Awards, the Regulations for the Degree of Master, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate, the Regulations for individual degree programmes, including higher degrees, and any other Regulations as appropriate, provided that any such changes or amendments do not disadvantage students.
- 3.5 The University Examinations Board will take all necessary steps to ensure that:
- (i) A final result is determined for each student for the academic year 2008-09, and
  - (ii) The status of each student in relation to progression and, where appropriate, the award or non-award of degrees or other distinctions is determined in time to meet all obligations to students in relation to assessment, progression and graduation.



- 3.6 In meeting its over-riding commitment not to disadvantage students, the University Examinations Board will use its best endeavours at all times to ensure that the scholarly integrity of assessment and examination processes is maintained and that results in 2008-09 are comparable with results in other years.
- 3.7 The establishment of a *Faculty Examinations Board* for each of the four Faculties with overall authority and responsibility in relation to all assessment and examination processes within the Schools assigned to the Faculty, and in particular with the authority to determine student grades for the 2008-09 academic year, and to determine all other matters relating to the progression and award or non-award of degrees and other distinctions to students pursuant to their academic studies.
- 3.8 The membership of Faculty Examinations Board shall be as follows:
- Vice-President and Dean of the Faculty (in the Chair)
  - All Heads of School (or equivalent) within the Faculty
  - The Faculty Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning (or equivalent)
  - The Faculty Associate Dean for Graduate Education (or equivalent)
  - At least one external examiner
  - The Head of Faculty Administration or nominee (Secretary)
- The Faculty Examinations Board will have powers to co-opt.
- 3.9 Each Faculty Examinations Board will provide the University Examinations Board with a final result for all students in its Faculty according to a timetable determined by the University Examinations Board, together, where relevant, with recommendations about the progression and the award or non-award of degrees or other distinctions.
- 3.10 Where the required information in relation to the assessment, examination and progression of students and/or the award or non-award of degrees and other distinctions is for any reason not available on a timely basis, the University Examinations Board shall have the right to require such information from the Head of School concerned.
- 3.11 Faculty Examinations Boards and the University Examinations Board will have assigned to them all the responsibilities given to Boards of Examiners under General Regulation XII for assessing the form and content of examination papers together with statements of any other requirements and the authority to determine results.

Professor Alan Gilbert  
President and Vice-Chancellor

20 January 2009