

Unconfirmed minutes

The University of Manchester

SENATE

Wednesday, 1 February 2006

Present:

Professor Gilbert (in the Chair),

Ms Barker, Professor Bishop, Dr Birse, Professor Börjars, Drs Brockhaus-Grand, Browning, Professor Durell, Drs Eccles, Ford, Professors Foster, Garrod, Gaskell, Georghiou, Gordon, Hammond, Humphries, Layzell, Miss Medforth, Drs McGovern, Mellor, Professor Munn, Dr Nkwenti-Azeh, Professor North, Dr Owen-Crocker, Professors Pattrick, Perkins, Dr Quayle, Professor Rothwell, Mr Satterthwaite, Mr Simpson, Professors Thomson, Thompson, Dr Timmerman and Professor Ulph (35).

For unreserved business: Mr Brannan and Ms Currie, Students' Union.

Invited: Professor Gifford (School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science), Professor O'Brien (School of Chemistry) and Professor Parker (School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures).

In attendance: The Registrar and Secretary and the Student Experience Officer.

1. Minutes

Confirmed: Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2005.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

- (a) Agendum 4(f): Iconic Appointments

Reported:

That, in line with the strategic objective of recruiting a number of 'iconic' scholars to the University, Professor Joseph E Stiglitz had been appointed to chair the new Brooks World Poverty Institute. The outcome of discussions on other possible iconic appointments would be reported as they arose.

- (b) Agendum 10: Data Protection Policy

Reported:

That the new Data Protection Policy for the University had been approved by the Board of Governors at its meeting on 7 December 2005.

(c) Agendum 11: 2005-06 Student Number Performance

Reported:

That further to the report of provisional numbers made to the last meeting of the Senate, it could be confirmed that the 1 December numbers showed a comparatively small overshoot on home undergraduate students. Overseas undergraduate performance had exceeded targets by 1% and showed an 8% rise compared to 2004-05. Taught postgraduate figures were slightly disappointing, although it was recognised that numbers tended to be fairly volatile. Postgraduate research performance had been good compared to 2004-05 (Home/EU +6%; Overseas +1%) although slightly below target. Whilst the overall overseas position showed a significant increase over last year, it was down against target which would result in a not insignificant negative variance against budgeted fee income. The number of part-time research students was disappointingly down against both target and last year's position. Year-on-year changes at this overall level would not produce the 2015 outcome and Faculties would have to consider how they would meet their targets in the longer term.

3. Statement by the President and Vice-Chancellor

Received: a report from the President and Vice-Chancellor, in which reference was made to:

- (a) The Planning and Accountability Cycle
- (b) The Strategic Review of the Manchester Business School
- (c) The Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC)
- (d) The Strategic Development of e-Learning: An e-Learning Alliance with the Open University
- (e) Planning the University's Student Profile
- (f) The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency (NDA)
- (g) Managing Risk
- (h) DTI/OST UK-US Research Collaboration
- (i) External Review of Computer Science and Informatics

Further to this report, the President and Vice-Chancellor stated that:

That following completion of the strategic review of the Manchester Business School, and the approval of its recommendations by the Board of Governors, a search had commenced for a Director. This search would be assisted by the recent publication of the 2006 Financial Times global MBA ranking list which placed the University's programme in 22nd position worldwide (from 44th position in 2004). This was a significant achievement, reflecting the strength and breadth of the new Business School, for which the School and the Faculty of Humanities were to be congratulated.

4. Vice-President (Research)

Reported:

- (a) That the latest data on University research grants and contracts income showed that its rate of increase for 2004-05 over the preceding year was 15% ahead of the target required by the Manchester 2015 agenda, although caution had to be exercised over the use of one year's figures.
- (b) That approximately half of the University's Schools had completed external reviews of research. It was expected that the remainder would be completed before summer 2006. These reviews were intended to provide an important contribution to internal planning processes, the preparation of RAE submissions and staff development programmes and opportunities.
- (c) Preparatory activity for RAE2008 was ongoing, co-ordinated by a University RAE Steering Group. Amongst initial areas of work, the Group had approved a draft Code of Practice on the preparation of RAE submissions, which included particular reference to equality issues.
- (d) That a number of events in support of the University's research agenda had taken place, including a Research Dinner at Broomcroft Hall and an informal away day entitled 'Science Meets Arts and Humanities'.

Noted: That external review reports could be circulated to staff as deemed appropriate by the Head of School, noting that supporting data on individual research performance must remain confidential.

5. Associate Vice-President (Graduate Education)

- (a) Developments in Graduate Education

Received: a draft of the University's response to the *QAA Special Review of Research Degree Programmes Questionnaire* and an accompanying analysis of five-year qualification rates for five cohorts of full-time PGRs.

Reported:

- (i) That the special review was expected to be a one-off exercise as in the future research degree programmes would be assessed by the QAA as part of the periodic Institutional Audit.
- (ii) That although the outcome of the Review currently had no direct link to funding from HEFCE, the Funding Council had reported its intention to monitor the allocation of funding in terms of its relationship with the assessed quality and standards of research degree programmes. This monitoring process was likely to pay particular attention to five-year qualification rates for PGR students.
- (iii) That, in its consideration of the draft response, Senate should take particular note of the inclusion of the following points as these, in particular, required the active engagement and support of all academic staff involved in research degree provision:

- a commitment to achieving a year-on-year increase in qualification rates across the institution (*section 1*);
- a commitment to achieving a seventy-two hour turnaround in applications (*section 3*);
- the supervisor's role in the induction process (*section 3*).

Noted:

- (i) That there was considerable variation in PGR five-year qualification rates across the University. It was therefore important to learn from those areas, such as the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences, which had succeeded in bringing about a substantial improvement in qualification rates over recent years.
- (ii) That timely completion of degree programmes was in the best mutual interest of the institution and the students themselves.
- (iii) That it would be important to make further efforts to gain an insight into the reasons for non-completion of PGR programmes. The use of student exit interviews might be of assistance in this regard.
- (iv) That, notwithstanding the work being done to ensure the clarity of information on student and supervisor responsibilities as part of the induction process, it would be important to consider the situation of current students, especially those registered on part-time programmes, to ensure that a similar message about the requirement for timely completion is communicated to them effectively.
- (v) That the data on five-year qualification rates included in the 'withdrawal' category any students who were registered for more than one year and failed to qualify for their intended degree by the end of five years, irrespective of the actual reason for non-completion.
- (vi) That it was understood that the commitment to achieving a seventy-two hour turnaround in applications referred to initial contact with the applicant, rather than completion of the full selection process, and was subject to the provision of complete application materials, including references.

Resolved: That the draft response to the *QAA Special Review of Research Degree Programmes Questionnaire* be approved.

- (b) Policy for Split-site PhD Arrangements

Received: a proposed University policy for split-site PhD arrangements.

Reported:

- (i) That the policy had been endorsed by each Faculty's Research Degrees Committee and the Graduate Education Group, following extensive consultation with Faculties and Schools.
- (ii) That the following amendments to the policy should also be considered:

- Second bullet in section 3 to read: “an individual student undertaking a split-site PhD on a one-off basis, where there is no formal relationship between the University and a partner institution.”
- Additional sentence in section 3.2.1: “In all such cases the arrangements must be designed to ensure an experience broadly comparable to that of a student based entirely in Manchester.”

Noted:

- (i) That the definition of split-site arrangements in section 1.4 of the policy required further clarification as it currently appeared to include those students who conduct research at overseas institutions for certain periods as part of their research degree programme but who would not conventionally be understood to be within the intended ambit of the policy.
- (ii) That comments regarding the policy’s expectation that examinations for split-site research degree programmes should normally be held in Manchester would be addressed as part of further work on the research examination process.

Resolved: that the proposed University policy for split-site PhD arrangements be approved subject to amendment to take account of the issues raised in (i) above.

6. Development of a Strategic Partnership between The Open University and The University of Manchester

Received: a report presented to the Board of Governors and the MOU to be signed with The Open University

Reported:

- (a) That during the latter part of 2005, The University of Manchester had been in dialogue with The Open University, to explore the synergies, benefits and risks of entering into a strategic partnership. The aim of the partnership was to bring mutual benefit and, for Manchester, to further the strategic aims noted above. This would be achieved by deriving maximum benefit from the investment already made in the respective University brands and market awareness, distance learning materials and production infrastructure, processes and know-how. In order to enable both universities to progress, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was to be signed and a joint development fund created to encourage and support the detailed planning work required to facilitate future benefit realisation. In some cases, this initial work would lead to business cases developing strategically important projects which would require further funding. Such cases would be subject to normal funding and project appraisal processes. In parallel, work would be conducted to establish a joint brand under which certain types of product could be marketed and awards given. Further market analysis would also be undertaken to confirm the nature and scope of markets which could be exploited as a result of the strategic partnership. The proposed work would place The Open University and The University of Manchester in a good position to make a bid against the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund for a contribution to the setup costs. The strategic partnership would be launched formally on 24 February 2006 when a Joint Management Group would also be formed.
- (b) That the agreement was an important, although not exclusive part, of the University of Manchester’s strategy to improve the student learning experience and deliver more online learning. Schools had been invited to nominate a member of their senior staff to form a University-wide group which would seek to make 2006 the year of e-learning in

Manchester. The Group would meet for the first time on 2nd February 2006, where details of the Open University agreement would be explained, together with wider initiatives around improvements to Manchester's virtual learning environment and related matters.

- (c) That these developments would play a key part in contributing towards the University's fulfillment of one of the 2015 goals against which progress was currently slowest – goal eight, under which the University must acquire the recurrent and capital resources necessary to be competitive at the highest international level. Senate would be asked to consider this matter in more depth following discussion at the forthcoming planning conferences of work led by the Vice-President for Innovation and Economic Development. However, it was already reasonably clear that the required strengthening of the University's resource base would not result from additional research activity or from the development of knowledge transfer or industrial links. Instead, it should be recognized that the greatest potential would most likely relate to the provision of high quality educational materials and services on a fee-paying basis, most especially to markets overseas. The University had therefore to be committed to developing new modes of provision which would be best placed to take advantage of this growth potential. Given that these new modes of provision were likely to include a greater use of online delivery methods, and that, in the short term, online learning would become a prerequisite feature of *any* high quality programme, the partnership with The Open University would allow access to significant experience and advanced knowledge in this area. It would also promote the University's expansion of its capability for providing new modes of learning.

Noted:

- (a) That although existing collaborative arrangements of both universities would continue, the strategic partnership represented an exclusive agreement for the co-branding of programmes overseas.
- (b) That the need for additional resource to invest in developing new modes of provision, including online learning, would be discussed at the forthcoming Faculties and Schools planning conference. It was clear that the development of these new modes would involve significant costs.
- (c) That the progress of the strategic partnership with The Open University would be considered at a future meeting of the Senate.

7. Vice-President (Teaching and Learning)

- (a) Institutional Audit, 2005

Received: A summary document describing the outcome of the 2005 Institutional Audit of the University.

Reported:

That both the letter summarizing the key findings from the Audit and the draft report had now been received. (Copies of the report were available on request from angela.dignan@manchester.ac.uk). The judgment of 'broad confidence' was the most positive available, and the features of good practice that the report identified were welcome, particularly as they all relate directly to the student experience. The recommendations for action were broadly as might have been expected, largely requesting the completion of work that was already in hand. An action plan for this had been prepared for consideration in the first instance by the Quality Advisory Group. The University had been invited to correct any factual errors in the draft report

by 3 February 2006 and to provide a brief statement on any significant developments since the audit visit was conducted. The final report would be published towards the end of March 2006.

Noted:

- (i) That the auditors had advised the University to review its current quality assurance procedures to ensure that they take full account of the purposes and intentions of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (*FHEQ*). This was understood to refer to a perceived degree of differentiation between the approval process upon merger for harmonized and continuing programmes.
 - (ii) That the auditors had a particular interest in the nature and operation of institutional (as opposed to faculty and school) mechanisms for the oversight of academic quality. This should be noted during the preparation for the QAA Special Review of Research Degree Programmes.
- (b) WebCT Vista Academic Enterprise System

Reported:

That at its December 2006 meeting, the Planning and Resources Committee had approved a recommendation to proceed with the full implementation of the WebCT Vista Academic Enterprise System. This would provide a full virtual learning environment with a wide range of tools. It would integrate with other information systems, in particular the Student System, but at the same time would allow much more flexibility in how it could be deployed locally in Faculties and Schools. This would allow existing systems that support teaching and learning to continue to be used, although they would not be supported centrally. The implementation was expected to take several months, with a number of pilot projects to test the functionality and connectivity. Meanwhile, Faculties had been asked to include in their strategic and operational plans a statement on how they propose to demonstrate their success in increasing the proportion of programmes enhanced by online learning, as *Manchester 2015* requires.

Noted:

- (i) That the new Vista system had lowered the barriers to entry for developing online learning provision and should encourage expanded use in areas of the University where limited use was currently made of WebCT.
 - (ii) That students would undoubtedly play a key role in encouraging the roll-out and expanded use of WebCT.
- (c) Commercialisation of Teaching Materials

Reported:

That a policy on commercialization of teaching materials would be brought to Senate for consideration in due course. These matters were currently covered in limited detail by the University's Intellectual Property policy but it was increasingly clear that arrangements required greater clarification. UMIP would conduct some preliminary investigation of the key issues over the next six months.

8. **Annual Report of Appeals, Complaints and Student Discipline Cases for the Academic Year 2004-05**

Received: the annual Report of Appeals, Complaints and Student Discipline Cases for the academic year 2004-05, prepared by the Head of Student Support and Services.

Reported:

- (a) That the University regulations on student Appeals, Complaints and Discipline which were put in place on 1 October 2004 introduced the requirement for an annual report to Senate on the number and nature of such cases, and on the general issues raised.
- (b) That the report covered the academic year 2004-05. It included figures regarding formal cases only and did not include cases that had been dealt with and resolved by colleagues in Schools and Faculties.
- (c) That the number of formal complaints dealt with in 2004-05 was relatively small i.e., 27 compared with 26 in the previous year. This was encouraging given the amount of change and disruption that took place across the University during that period.
- (d) That it was of concern that overseas and ethnic minority home students were disproportionately represented in the number of academic appeals and student discipline cases.
- (e) That a high proportion of discipline cases concerned plagiarism and involved taught postgraduate students, many of whom were from overseas.
- (f) That a significant proportion of appeals had been brought on the grounds of mitigating circumstances. There was a pressing need to understand the reasons why some students are reluctant to bring forward details of mitigating circumstances at the appropriate time and to develop strategies to encourage them to make circumstances known sooner.

Noted:

- (a) A concern that there was substantial misunderstanding of plagiarism among students that required a more pro-active and direct approach to be adopted within the University if the matter was to be addressed in any significant way.
- (b) That advice to staff concerning student plagiarism was currently being revised. This will encourage greater effort to 'design' out plagiarism from the curriculum and earlier use of mechanisms to distinguish between poor academic practice and the more intentional and serious disciplinary matter of plagiarism.
- (c) That this advice would take note of different cultural understandings of the issue of plagiarism which possibly give rise to greater incidence of the problem amongst overseas students.

9. **Membership of the Awards and Honours Group**

Resolved: that Professor Helen Gleeson be appointed as a member of the University Awards and Honours Group (*vice* Professor Colin Webb) for a period of three years, with immediate effect.

10. Matters for Report to Senate

Report on the exercise of delegations (on behalf of Senate and the Board of Governors)

(a) Professorial appointments

The following appointments have been approved on behalf of Senate and the Board of Governors:

Chair of Development Studies

Tony Addison, BA (East Anglia), MSc (London), at present Deputy Director of the World Institute for Development Economics, as Professor of Development Studies (in the School of Environment and Development) from 1 May 2006.

Chair of Finance

Massimo Guidolin, Laurea Econ. (Bocconi, Milan), PhD (California), at present Senior Economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of St Louis, as Professor of Finance (in the Manchester Business School) from 1 September 2006.

Chair of Haematological Oncology

Michael Deininger, MD (Wurzburg), PhD (London), at present Assistant Professor in the Division of Haematology/Oncology at the Oregon Health and Science University, Portland, as Professor of Haematological Oncology (in the School of Medicine) from 1 August 2006.

Chair of Operations Management

Paul Cousins, BA (Sheffield), MBA, PhD (Bath), previously Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply Professor of Strategic Supply Management at Queen's University Belfast, as Professor of Operations Management (in the Manchester Business School) from 1 September 2005.

Chair of Paediatric Oncology

Vaskar Saha, MD (Madras), MB,BS, PhD (London), FRCPCH, at present Professor of Paediatric Oncology at the University of London, as Professor of Paediatric Oncology (in the School of Medicine) from 1 August 2006.

Chair of Spatial Planning

Yin Ling Celia Wong, BSocSc (Chinese University of Hong Kong), MCD (Liverpool), PhD (Manchester), at present Professor of Planning at the University of Liverpool, as Professor of Spatial Planning (in the School of Environment and Development) from 1 February 2006.

***Ad Personam* Promotional Chair in Ancient History**

Stephen Todd, MA, PhD (Cambridge), previously Reader in Classics at this University, as Professor of Ancient History (in the School of Arts, Histories and Cultures) from 1 January 2006.

(b) Change of a professorial title

Acting on behalf of Senate and the Board of Governors, the President and Vice-Chancellor has approved a change in the professorial title held in the School of Medicine by Professor O B ('Tim') Eden, such that it should be 'Teenage Cancer Trust Professor of Teenage and Young Adult Cancer' (*in lieu* of Professor of Paediatric Oncology) from 1 October 2005.

(c) Grant of the title of Reader

The University Promotions Committee for the Faculty of Humanities has, on behalf of Senate and the Board of Governors, approved a recommendation that the following, who previously held appointment as Senior Lecturer in the School indicated, be granted the title of Reader in Intellectual History from 1 January 2006:

Dr H Stuart Jones

Arts, Histories and Cultures

11. Any other business

There was no other business.