



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

University  
Secretary's  
Office.

## The Council, 3 July 2017

### Report of the Senate

**Date:** 21 June 2017  
**Chair:** The President & Vice-Chancellor  
**Secretary:** Dr A West

#### 1. Vice-Chancellor's report

- 1.1 The Vice-Chancellor presented his report, including:
  - 1.2 Higher Education and Research Act: The Act will result in the most major changes to the higher education landscape since 1992. It will create a new regulatory body, the Office for Students, operational from April 2018 with a focus on encouraging competition and a single research and innovation funding body, United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI), upholding the Haldane principle and protecting the dual support system of research funding.
  - 1.3 The Queen's Speech: The Queen's Speech did not make any reference to universities or to reducing immigration to the tens of thousands as referred to in the Conservative Party election manifesto. It did include: a major review of technical education; reference to the Industrial Strategy; maintaining and enhancing a leading role on the world stage for the UK; and an Immigration Bill that would end freedom movement in the UK for nationals of EU countries and would bring EU nationals within the UK's immigration system.
  - 1.4 The Office for Students (OfS): The OfS will incorporate the functions of HEFCE (except its research funding functions) and the Office for Fair Access. It will operate the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and have explicit duties focused on choice, quality and value for money, and the need to protect the institutional autonomy of English higher education providers. The OfS will have powers to vary or withdraw an institution's degree awarding powers or university title.
  - 1.5 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF): The TEF awards will be announced on Thursday 22 June, and the outcomes have been reported to Council separately. The TEF measured performance against expected benchmark values based on student profiles, rather than absolute outcomes.
  - 1.6 International staff and students: There is still no clarity regarding UK residency rights for EU staff after Brexit or staff and student mobility in the light of migration targets and this was causing great concern to individual staff, students and the sector as a whole. The Conservative Party general election Manifesto made specific mention of including international students in migration figures which are subject to reduction targets and also made reference to tighter visa regulations for international students. The University is working with business on these matters, including holding events in parliament with the CBI and IOD and working with the

Engineering Employers Federation and others.

1.7 Challenges and opportunities: There was a need to address areas of potential risk, including an ongoing reduction of public funds; lost opportunities for recruitment, funding and collaboration post-Brexit; and a potential reduction in non-EU international students. The University's response involved calm planning, working closely with Faculties and Departments, as well as considering opportunities for more coordinated and efficient support from professional services.

1.8 Update on Faculty Reflection:

The staff consultation has demonstrated the value placed by staff on the faculty and departmental model. It was felt important for the institution to have a clear brand and that more could be done to broadcast some of the University's strengths, without having to undertake significant structural change. The benefits of departments and faculties to students and staff were recognised. However, some greater central direction of certain activities was likely to be necessary to maximise opportunities whilst controlling costs.

## **2. Report of the Council**

2.1 Senate received a report on the meeting of Council held on 24 April 2017.

## **3. Reports of committees**

### **3.1 Committees of Senate**

Senate approved the reports of the following committees:

(a) Learning and Teaching Committee

(Meetings held on 29 March and 19 May 2017)

- (i) New and Significantly amended programmes approved by Faculties since 2 February 2017: Senate approved the new, significantly amended, suspended and discontinued programmes approved by Faculties since 2 February 2017.
- (ii) Amendments to the General Regulations: Senate approved changes to the General Regulations to first degrees for apprenticeship-related programmes and approved changes relating to examinations in response to a student complaint relating to the supply of additional examinations paper.
- (iii) Other Matters: Senate noted the activity and information as set out in the report. Attention was drawn to: work to support individuals in their teaching; the 2017 winners of the Senate Awards for Excellence in L&T and Students' Union Academic Awards; progress in relation to Programme Level View; further development and implementation of the institutional Academic Quality Framework.

(b) Research and Innovation Committee

(Meeting held on 18 May 2017)

Senate noted the report, including: an update on the proposed research support structure; enhancing institutional submission rates; and that a review of the institutional structure for doctoral education would be undertaken.

(c) Research Ethics Committee

(Meeting held on 03 May 2017)

Senate noted the report, including: advice issued to a department following a breach of the Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants,

Personal Data and Human Tissue; planned activity to evaluate the impact of the revised Ethics Policy; ethics decisions made by departments; and committee membership changes.

(d) Senate Budget Committee

(Meetings held on 13 April 2017, 21 April 2017 and 27 April 2017)

Senate noted that the Committee had recently had individual meetings with each of the five Vice-President & Head of Faculties to discuss financial and budgetary processes within their respective Faculties and would report back to Senate in October 2017.

(e) Senate Nominations Committee

(Meeting held on 1 June 2017)

Senate approved the appointment and reappointment of Senate representatives on University committees as indicated in the Report.

### **3.2 Other committees**

- (a) Senate received for information the reports of the Estates Committee (meeting held on 31 March 2017), Finance Committee (meetings held on 20 January, 23 February and 14 March 2017), Health and Safety Committee (meeting held on 13 February 2017), and the Human Resources Committee (meetings held on 25 January and 22 March 2017), which were approved by Council at its meeting on 24 April 2017.
- (b) Senate received a report and noted actions taken by the Honorary Degrees Committee at its meeting and business conducted by correspondence (meeting held on 16 March).
- (c) Senate received and approved the Annual Report of the Military Education Committee.

### **4. Amendments to University Regulations**

Senate noted changes to the University Regulations to reflect recent changes to the University's executive structure and the titles of members of the University Executive Board, which were approved by Council at its meeting in April.

### **5. Ethical Governance**

Senate received and noted an update report on a revised approach to ethical governance.

### **6. Quarterly Financial Results**

Senate received for information the Quarterly Financial Results to 30 April 2017.