

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

ASSEMBLY

Minutes of the meeting of the Assembly held on 29 June 2018

Present: Stuart Croft (Vice-Chancellor (Chair)); Aleksi Aaltonen; Sarah Ashworth; Mary Bagnall; Christine Barnett; Sarah Bell; Gareth Bennett; Nicholas Bernards; Swarnava Biswas; Philippe Blanchard; Claudia Blindauer; Daniel Branch; Till Bretschneider; Guy Clarkson; Georgina Cowley; Mary Cox; Wendy Coy; Stuart Croft; Jonathan Davies; Graham Day; Andreas Dedner; Rosemarie Dias; Trudie Donnelly; Laura du Plessis; Peter Dunn; Christine Ennew; Caroline Farren; Ana Fernandez; Maureen Freely; Hannah Friend; Rachel Gower; Ian Graham; Teresa Grant; Graham Hakes; Erica Hawkes; Michael Haymes; Denise Hewlett; Alexandra Homolar; John Horsler; Robert Horton; Christopher Hughes; Ray Irving; Marcin Jurdzinski; Sara Kalvala; Sumin Kang; Daniel Katz; Dominic Kelly; Mark Kennell; Colin Lambert; Jacob Langlands; Katja Laug; Nicholas Lawrence; Robert MacKay; Andrew Marsh; Justin McArthur; Anne McQuillan; Guglielmo Meardi; Jane Miller; Sian Moore; George Morrell; Nikki Muckle; Michael Niblett; Maria Ovens; Thomas Overy; Edward Page; Graham Patridge; John Phillips; Ben Pithouse; John Pitman; Nicola Pratt; Denise Rae; Amy Robinson; Rudo Roemer; Ian Rose; Jonathan Rourke; Clare Rowan; Ian Rowley; William Rupp; Ana Sanchez-Fuentes; Rachel Sandby-Thomas; Aditya Sarkar; Alexander Shaw; Jonathan Skinner; Alastair Smith; Christopher Stinton; Miriam Storey; Simon Swain; Giorgio Tagliaferro; Celine Tan; Pamela Thomas; Helen Toner; Paul Trimmer; Myka Tucker-Abramson; Sharon Tuersley (Secretary); Thijs Van Rens; Anjelina Wanczarskyj; Jonathan Warren; Simon Watson; Sue Wharton; Gemma Wilkins; Roberta Wooldridge Smith.

Apologies: None received.

In Attendance: Michael Broderick; Michelle Brown; Dawn Ellis (Assistant Secretary); Lucy Goulding; Penny Hewitt; Nicola Hunt; Roland Ingram; Janet Keene; Michael Koch; Lara McCarthy (Returning Officer if required); Emma Morrison; Naomi Moulard; Ros Roke; Hywel Rowles; Fiona Slater; Wendy Taylor; Emma Tew; Adam Waddingham; Carole Walker; Sarah Wall; Lisa Whiston; Clare Wightman.

1/17-18 Confirmation of Quoracy

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the meeting of the Assembly was quorate based on there being more than 50 members of eligible staff present, as required in the Standing Orders.

2/17-18

Chair's Business

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the agenda for this meeting, along with full details of the motion had been made available online and communicated to members of the Assembly via Insite on 22 June 2018.

3/17-18

Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That, should any members or attendees of the Assembly have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Code of Governance (2014).

NOTE: No declarations were made.

4/17-18

Standing Orders of the Assembly

REPORTED: (by the Acting Secretary to Council)

- (a) That the Assembly was not a decision making body of the University but could make recommendations to the Council or to the Senate on any matter whatsoever relating to the University.
- (b) That the Standing Orders of the Assembly were available on the University's webpages, noting that members or attendees of the Assembly should declare if they required clarity on the content of the Standing Orders.

NOTE: No clarifications were required.

5/17-18

Motion to the Assembly: Final Report from the Senate Sub-Group on Statute 24

CONSIDERED:

A motion moved by Professor Dan Branch, Chair of the Senate Sub-Group on Statute 24 and seconded by the Senate Sub-Group on Statute 24 (Professor Aileen Clarke, Professor Maureen Freely, Professor Saul Jacka, and Dr Thijs van Rens), as set out in paper A.01/17-18.

REPORTED: (By Professor Dan Branch, Chair of the Senate Sub-Group on Statute 24)

- (a) That with the purpose of providing clarity, it was proposed that the motion be amended as follows (deletions ~~struck through~~, additions underlined):

This Assembly notes:

1. The Senate Sub-Group's final report in (Appendix 1 (S.54/17-18)) which sets out the principles for the revision of Statute 24, the formation of an Academic Freedom Review Committee (AFRC) as a sub-committee of the Senate and its proposed role in disciplinary and redundancy processes.

This Assembly believes:

1. That the Senate Sub-Group's final report in (Appendix 1 (S.54/17-18)) will ensure the fundamental principle of academic freedom – namely “questioning and testing received wisdom and putting forward new ideas – which may be controversial or unpopular” and that academic freedom will be enshrined in the University's Statute and Ordinances.

This Assembly resolves:

1. That the Senate Sub-Group's final report in (Appendix 1 (S.54/17-18)) and its proposals are recommended to the University Senate and Council for approval.
 2. That Statutes, Ordinances and Policies be drafted in line with the recommendations set out in that report, and that meaningful consultation be held with the Trade Unions on revised Statute, Ordinances and Policies.
- (b) That the Senate Sub-Group on Statute 24 had been established in June 2017 to address concerns raised by the Assembly (minute 5/16-17 refers) and the wider Academy on proposed revisions to Statute 24.
- (c) That the Sub-Group had considered and consulted on the University's proposals to reform Statute 24 and related Ordinances, focusing particularly on the impact on the principles of academic freedom, and providing progress reports to the Senate throughout the year.
- (d) That the Sub-Group had agreed a number of recommendations to the Senate and Council, which should be used as the basis for further revision of Statute 24, with a particular recommendation being to establish the Academic Freedom Review Committee (AFRC) as a mechanism to protect academic freedom in the context of the University's academic contractual processes.
- (e) That the establishment of the AFRC would address broader concerns that had been previously raised by the Assembly, noting that:
- (i) The role and early involvement of AFRC in both disciplinary and redundancy cases would be enshrined in Ordinance;
 - (ii) The AFRC would be comprised of elected academic members of the Senate as opposed to senior management;

- (iii) The role of the Head of Department in disciplinary and redundancy processes would be subject to scrutiny and oversight.
 - (f) That members of the Assembly were invited to share their views and concerns on the proposals outlined in the amended motion.
- (by the membership, in summary)
- (g) That it was unclear as to exactly what members of the Assembly were being asked to vote on.
 - (h) That it would not be possible to vote on proposed changes to Statute 24 without sight of the wider proposed changes that were being made to the University's governing instruments.
 - (i) That there was uncertainty regarding the process, particularly whether it was planned for the proposal to come back to the Assembly for another vote once consultation with the Trade Unions had been undertaken.
 - (j) That the nature of the Assembly could be reassessed in relation to membership and voting rights; issues affecting academic staff only should not be open to professional services staff and vice-versa, noting however that this would be contradictory to the resolution made at Senate on 14 June 2017 (minute 94/16-17 refers) to expand the membership of the Assembly.
 - (k) That the meeting of the Assembly had been announced with little notice at a busy time in the academic year, when many colleagues were unable to attend due to academic commitments, thus not getting the chance to vote on what was a very significant issue.
 - (l) That, with the exception of the communication from the Provost on 18 December 2017, there had been no general updates on the proposal to amend Statute 24 until last week; significant time had therefore not been given to members of the Assembly to consider the motion or the amendment.
 - (m) That a point of procedural concern was that the motion and a draft of the Statute and Ordinance incorporating the proposed mechanisms to protect academic freedom, had been considered by the Senate at its meeting on 13 June 2018, prior to this meeting of the Assembly.
 - (n) That the Assembly should be adjourned and reconvened in the autumn term to allow staff more time to review and understand the implications of the motion.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed amendment to the motion be accepted.

NOTE: The proposed amendment to the motion was accepted following a show of hands.

6/17-18

Motion to the Assembly: Adjournment of the Assembly Meeting

CONSIDERED:

A motion moved by Dr Myka Tucker-Abramson, Assistant Professor in the English Department, and seconded by Dr Alastair Smith, Senior Teaching Fellow in the Global Sustainable Development Department, that the meeting of the Assembly be adjourned.

RESOLVED:

That the motion that the meeting of the Assembly be adjourned be approved, with the following votes cast:

In favour: 52

Against: 42

Abstentions: 11

NOTE: A total of 105 votes were recorded at the meeting. The recorded number of eligible voters at the time of voting was 105.