

University of York

Senate

Executive summary of the meeting held 28 Jan. 2025

Vice-Chancellor and President's report

1. Senate **considered** an overview report from the Vice-Chancellor, including significant achievements by members of the University and alumni since Senate's last meeting.
2. The report also updated Senate on the continuing financial challenges faced by UK higher education, exacerbated by a significant decline in the international student recruitment market for 2025-26 entry; and confirmation from government that the sector should not expect significant increases in public funding, and would need to achieve savings through operational efficiencies and increased collaboration. Senate **noted** that action was currently being taken to maximise income from existing activities and that work was underway to develop additional new income streams, but that it would also be necessary to achieve further cost savings and that this was being taken forward through the current planning and budgeting round.

Research Support

3. Senate **considered** a presentation from the PVC Research, Associate Deans Research and Director of RIKE on the work that was underway to maintain and build on the University's recent strong upward trajectory in research performance. This would be taken forward building on existing areas of strength within the University and its faculties, seeking to achieve greater clarity in articulating these areas of strength in ways that resonated with key stakeholders including funders. To support this work, research support structures and activities were being revised to help put research on a sustainable growth path, providing greater clarity for departments about the support available to them and greater consistency across the University in this support.

Changing Models of Scholarly Journal Publishing

4. Senate **considered** a paper from the Director of Library, Archive and Learning Services on recent and ongoing developments in this area, and particularly how to move towards more equitable and sustainable approaches in scholarly publishing as articulated in the statement on this subject from the N8 (of which the University is a member). Senate **noted** the support for such a move, while noting that it raised important issues relating to external issues (e.g. REF strategy; the approaches of research funders) as well as key aspects of internal academic culture. Senate also **noted** the issues raised by members of the University regarding some of the consequences of decisions taken in 2024 to achieve Library savings as part of the University's work to reduce its other operating costs; and that a process had been put in place for such issues to be brought forward and considered.

Knowledge Exchange Framework Results

5. Senate **considered** a report on the outcome of the recent KEF. It **noted** the results, but that these had limited usefulness in considering the University's performance in the areas KEF covered. Consequently that the University focused its attention on more detailed analysis of its performance in these areas in relation to its own strategic objectives and targets, and a range of actions were already underway to improve performance in this context.

Annual Statement on Research Integrity

6. Senate **considered** the Annual Statement, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the UUK *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*. Senate concluded that this demonstrated that the

University's approach in this area was operating effectively and **agreed** to recommend the statement to Council.

7. Council is asked to approve the Annual Statement on Research Integrity (attached as Annex 1).

Annual Report from Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee

8. Senate **considered** and **approved** the annual report from AECC, covering 2023-24.

Review of Academic Promotions Criteria

9. Senate **considered** proposed new criteria for promotion to Bands 2 and 3 of the professorial scale, developed as Phase 2 of the review of academic promotions criteria and building on the principles and approach of Phase 1 of that work. Senate **approved** the proposals.

Request to Approve Semester Dates to 2032-33

10. Senate **approved** in principle proposed semester dates to 2032-33 following the same structure as for the academic year as was currently in place, subject to confirmation by circulation that the Equality Impact Assessment remained current and valid; and authorising final approval to take place by Chair's Action if Senate was content that this was the case.

Sub-committee Minutes, Summaries and Other Reports

11. Senate **noted** reports from the following sub-committee meetings:

- a. University Teaching Committee, 26 Sept. and 7 Nov. 2024.
- b. University Research Committee, 26 Sept. and 21 Nov. 2024.
- c. University Partnerships, Enterprise and Engagement Committee, 6 Dec. 2024.
- d. Student Life Committee, 31 Oct. 2024.
- e. HYMS Joint Senate Committee, 6 Nov. 2024.