

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER
ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of a meeting held on
15 February 2018**

Present:

	J Scott (Chair)	
A Abdulla		A Cameron
E Clapp		F Deepwell
R Dickinson		G Green
S Handa		C Hewitt
D Lambert		D Lockett
L Masterman		B Norman
R Parry		M Peel
C Taylor		G Wynn

In attendance: D Kemp (for M20) and A Petersen (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from A Moran

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

18/M16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

18/M17 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting that had taken place on 15 January 2018.

The Committee **approved** the minutes as an accurate record.

18/M18 **MATTERS ARISING**

Arising from M11 the Committee noted that legal advice was awaited regarding the impact of the introduction of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) upon the operation of the Reflect Lecture Capture policy. In light of this the Committee agreed that the minute should be amended to note that the Committee recommended a change to the policy, subject to legal review. In the interim the Committee agreed that the download function would be enabled for students on the MBA programme only.

Arising from M12 the Chair reported that the University Leadership Team had approved the principle of an open door policy, but that it was recognised that certain factors might limit the manner in which this could be implemented within individual disciplines.

Arising from M13 the Committee noted that the BSc Accounting programme would no longer seek a dispensation from Senate Regulations associated with accreditation requirements.

18/M19 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair and the Committee congratulated S Handa on his appointment as Academic Director for the College of Science and Engineering.

The Chair reported that he had taken action to approve the withdrawal of the BA Management Studies (all specialisms) and the BA Management Studies and Economics, and the introduction of transformed PGT curricula in Media and Communication.

The Chair reported that the final meeting had taken place with the NOUS Consultancy team that had been supporting the development programme for Directors of Learning and Teaching. As a result of this an action plan had been agreed which included the provision of additional development opportunities through Organisational Development, and also ongoing work on a role descriptor for the Director of Learning and Teaching.

The Committee noted that the NSS for 2018 was underway and the overall University response rate was healthy, with some level of disciplinary difference. The Student Experience Team had led a successful campaign to encourage participation at institution level, and this would shortly move to become more focussed for selected departments.

The Chair reported that the UK Experience Survey and the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey would launch shortly and the University was seeking to achieve a higher response rate in both. The Students' Union was also undertaking two surveys, one on the Student Voice and another on student perceptions of feedback.

18/M20 TEF UPDATE

The Committee considered a paper regarding the University's ongoing preparations for the pilot subject level TEF 3 exercise, and the outcome of the recent teaching intensity pilot.

Draft provider and subject level submissions were currently being drafted, with a deadline of 28 February for submission. Drafting had taken place on a thematic basis in order to relate institutional level priorities to actions at subject level. The Committee expressed its thanks to the colleagues that had been involved in the drafting of the submissions.

Supplementary metrics had been released to contributing institutions. The data demonstrated that the University had not exhibited significant grade inflation over the period, evidencing the robustness of the processes in place to maintain academic standards. Teaching intensity measures had been released for a small number of subject areas, on the basis of returns from institutions and a survey of students. The variety of practice and approach across institutions, combined with a very low response rate to the student survey meant that no significant conclusions could be drawn from the data.

The Committee endorsed the report's recommendations regarding future drafting of submissions. The Committee fully endorsed the further recommendations regarding the effective planning and capture of relevant data to support TEF submissions at all levels. In particular, it was important to be able to evidence where issues were identified, addressed and the associated quantitative measures of success or impact. The Committee noted that Curriculum Transformation represented an opportunity to identify potential impact case studies and monitor these through the roll out of transformed curricula.

The Committee thanked colleagues for their ongoing work in this area, noting that the final submissions would be received at a future meeting, for information.

18/M21 MONITORING OF THE LEARNING STRATEGY

The Committee considered a termly monitoring report on the implementation of the current University Learning Strategy. The Committee noted that a refreshed Learning Strategy would be presented to Senate for approval in March 2018, and that following this point monitoring would be undertaken of the new Strategy.

The Committee considered updates to the Strategic Implementation Plan and welcomed the major achievements therein, which included ongoing Curriculum Transformation, the development of the Assessment Strategy, the launch of the Lecture Capture Service and a number of process enhancements through the Student Lifecycle Change Project. The Committee also noted the priorities for the coming period and the associated challenges, which included the limited IT resource available to support major systems development.

The Committee noted that a number of the University Enabling Strategies would feed into or otherwise inform the implementation of the Learning Strategy. The Committee recommended that future updates consider how the Strategic Implementation Plan might reflect the interface with these Enabling Strategies.

18/M22 MODULE EVALUATION

The Committee considered a report regarding the ongoing development of the new LUMES Module Evaluation System and the output of the wider pilot in Semester 1 of 2017/18.

The Committee noted that the extended semester 1 pilot of the scheme had been highly successful, with 408 modules generating responses through LUMES. Response rates varied significantly but sufficient data was generated to demonstrate a number of significant themes. Although 'Teaching on my Course' generally ranked highly, there were lower average scores returned for 'Assessment and Feedback,' which aligned with institutional level returns. In process terms the extended pilot had also yielded a lot of helpful lessons in terms of the timing of future surveys, the importance of engaging module leaders with the process and the value of qualitative analysis of free text answers.

Following the successful pilots it would be necessary to move the project towards full implementation and business as usual. Current governance for the project would need to be revised to bring in appropriate operational and technical support. The software platform was being procured but the varied demands upon current IT resource were such that it was not yet confirmed when support would be available to support the full implementation of the system. As such, it could not yet be confirmed when full integration would take place with the student records system and there may be an intervening period when the full functionality of the system would not be available. The Committee noted that work was underway to draft the policy framework for the operation of the LUMES system.

The Committee noted that the availability of IT resource was impacting upon a number of major projects, but further noted that all efforts were being made to increase resource in this area. It was also recognised that a level of resource would be required to support the operation of the system in business as usual state, and that this had been reflected in the overall resource plan for the project.

The Committee noted that the provision of a regular and consistent format of data through the LUMES system would be an important element of supporting future TEF submissions,

and recommended that the team work with the team currently developing the programme dashboard to ensure that this data could feed in to that service.

The Committee noted the potential for data generated through the LUMES system to inform a number of wider processes such as HEA applications or Performance and Development Discussions. The Committee recognised the complexities associated with the use of data within such processes and that this would be subject to detailed discussion with stakeholders and unions.

18/M23 **REFLECT SEMESTER 1 REPORT**

The Committee considered a report on the operation of the Reflect Lecture Capture system over the course of the first semester of 2017/18.

The Committee noted that the usage statistics indicated growing use of the service amongst students, with the hours viewed per UG student rising from 6.2 in semester 1 of 2016/17 to 8.6 in the equivalent period in 2017/18. Similarly, the number of views per UG student rose from 25.7 in semester 1 of 2016/17 to 32.3 in 2017/18. A number of additional teaching spaces had been equipped with lecture capture facilities. The Committee noted that the introduction of new GDPR requirements might necessitate amendments to the Reflect policy with regards to permission to capture and publish sessions, and that any required amendments would come forwards to the Committee in due course. The Committee welcomed a number of other enhancements to the service, including the pilot of a new approach for capturing board based teaching.

The Committee noted that the rate of publication for recordings appeared low, and that there were significant variation across departments. It was noted that some technical elements might lead to incorrect recording or duplication of recordings and that this may distort the overall figure. The LLI was working with Academic Directors and departments to support maximum usage of the service.

18/M24 **UNDERGRADUATE EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

The Committee considered a report from a meeting of the Chair, College Academic Directors and the Deputy Director of Academic Services which had reviewed all of the reports from External Examiners for undergraduate programmes in 2016/17.

As in previous years, the reports confirmed that the Committee and Senate could have confidence in the standards of the University's awards and the operation of the external examining process. The Committee noted that where issues had been raised in relation to particular disciplines this was being addressed within the departments, and the report highlighted a number of recommendations for consideration at University level.

The Committee considered and approved recommendations that College Academic Committees should be required to ensure that mechanisms were in place in all departments for External Examiners to have the opportunity to meet with students, and that these Committees should also be required to consider the clarity of moderation processes across departments.

The Committee considered a recommendation that the provision of finalist re-sit opportunities in the summer re-sit period should be standard practice in all departments. The Committee **approved** this recommendation for implementation in 2018/19, and that this would be reported to the upcoming meeting of Senate.

18/M25 AMENDMENTS TO SENATE REGULATIONS

The Committee considered proposed minor amendments to Senate Regulation 2 governing Admission and Registration, and Senate Regulation 12 governing Complaints.

The Committee noted that as part of demonstrating compliance with relevant legislation and to meet the requirements for registration with the new Office for Students, it was necessary to formally reference how University policy and procedure adhered to the requirements of Consumer Rights legislation.

The Committee agreed that as Senate Regulations as a whole represented a body of pre-contract information for students it would be helpful to establish an overarching principles document which confirmed that these were compliant with relevant legislation. The Committee agreed that such a document should be drafted and submitted to Senate (attached as APC/18/M25 (app)).

18/M26 INCLUSIVE CURRICULA

The Committee considered a detailed proposal for an inclusive curricula and teaching project. The proposal had been developed directly with the Students' Union. The project aimed to celebrate existing initiatives of inclusive curricula whilst engaging and supporting a wider body of staff in enhancement work to achieve an inclusive curricula across all disciplines. The proposal emphasised the importance of supporting colleagues to consider how this might be achieved in their area through developing advice, guidance and case studies. The project would launch in April 2018 and run until the end of the calendar year at which point it would launch supporting resources and make recommendations for any necessary amendments to policy and procedures.

The Committee endorsed and welcomed the proposals, in particular the emphasis upon effective and meaningful partnership with students. The Committee agreed that the project should be highlighted at College level and that suggestions for representation on the delivery group should be forwarded to M Peel.

The Committee also received a summary of the role of Director of Educational Innovation. The objectives for the role in 2018 included further developing Leicester's innovation in the Student Journey, reviewing taught postgraduate education within the institution, and developing a sector leading approach to the development of teaching focussed staff.

18/M27 DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The Committee received an update on the Digital Learning Environment (DLE) Project from R Parry.

The Committee noted that a joint session had been held between the Education Excellence and DLE project teams regarding the development of digital assessment and that a small group had been established to define the priorities in this area.

The Committee noted that significant work had been undertaken to develop consistent templates for modules within Blackboard in order to enrich the current VLE. It was noted that population of these new VLE sites would be a manual process in summer 2018 but that following this processes would be introduced to automatically update in the future, enhancing consistency and reducing the workload for staff in departments.

The Committee noted that a new policy on the roles, responsibilities and requirements for the maintenance of a high quality and consistent Digital Learning Environment would be developed over the coming months and presented for initial consideration at the Committee in the summer term, before wider consultation.

18/M28 CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION

The Committee received an update on the Curriculum Transformation Project from G Wynn. The Committee noted that 117 programmes had been considered through approval panels, which included the majority of undergraduate provision. Current priorities for the project including mapping and resolving the impact for a small number of students arising from the deferred roll out of some programmes, and supporting communication with current first year students regarding the transformed curricula for 2018/19. The Committee also noted that the close link between Curriculum Transformation and Education Excellence would ensure that the roll out of transformed curricula was monitored in such a way as to generate data, examples and impact case studies to feed a future TEF submission.

18/M29 PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL

a) BA Journalism

The Committee considered the report of the Programme Approval Panel that had met on 23 January to consider a BA Journalism and associated Major and Minor. The Committee welcomed the development of the programme. The Committee approved the report and authorised the Chair of the Panel to approve the academic case for the programme upon receipt of a satisfactory response. The Committee noted, however, that approval of the final business case was pending approval from UPMG.

b) MSc Forensic Genetics and Genomics

The Committee considered the response from the programme team to the conditions in the Programme Approval Panel report. The Committee agreed that the conditions had been met, but noted that following further consideration of the business case the development of the programme had been suspended.

c) Programme Withdrawals

i) PGCert Action Research

The Committee considered and approved a proposal to withdraw the PGCert Action Research. Entrants in October 2017 would be the final cohort, and a plan was in place to support the-teach out of the programme, including periods of suspension and re-sit.

ii) PGCE Secondary (Citizenship Route)

The Committee considered and approved a proposal to withdraw the PGCE Secondary (Citizenship) route. Entrants in October 2017 would be the final cohort, and a plan was in place to support the teach-out of the programme, including periods of suspension and re-sit.

18/M30 STUDENT EXPERIENCE ENHANCEMENT GROUP

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Student Experience Enhancement Group that took place on 24 January 2018.

18/M31 COLLEGE ACADEMIC COMMITTEES

The Committee received reports of the meetings of the College Academic Committees that had taken place on:

- a) College of Life Sciences, 18 January 2018
- b) College of Science and Engineering, 17 January 2018
- c) College of Social Science, Arts and Humanities, 24 January 2018

Arising from a) the Committee was pleased to note the innovative approach being taken to alternative re-assessment of research methods modules in Psychology, which involved the provision of specific intensive statistics workshops.

18/M32 OIA CONSULTATION

The Committee noted the current consultation regarding the rules of the OIA. Any feedback was requested to be directed to the Quality Office by 20 February,

18/M33 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

The Committee considered and approved the nomination of the following External Examiners:

College of Life Sciences

School of Biological Sciences

Professor Vincent O'Connor, University of Southampton

Period of Office: September 2018 to September 2022

Programme(s): BSc Biological Sciences (Physiology with Pharmacology, and Neuroscience variants) and BSc Medical Physiology

Medical School

Professor Jamie Coleman, University of Birmingham

Period of Office: September 2017 to September 2021

Programme(s): MBChB (Phase II)

College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

School of Education

Mr Chris Randall, Lindens Teaching School Alliance

Period of Office: September 2018 to September 2022

Programme(s): PGCE SCITT

Dr David Stevens, Durham University

Period of Office: September 2018 to November 2022

Programme(s): Masters in Education

School of Law

Dr Sarah Fovargue, Lancaster University

Period of Office: September 2017 to November 2021

Programme(s): LLB Law, LLM Law

Professor Fiona Smith, University of Leeds
Period of Office: September 2017 to November 2021
Programme(s): LLB Law, LLM Law

The Committee noted that the following External Examiner appointments had been approved by Chair's Action:

College of Life Sciences

School of Biological Sciences and the Medical School

Dr Allison Fulford, University of Bristol
Period of Office: September 2017 to December 2022
Programme(s): BSc Biological Sciences (with foundation year),
MBChB (with foundation year), International Foundation Year for
Medicine

College of Science and Engineering

Department of Chemistry

Dr Simona Francese, Sheffield Hallam University
Period of Office: March 2018 to March 2022
Programme(s): MSc Forensic Science and Criminal Justice (DL)

DURATION OF MEETING: Two hours and five minutes

CHAIR

1. The following University Senate Regulations adhere to guidance issued by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) in order to comply with the University's obligations under consumer protection law, in particular the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 and the Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013. The University is also a member of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) complaints scheme. The OIA is responsible for reviewing individual complaints by students against higher education providers and is listed by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) as a consumer alternative dispute resolution (ADR) body.
2. The University regularly reviews and maintains its practices in accordance with our CMA Policy, guidelines issued by the CMA, relevant consumer law and OIA guidelines.