

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER
ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of a meeting held on
20 March 2018**

Present:

J Scott (Chair)

A Abdulla	A Cameron
E Clapp	F Deepwell
R Dickinson	G Green
S Handa	A Moran
B Norman	R Parry
M Peel	C Taylor

G Wynn

In attendance: M Rawlinson (for M41) and A Petersen (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from C Hewitt, D Lambert, D Lockett and L Masterman

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

18/M34 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

18/M35 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

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

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

18/M36 **MATTERS ARISING**

Arising from M12 the Committee noted that ULT had endorsed an open door policy but that a detailed policy statement had yet to be drafted. The Chair and G Green agreed to lead the drafting of a statement for review by a small group, including the Students' Union before submission to the Committee for approval.

Arising from M18 the Committee noted that the Chair would be meeting shortly with colleagues from the Library, LLI and Information Assurance Services to discuss the potential impact of GDPR on the Reflect policy, and any amendments that may be necessary.

Arising from M24, the Committee noted that Senate had endorsed the proposal that summer re-sits should be available for all finalist modules, commencing in 2018/19.

Arising from M25 the Committee noted that Senate had approved an introductory document to Senate Regulations which confirmed adherence to guidance issued by the CMA in order to comply with the University's obligations under Consumer Protection Law, as well as other relevant complaints and dispute resolution schemes.

Arising from M26 the Committee noted that the Inclusive Curriculum Project had been highlighted to College Academic Committees, an invitation for colleagues to take part had been circulated, and that expressions of interest to lead the Group had been requested.

18/M37 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair reported that:

R Dickinson had been awarded a Principal Fellowship of the HE. The Committee congratulated him on this achievement;

- a) Senate had approved the refreshed Learning Strategy at its meeting on 7 March and this would be submitted to Council for consideration shortly.
- b) AdvanceHE (created by the merger of the HEA, the Leadership Foundation and the Equalities Challenge Unit) would be launched at the end of March and would support the development of learning, teaching and leadership in Higher Education.
- c) It appeared that the focus from TEF 4 onwards would be on subject, rather than provider level submissions.
- d) That the Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) data had been published. This demonstrated that a significant range of factors, many associated with students' background before University and geographical location, influenced employment outcomes.
- e) That the Value for Money report authored by the OfS demonstrated a significant proportion of students did not feel that their programme was value for money, although there were significant disciplinary differences with students on STEM programmes typically showing a greater level of satisfaction in this area.
- f) That the NSS for 2018 was ongoing. The University response rate was strong and the vast majority of departments had reached the reporting threshold. Targeted work was underway in individual departments to maximise response rates.

The Committee also noted that the Office for Students had been formally launched. The University would be required to register by 30 April and provide evidence relating to a number of themes including governance and management, compliance with consumer rights legislation, a student protection plan, compensation and refund policies and an access and participation plan. The Committee noted that provisional registration documentation would be considered at its extraordinary meeting on 20 April.

18/M38 TEF SUBMISSIONS

The Committee received for information the final Provider Submission and subject level submissions for the subject level TEF. The Committee expressed its thanks to all colleagues that had been involved in the drafting of the submissions.

The Committee noted that the subject level pilot had been demanding but had been an invaluable experience in terms of preparation for what would become a core component of the TEF. It had emphasised the importance of departmental ownership of metrics as expressed within the TEF framework. It had also demonstrated the importance of viewing preparation for TEF as a continuous rather than a time limited exercise. A result of this there would be the continual maintenance and updating of TEF submissions as live

documents within the University, and an emphasis upon collecting evidence of impact over time.

18/M39 **EDUCATION EXCELLENCE**

The Committee received for information a paper that had been considered by Senate regarding the Education Excellence Programme. In line with the previous item, the Education Excellence structure would be the primary means through which potential examples of evidence based impact would be identified, recorded and promoted.

The Committee noted that Senate had approved the disbandment of both the Student Experience Enhancement Group and the Assessment and Feedback Working Group. The work of both groups would be absorbed within the Education Excellence Programme. The Committee thanked members of both groups, past and present, for their contributions.

The Committee also received an update on Curriculum Transformation from G Wynn. The project team was focussing upon supporting departments in their discussions with returning students regarding the implementation of transformed curricula in 2018/19. The Committee was pleased to note that an initial analysis indicated that as a result of transformation there was an 11% reduction in the number of modules at UG level and an 11% increase in overall contact time. The initial analysis also indicated a 29% decrease in the average number of examination hours per credit. The Committee noted that this initial analysis may be further refined through the production of the CT report, which would be presented to the Committee before the end of the calendar year.

18/M40 **LEICESTER LEARNING INSTITUTE**

The Committee considered a paper from the Leicester Learning Institute (LLI) which set out the Institute's current activities and priorities for future development. The current activity was in three main areas namely programme design and the learning environment, supporting the delivery of learning, teaching and assessment, and supporting formal recognition for teaching through HEA fellowships. The Committee was pleased to note the many successful projects and initiatives under these themes including support for Curriculum Transformation, the Learning Spaces Strategy, Reflect Lecture Capture and an increase in HESA returnable staff with ATQs from 47% to 71%.

The Committee considered the areas of future focus and the questions raised in the document. The Committee agreed that the capacity building set out in the document could more accurately be described as capability building in terms of equipping academic staff with the tools to enhance their practice. This aligned strongly with the work of the LLI in both supporting and enabling enhancement in teaching. Following this, the Committee agreed that it would be helpful if the LLI could build upon this theme to articulate indicative institutional descriptors for certain roles relating to teaching, and how good or excellent practice could be defined within this.

The Committee noted that the LLI was represented at various levels in formal and project governance and had strong working relationships with academic colleagues. It was not initially clear the extent to which these relationships extended beyond individual contacts in departments and therefore how the extent of the impact of the LLI's work could be measured. The Committee agreed that it would be helpful for additional data on this to be collated to build up a map of engagement at departmental level.

It was also noted that the LLI engaged significantly with the student community through various projects such as Digital Innovation Partnerships. The Committee agreed that consideration of how such positive engagement could be further promoted would be undertaken outside of the meeting.

The Committee thanked the LLI for its ongoing work in supporting the development of learning and teaching practice within the institution, and welcomed an update on the above discussions in due course.

18/M41 **CODE OF PRACTICE ON PERSONAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

The Committee considered proposals for minor amendments to the Code of Practice on Personal Support for Students.

The Committee noted that since the approval of the original Code there had been a significant period of reflection and learning with regard to the effective operation of personal tutoring. The enhancement of practice in this area combined with the experience of operating elements of the current Code presented an opportunity to make further amendments which would align the document with front line practice in departments.

The amendments more clearly defined the core role of the personal tutor with regard to programme level support and academic progression. They also revised the description of the Senior Tutor to reflect developments in practice and re-iterated the importance of professional development for tutors.

The Committee considered the proposed changes. Although welcoming the clearer focus upon academic support and the resources available to support personal tutors in signposting students to appropriate pastoral support where required, the Committee agreed that this latter element of the role should be more clearly recognised in the initial description of a personal tutor. The Committee therefore required that a reference to the provision of initial pastoral care should be added to the principles section of the document.

The Committee considered whether the framework set out in the Code took account of the requirements arising from individual disciplines or modes of study. Overall, the Code was designed to set a framework and establish threshold requirements. It did not preclude a level of disciplinary variation in terms of implementation. Overall compliance with the threshold requirements would be managed through the Senior Tutor network. It was noted that personal tutor training was a standard part of the training for new starters and online training was provided for current staff but completion rates varied across the institution.

The Committee noted the amendment to the Code to specify that the process for changing personal tutor should be set out in the programme handbook. While supporting this amendment it was agreed that it would be helpful to clarify that the process of changing tutor and notifying the Student Records team was a departmental responsibility.

The Committee considered the recording of personal tutor interactions. It was noted that this was a requirement of the Code but that there was not at present a corporate business process or system to support this. The Committee fully supported the principle of keeping a record of such meetings but agreed that the reference to provision of a University wide system should be removed until further scoping on the nature and timescale for such a system could be undertaken. The Committee further agreed that the current obligation at departmental level to record interactions should be reflected in the body of the code.

The Committee **approved** the majority of the amendments but noted that those discussed above required further consideration and this may necessitate additional amendments. In light of this the Committee agreed that final version reflecting these amendments should be considered by a sub group of the Committee before final approval could be given.

18/M42 **POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT REVIEW**

The Committee considered a paper which set out the scope and timescale for a review of Taught Postgraduate provision within the University, building upon the work of the previous Task and Finish Group that had considered this issue.

The themes that had been initially identified through the original report such as the importance of flexibility in the overall offer and establishing a University level narrative regarding the role and value of taught postgraduate education were central to this subsequent programme of work. The document set out a number of issues and objectives across a range of themes including recruitment and portfolio, sustainability and flexibility of provision and student aspiration and identity. The paper proposed the establishment of a small working group with focussed objectives and a timeline for developing both new guidelines for programme development at PGT level and recommendations regarding PGT student identity, cohesion and aspiration, by June 2018.

The Committee welcomed and supported the framework for the review and the composition of the proposed Group. The Committee agreed that it was important to ensure that this piece of work was viewed as complementing the existing work of Curriculum Transformation to date, rather than being an additional project. The Committee noted that many of the objectives were entirely complementary and therefore it should be possible to build upon Curriculum Transformation. The Committee also agreed that it was important that this work aligned with that underway within the Digital Learning Environment (DLE) programme.

18/M43 **LEICESTER EDUCATION EXCELLENCE PARTNERSHIP**

The Committee considered a proposal to establish Leicester Education Excellence Partnerships (LEEP) in order to create a network and form of recognition for student centred academic and professional services staff. Any member of staff of the University could become a LEEP partner through meeting a number of obligations around the theme of impactful engagement with change projects, personal development and engagement with internal events in the area of learning and teaching.

The Committee welcomed the proposal, in particular the inclusive emphasis and lack of distinctions drawn between different staffing groups. The Committee recommended reconsideration of the title so as to avoid potential confusion with other projects. The Committee recognised the value of different communities of learning and teaching practitioners, but noted that it was important that there was a level of cohesion to allow the institution to ensure that good practice and innovation was promulgated. The Committee fully endorsed the proposal and recommended that this sit in within the Education Excellence Programme.

18/M44 **MODULE EVALUATION**

The Committee received an update on the Module Evaluation Project from A Cameron.

Over 500 modules were due to take part in the LUMES process for semester 2 of 2017/18. Due to the complexity of achieving full integration of EvaSys with SITS there would be a transitional period where the full functionality of the EvaSys system would not be in operation. The project had been rolled into the Education Excellence programme and the team was in the process of mapping out the process for transition and full integration. The Committee noted comments relating to the resourcing requirements for the system. The Committee also noted that L Masterman was leading the drafting of a Code of Practice which articulated the protocols for the collection and use of data through LUMES.

18/M45 **DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

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

The team had met with colleagues in Student and Academic Services and the Colleges to consider the process for the migration of material into the new Blackboard templates in the summer of 2018. This would be followed up with discussions in individual schools, and it was noted that additional short term resource would be available to support the migration.

18/M46 **PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL AND WITHDRAWAL**

The Committee considered the following:

a) Masters in Education and 90 credit PGCE

The Committee considered the report of the Panel that had met on 23 January 2018 to consider the introduction of an MEd and the addition of an option to study a further 30 level 7 credits as part of the existing PGCE programme. For the latter, the Committee noted that it had already approved the principle that the additional 30 credits would not count towards the award of the PGCE, but could be used as APCL for entry into the MEd under a dispensation to allow up to 90 credits of APL for that programme.

The Committee **approved** the report. The Committee noted that a final response to the corrections required by the Panel was pending, and authorised the Chair to consider and approve this on behalf of the Committee once submitted.

b) MSc Social Media and Data Analytics

The Committee considered the report of the Panel that had met on 24 January 2018 to consider the introduction of an MSc Social Media and Data Analytics. The Committee noted that the programme would be cross-disciplinary and would make use of existing material. The Committee noted that one of the recommendations was to consider amending the title from 'Analytics' to 'Analysis', and noted that this would be part of the response. The Committee **approved** the report. The Committee noted that a response had been received and authorised the Chair of the Panel to approve the programme for introduction, subject to consideration of this response.

- c) Addition of a Year Abroad and Year in Industry option to BA Economics and Accounting and the BA Human Resources Management Major Pathway

The Committee considered the report of the Programme Approval Panel that had met by correspondence in December 2017 to consider the addition of the Year Abroad and Year in Industry option to the above programmes. This would bring them into line with other provision within the School.

The Committee **approved** the report and **approved** the additions for current and future students on the programmes, from 2018/19.

- d) Programme Withdrawals
 - i) Doctorate of Psychology

The Committee considered a proposal to withdraw the Doctorate of Psychology. The Committee noted that staffing change meant that it was no longer possible to offer the programme to new entrants, and the last cohort had commenced in January 2017. A plan was in place to ensure the ongoing supervision and support of all remaining students on the programme until completion.

The Committee **approved** the proposal to withdraw the programme, effective from January 2017.

- ii) BSc Major in Human Resource Management

The Committee considered a proposal to withdraw the Major in Human Resources Management that led to a BSc award. The Committee noted that this was a technical change as the School had introduced a BA Human Resource Management Major Pathway through Curriculum Transformation, which had essentially replaced the programme being withdrawn. The Committee **approved** the withdrawal noting that a full teach out plan was in place for the students affected.

18/M47 **STUDENT EXPERIENCE ENHANCEMENT GROUP**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Student Experience Enhancement Group that took place on 28 February 2018.

As noted above, this would be the last meeting of the Group.

18/M48 **ISC ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the ISC Academic Management Board that took place on 16 February 2018

18/M49 **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, 1 March 2018
- b) College of Science and Engineering, 28 February 2018
- c) College of Social Science, Arts and Humanities, 28 February 2018

Arising from a) the Committee noted a correction to the report to state that the business case for the BSc Perioperative Practice was due to be considered by UPMG shortly. The Committee also noted issues raised regarding the risk of students seeking to bypass the Attendance Monitoring System. These points had been fed back to the Directorate of Academic Services directly. Further arising from the report, the Committee noted the comments from departments and some Professional Services regarding the timescale for appointing staff through Unitemps. The Chair agreed to raise these issues with the Registrar and COO.

18/M50 **APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

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

College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

School of Archaeology and Ancient History

Professor Serafina Cuomo, University of Durham

Period of Office: September 2018 to November 2022

Programme(s): BA Ancient History, BA Ancient History and Archaeology,
MA Greco-Roman World

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

College of Social Sciences

School of Education

Professor Agnes Kukulska, The Open University

Period of Office: January 2018 to November 2018

Programme(s): PG Cert Action Research

School of Law

Vanessa Bettinson, De Montfort University

Period of Office: September 2017 to November 2021

Programme(s): LLB Law, LLB Law with Criminology, LLB Law with Politics
LLB Law with a Modern Language

Dr Simon Cooper, Oxford Brookes University

Period of Office: September 2017 to November 2021

Programme(s): LLB Law, LLB Law with Criminology, LLB Law with Politics
LLB Law with a Modern Language

DURATION OF MEETING: Two hours and twenty minutes

CHAIR