

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

MEETING OF SENATE

Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 13 November 2013

Present: The Vice-Chancellor (Chair)

Dr Aissaoui	Professor Lilley
Mr Athwal	Professor Lovell
Professor Atkinson	Dr MacLeod
Dr Barber	Dr Marsh
Professor Barstow	Dr Maltby
Professor Beck	Professor Mattingly
Professor Bell	Professor Peel
Professor Brilliantov (<i>vice Professor Davidchack</i>)	Professor Phythian
Professor Chapman	Professor Raven
Professor Coleman	Dr Rawlinson
Ms Dunne	Professor Samani
Professor Erlebach	Professor Schurer
Professor Fulcher	Professor Schwabe
Ms Fyfe	Ms Taylor
Dr Gibson	Professor Thompson
Dr Grubb	Professor Wilson
Professor Hainsworth	Professor Wynford-Thomas
Professor Ketley	Mr Flatt
Professor Lester	Mr Rubin
Dr Lewis	

Campus Trade Union Representatives in attendance for M34: Mr C Marlow (UNITE)

In attendance: Director of the International Office, Director of External Relations, Director of Finance, Mrs J Wood (Assistant Registrar, Vice-Chancellor's Office) and Mr A Petersen (Assistant Secretary)

Apologies for Absence were received from Ms L Bailey, Professor Coffey, Professor Davidchack, Professor Fry, Professor London, Professor Lunt, Dr O'Connor, Dr Parry and Professor Wallace

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

13/M34 **UNIVERSITY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2012/13**

Senate considered extracts from the University's Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2013. Members of the Campus Trade Unions were present for this item. The Director of Finance drew Senate's attention to significant points of interest from the end-of-year accounts.

The Director of Finance re-affirmed the core elements of the University's financial strategy:

- To generate a sufficient and sustainable operating surplus;
- To incorporate high priority strategic developments;

- To have in place an appropriate and prudent portfolio of loans;
- To maintain a prudent level of cash flow at all times.

Senate was pleased to note that the University's income had risen to £281 million, representing an increase of 6.7% on the previous year. Senate noted the steady increase in the University's income over the previous decade, however it also noted the distinct shift in the balance between the various income streams, with a significantly greater proportion generated through tuition fees and other teaching related activities than in previous years.

Senate noted that following an anticipated dip in 2011/12 the University's operating surplus had risen to £4.3 million in the 2012/13 academic year, representing 2.6% of total income. Senate noted that this growth in operating surplus combined with the effects of changes to the funding for higher education nationally was projected to strengthen Leicester's financial position in comparison with peer institutions.

Senate noted that £43 million had been invested in the University estate and infrastructure on a range of projects which included the acquisition of the Brookfield site, the development of College Court and significant investment in equipment to support learning, teaching and research. In addition, the financial statements demonstrated that the University held cash reserves of £43 million, strengthened in part by the first instalment of funds from the recently acquired loan from the European Investment Bank.

Senate noted that the Financial Statements would be submitted to Council shortly, and further noted that they would form part of the University's submission to HEFCE in due course.

Senate thanked the Director of Finance and colleagues in the Finance Office for their work in producing the financial statements.

13/M35

INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR PGT STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Senate received a presentation from the Director of the International Office and the Director of External Relations regarding the University's strategy for increasing and diversifying recruitment of overseas students to taught postgraduate programmes of study. Senate noted that although overall international student registrations across the institution had increased, there was significant competition in the taught postgraduate marketplace. Senate further noted that the University had achieved success in opening and expanding new markets, however there was still an element of reliance upon traditional large markets such as China and, to a lesser extent, India.

Senate noted the progress made in terms of developing the University's portfolio of programmes to meet the demands of the market. Overall Senate considered a range of potential actions in order to protect and grow the existing market share. These included:

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- seeking to identify new markets;
- reviewing provision within department and aligning programme and module provision more closely with the requirements of employers;
- developing strategic partnerships with companies, HEIs and government bodies;
- developing more flexible programmes that allowed students to meet their professional development aims in a mode of study that suited them.

Senate noted that support for Departments to consider the focus and marketing of their provision could be provided by the Department of Marketing and Communications, whilst support for the identification and approach to new international market opportunities could be provided by the International Office.

13/M36 **MEMBERSHIP AND POWERS OF SENATE**

Senate received its constitution, as recorded in Ordinance 10, and its membership for 2013/14. The Vice-Chancellor welcomed all new members to their first meeting.

13/M37 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Senate considered the minutes of a meeting held on 4 July 2013.

Senate **approved** the minutes as a correct record.

13/M38 **VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BUSINESS**

(a) Staff Distinctions

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the following distinctions:

Staff Awards

Professor Andy Abbott (Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Department of Chemistry) has won a Brian Mercer Award for innovation from the Royal Society.

Professor Andy Abbott and **Professor Karl Ryder (Chemistry)** have won the Canning Bi-centenary medal from the Institute of Material Finishing.

Professor Heiko Balzter (Geography) has been invited to join the NERC Peer Review Council from 1 January 2014 as a Core Panel member for Panel C.

Dr Cyril Dominguez (Biochemistry) has been appointed to the French ANR (The French National Research Agency) grant panel and has also become associated editor of the journal *BMC Biochemistry*.

Mr Dave Hall (Registrar and Secretary) has become a member of the AHUA (Association of Heads of University Administration) Executive and will serve on the Board for a three-year period.

Professor Martin Halliwell (Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, School of English) is to hold the first John Maynard Keynes Fellowship in US Studies.

Professor Rob Hillman (Chemistry) has joined the editorial team of *Electrochimica Acta* and he will become Editor in Chief in 2014.

Professor Eric Hope (Chemistry) has been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

Dr Alexander Korb (Historical Studies) was awarded a prize by the German Association of Booksellers for the best non-fiction book. The book was also awarded recognition by the German Popular History Journal as well.

Professor David Mattingly (Archaeology and Ancient History) has been invited to become a member of *Academia Europaea*.

Professor Peter Moody (Biochemistry) has been appointed to the Diamond Light Source Peer Review Panel.

Dr Jenny Pickerill (Geography) has been selected to be an assessor for the Australian Research Council as one of its international experts.

Professor Catrin Pritchard (Biochemistry) has been appointed a member of the Cancer Research UK Programme Review Panel and a Reader for L'Oreal-Unesco for Women in Science UK and Ireland Fellowships.

Professor John Schwabe (Biochemistry) has been awarded a Wellcome Trust Senior Investigator Award and a Royal Society Wolfson Research Merit Award.

Dr Alison Stewart (Chemistry) has led the development of the Department's Submission to Athena Swan which resulted in a successful Bronze Award.

Professor Geerten Vuister (Biochemistry) has been appointed a member of the Executive Committee of the UK Structural Biology Forum.

Dr Dylan Williams (Chemistry) has been elected to the Tertiary Education Committee of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

UNIVERSITY AWARDS

The University of Leicester was chosen as University of the Year runner-up in the first ever joint Sunday Times/Times Good University Guide.

Four Science departments from the University of Leicester have been granted the following Athena Swan Awards:

Health Sciences achieved a silver award in the Athena Swan submission, a first for the University

Cardiovascular Sciences, Chemistry and **Computer Science** all achieved bronze awards in the Athena Swan submissions.

Corporate Affairs and Planning received the following six education marketing awards at the recent HEIST Awards:

Gold Awards

Marketing, Planning and Communication for:

Marketing Department of the Year (Paul Drake and team)
Best Postgraduate Prospectus (Sam Winter and team)
Best PR/Advocacy campaign (Ather Mirza and team)

Silver Award

Development and Alumni Relations for:

Best Alumni/Fundraising Campaign for their work for the Women of Influence Initiative (Lisa Davies and team)

Bronze Award

Marketing, Planning and Communication for:

Best Undergraduate Prospectus (Sam Winter and team)

Student Recruitment received a Highly Commended Certificate in the Student Recruitment Campaign (Elizabeth Smythe and team)

(b) Senate Regulation 3 governing fees

Senate noted that the Vice-Chancellor had taken action on behalf of Senate to approve an amendment to Senate Regulation 3 governing fees, in order to extend the alumni discount to include students undertaking programmes by distance learning.

(c) Senate Regulation 11 governing student discipline

Senate noted that the Vice-Chancellor had taken action on behalf of Senate to approve an amendment to Senate Regulation 11 governing student discipline, in order to expand the penalties available for a Head of Department to impose in the event of a student neglecting their academic obligations.

(d) REF 2014

Senate noted that draft Research Excellence Framework (REF) submissions were under consideration within the University, ahead of the deadline for final submissions on 29 November 2013. The Vice-Chancellor thanked all of the staff throughout the University who have been involved in the development of the REF submissions, in particular the REF Coordinators in academic departments.

(e) 1994 Group

Senate noted that the 1994 Group of universities of which Leicester was formally part had disbanded. Senate noted that it would be necessary to await developments at national level before the University's involvement with other similar Groups could be considered.

(f) Grade Point Average Pilot

Senate noted that the Vice-Chancellor would be Chairing a national group piloting the use of a Grade Point Average (GPA) for the award of degrees, building upon the wide-scale adoption of the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).

(g) Literary Leicester

Senate noted that the sixth Literary Leicester festival was underway bringing together a variety of distinguished authors and academics for a programme of free events.

13/M39 STRATEGY AND POLICY

(a) Amendment to Regulations

Senate considered an amendment to the regulations governing the academic dress of the University. The amendment would add the option of a bonnet in place of the normal cap for female holders of senior offices within the institution.

Senate **approved** the amendment to regulations.

(b) University Risk Register

Senate considered amendments to the University Corporate Strategic Risk Register for the Autumn term. The Vice-Chancellor drew Senate's attention to specific elements of the report.

Senate **approved** the Risk Register for onward submission to Council.

(c) Admissions target setting for 2014/15

This paper was withdrawn.

(d) League Tables

Senate noted the University's position in the following league tables:

The Times/Sunday Times Good University guide	14 th
THE Table of Tables	18 th
THE World University Ranking	161 st
QS World University Ranking	202 nd

Senate was pleased to note that the University had established its place as a top 20 UK University in all of the main league tables. Senate was also pleased to note the University's position in the THE World University rankings, which represented a rise of over 30 places and firmly established the University within the top 2% of higher education institutions globally.

13/M40 **LEARNING AND TEACHING**

(a) National Student Survey 2013

Senate noted that in the 2013 National Student Survey (NSS) Leicester's overall satisfaction rating was 89%. This was the 6th highest overall satisfaction score, however due to the close proximity of a large number of institutions within the league table the overall result was for Leicester to be placed 16th amongst mainstream institutions. Senate noted that this did not represent a significant drop in overall student satisfaction, which had remained consistently high over the previous seven years, however it was agreed that this further re-enforced the need to continue investing to improve the student experience. Senate also noted that work was underway at departmental and college level to analyse the results and identify those opportunities for improvements at a local level.

Senate considered preparations for the 2014 National Student Survey, and noted that the survey would open for final year students on 3 February 2014. Senate also noted that the 2014 survey would include questions on Course Delivery, Welfare, Resources and Facilities.

(b) Academic Policy Committee

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) presented reports of the meetings of the Academic Policy Committee held on 18 September and 18 October 2013.

Senate considered and **approved** the terms of reference and membership of the Committee for the 2013/14 academic year.

Senate noted the development and approval of a University policy for the quality assurance of distance learning materials. Senate was pleased to note that the implementation of the policy should result in a consistently higher standard of learning experience for students on distance learning programmes across the University. Senate has also noted that the policy was based upon existing good practice in many distance learning departments and that a range of supporting resources were available to staff for the implementation of the policy. It was noted that the policy included external review for new DL modules and Senate agreed that any queries regarding the development and implementation of the policy should be discussed with the Director of Distance Education.

Senate also noted that a working group of the Committee was undertaking a review of the operation of Senate Regulation 7 governing the assessment of taught programmes, and that following this would be undertaking a programme of reviewing the Senate Regulations more widely. Senate noted that all departments would have the opportunity to contribute to the process of review, and agreed that any additional comments should be fed back to the Secretary to feed into the process.

Senate also noted the publication to departments of a draft University Code of Practice on Managing Higher Education provision with others for consultation, and that this process would also contribute to the clearer articulation of a University strategy on collaborative provision.

Senate **approved** the reports.

(c) Career Development Advisory Board

The Vice-Chancellor presented a report of the meeting of the Career Development Advisory Board held on 4 November 2013.

Senate considered and **approved** the terms of reference and membership of the Committee for the 2013/14 academic year.

Senate noted that the Festival of Careers took place on 5th November and had proven highly successful with over 2700 students attending. Additionally, Senate has noted that the Employability Summit was due to take place on 17th December, further emphasising the centrality of student employability to the work of the University

Senate also noted the results of the Student Aspirations Project which had demonstrated the importance of engaging students with employability activities such as internships early in their studies and providing mentoring opportunities, especially from alumni. The report was recommended to all departments.

Senate **approved** the report.

(d) Postgraduate Research Policy Committee

The Graduate Dean presented reports of the meetings of the Postgraduate Research Policy Committee held on 16 September and 7 October 2013.

Senate considered and **approved** the terms of reference and membership of the Committee for the 2013/14 academic year.

Senate noted that the Committee had considered a proposal to develop an online system for research degree applications which would dramatically increase the efficiency of the system and allow colleagues to track individual applications in real time. The Committee had approved a pilot of the new system with a view to full implementation in 2014/15.

Senate also noted that the Committee was overseeing the operation of a range of activities to support the implementation of the recently approved Senate Regulation 9 governing research degrees. Senate noted finally that the Committee was working with the English Language Teaching Unit to develop more tailored pre-sessional English language training for research students.

Senate **approved** the reports.

(e) Honorary Degrees Board

Senate considered a report of the meeting of the Honorary Degrees Board held on 4 November 2013.

Senate considered the nominations for the conferment of honorary degrees and a distinguished honorary fellowship at future degree ceremonies.

Senate **approved** the report and has **resolved to recommend** to Council that these nominations be approved.

(f) Programmes of Study

Senate received a list of programmes of study recently approved or withdrawn.

13/M41 **RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE**

(a) Enterprise Policy Committee

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) presented a report of the meeting of the Enterprise Policy Committee held on 28th October 2013.

Senate considered and **approved** the terms of reference and membership of the Committee for the 2013/14 academic year.

Senate noted that the University had improved its position in the HEBCIS league table, and noted that further work was planned in order to strengthen the University's position among key regional peers. In particular Senate noted the planned increase in the University's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provision, and the development of more effective incentives to encourage enterprise activity within academic departments.

Senate **approved** the report.

(b) Research Policy Committee

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) presented a report of the meeting of the Research Policy Committee held on 30 October 2013.

Senate considered and **approved** the terms of reference and membership of the Committee for the 2013/14 academic year.

Senate noted with pleasure that in 2013/14 the University achieved a record level of research awards and research income. Senate has also noted that the University had joined the Industry and Parliament Trust which represented an opportunity to showcase Leicester's research strengths to parliamentarians, industrialists and national policy makers.

Senate **approved** the report.

13/M42 **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

(a) Staffing Policy Committee

The Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Resources) presented a report of the meeting of the Staffing Policy Committee held on 24 October 2013.

Senate considered and **approved** the terms of reference and membership for the Committee for the 2013/14 academic year.

Senate noted that the revised induction for new Heads of Department had proved successful, and noted the Committee's additional congratulations to those departments within the University achieving Athena Swan awards.

Senate **approved** the report.

(b) Information and Communications Strategy Committee

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Science and Engineering presented the report of a meeting of the Information and Communications Strategy Committee held on 1 November 2013.

Senate considered and **approved** the terms of reference and membership for the Committee for the 2013/14 academic year.

Senate noted that the Committee had been considering the development data security policies for mobile devices connected to the University's network and that full proposals would be considered by the Committee shortly. Senate also noted that key areas of work for IT Services in 2014/15 would involve improvement to administrative processes, management information and reporting, the introduction of new technologies in Learning and Teaching, research data management, securing the digital campus and use of Cloud services.

Senate **approved** the report.

(c) Senate Student Discipline Committee

Senate **approved** the appointment of Professor Jose Miola and Dr Henrietta O'Connor as Authorised Officers to investigate allegations of academic misconduct.

13/M43 **DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Senate noted the dates and times of its meetings in 2013/14 as follows:

Wednesday 12 March 2014 at 2.00 pm

Thursday 1 July 2014 at 2.00 pm

13/M44 **APPOINTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY'S NEXT VICE-CHANCELLOR**

Senate received an update from the Joint Committee of Senate and Council considering the appointment of the next Vice-Chancellor.

CHAIR