

# UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

## MEETING OF SENATE

### Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 21 March 2012

Present:	The Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor Abbott	Professor Lansdale
Professor Ainley	Professor Lester
Mr Athwal	Professor Levesley
Dr Barber	Professor Lilley
Professor Barstow	Professor Lunt
Mr Beck	Professor Murphy
Professor Bell	Dr O'Connor
Dr Campbell	Professor Petersen
Professor Chapman	Professor Phythian
Dr Comber ( <i>vice</i> Dr Page)	Dr Rawlinson
Ms Dunne	Professor Robinson ( <i>vice</i> Professor Samani)
Dr England ( <i>vice</i> Professor Lovell)	Professor Ruzza
Professor Erlebach	Professor Sandell
Ms Fyfe	Professor Schwaeble ( <i>vice</i> Professor Andrew)
Dr Georgoulis	Professor Schürer
Dr Grubb	Professor Schwabe
Professor Gunter	Dr Spunta
Professor Hainsworth	Professor Tallack
Professor Hall	Professor Thomas
Professor Halliwell	Professor Thompson
Professor Haselgrove	Ms Visser
Ms Jones	Professor Wilson
Dr Jones ( <i>vice</i> Professor Steward)	Professor Wynford-Thomas
Professor Ketley	Mr Nutt

**Campus Trade Union Representatives in attendance** for minute 12/M1:  
Mr C Marlow (UNITE) and Ms E Chung (UCU).

**In attendance:** Ms Wood, the Director of Finance, the Director of Corporate Affairs and Planning, the Registrar and Secretary, the Academic Registrar (Secretary) and Mr A Petersen (Minute Secretary).

**Apologies for Absence** were received from Professor Andrew, Ms Burtenshaw, Dr Gibson, Professor Lovell, Dr Page, Professor Samani, Dr Scott and Professor Steward.

## UNRESERVED BUSINESS

### 12/M1 **HEFCE RECURRENT GRANT ALLOCATIONS**

**Senate noted** a letter from HEFCE announcing the recurrent grant for 2012/13. The Director of Finance provided an oral commentary on the outcome from a University perspective. Representatives of the campus Trades Unions were present for this discussion.

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**Senate noted** that the University was entering the new academic year from a position of strength with a substantial operating surplus following several years of growth. Developments at national level had created uncertainties regarding future funding and student numbers, however Senate noted that significant contingencies had been incorporated within the financial forecasts for this period to mitigate this risk. In addition, the University was seeking to maintain a prudent cash balance, continue to maintain capital investment and ensure an appropriate loan portfolio to support growth.

**Senate noted** that the University's Teaching Grant for 2012/13 would be £30 million, representing a reduction of £6.3 million on the previous year, while the Research Grant would be £19.6 million, a reduction of £0.9 million. Senate noted that teaching funding in 2012/13 would be provided on a strict per capita basis, and it was therefore essential to ensure that the University met its allocated Student Number Control (SNC) whilst also seeking to recruit well among students obtaining AAB or higher. Significant financial penalties would be imposed where institutions exceeded the SNC.

**Senate also received** a report from the Director of Corporate Affairs and Planning regarding student recruitment for the 2012/13 academic year. Headline application rates for the institution for 2012 entry were below those of previous years, with some significant fluctuations at departmental level, however overall the situation was broadly in line with national developments. Senate was pleased to note that undergraduate acceptance rates were higher than in previous years, and application rates for taught postgraduate and research degrees had shown a significant increase.

**Senate also noted** the significant challenges presented by the need to recruit students obtaining AAB or higher to fill those places not covered by the SNC. The Division of Corporate Affairs and Planning was working closely with academic departments to meet these challenges, in terms of marketing, student recruitment activities, and developing guidance for clearing and confirmation.

12/M2 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Senate considered** the minutes of a meeting held on 15 November 2011.

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

12/M3 **MATTERS ARISING**

No matters arising were identified.

## 12/M4 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BUSINESS

**(a) Staff distinctions**

The Vice Chancellor drew attention to the following distinctions:

**Queen's New Year's Honours 2012**

**Professor Derek Raine (Physics and Astronomy and former Director of the Physics Innovation Centre for Excellence in Teaching)** has been awarded an MBE for services to science education.

**Staff Awards**

**Professor Sir Robert Burgess (Vice-Chancellor)** has received the Lifetime Achievement Award for a lifetime contribution to Midlands Business at the Midlands Business Awards held in Birmingham in February 2012. He has also been invited to Chair the Board of the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen Social Research) from February 2012 for four years in the first instance.

**Mr Colin Atkinson (Information Assurance Services)** has been awarded the UCISA-Eduserve Award for Excellence in 2011 for the Online Information Security Training Course that he was involved in developing.

**Professor Martin Barstow (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College of Science and Engineering)** has been:

- reappointed to the STFC (Council of the Science and Technology Facilities Council) for a further term of three years.
- appointed a member of one of the European Space Agency panels, the Astronomy Working Group, for three years. This panel is a senior panel in the ESA structure providing advice to the Director of Science and Robotic Exploration
- appointed a member of the UK Space Agency Space Projects Advisory Committee
- appointed a member of the Hubble Space Telescope Time Allocation Committee for 2012.

**Professor Gordon Campbell (English)** has been awarded the Longman – *History Today* Trustees' Award for his lifetime contribution to history.

**Professor Andrew Ellis (Chemistry)** has been appointed Visiting Professor at the University of Innsbruck.

**Mr Geoff Green (Director of Administration, College of Science and Engineering)** has been awarded an AUA Jubilee Award for Most Innovative Involvement in the Association of University Administrators.

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**Mr Mark Heggs (Building Clerk of Works, Estates)** was the outright winner of the Building on Quality Award 2010/11 for his contribution as the Building Clerk of Works for the Percy Gee project.

**Dr Don Jones (Cancer Studies and Molecular Medicine)** has been offered Honorary Membership of the Royal College of Radiologists for his notable contributions made to Clinical Oncology in the UK.

**Dr Cas Kramer (Genetics)** and **Dr Martin Tobin (Health Sciences)** have been selected to present at the Royal Society's Summer Exhibition.

**Professor Dave Lambert (Cardiovascular Sciences)** has been invited to join the International Union of Pharmacology (IUPHAR) sub-committee for the cardiovascular target Urotensin II.

**Professor Mel Leng (Geology)** has become an Associate Editor for the G-cubed Journal of Geophysics, Geochemistry and Geosystems.

**Professor Mark Lester (Physics and Astronomy)** had been invited to be a member of the European Space Agency's Space Science Advisory Committee.

**Professor Mike Lovell (Geology)** has been invited, as Chair of CHUGD (Committee of Heads of University Geoscience Departments), to be a member of the British Geological Survey Advisory Committee, which replaces the British Geological Survey Board.

**Dr Max Moorkamp (Geology)** has been nominated outstanding reviewer of the year 2011 by Geophysical Journal International and has been selected to participate at the House of Commons on 12th March in the Physical Sciences (Physics) Session of SET for Britain.

**Dr Henrietta O'Connor (School of Management)** has been elected to the editorial board of Sociology for three years from January 2012.

**Professor Gordon Roberts (Biochemistry)** has taken up the position of President of the International Union of Pure and Applied Biophysics for three years following the recent International Congress of Biophysics.

**Dr Joan Smith (Education)** has been awarded the prize of Best Paper 2011 entitled 'Agency and Female Teachers' Career Decisions: A Life History Study of 40 Women' by the Editorial Board at EMAL (Educational Management Administration and Leadership).

**Professor Douglas Tallack (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Arts, Humanities and Law)** has given the opening plenary at the 'Cultures and Languages in Contact, conference, El Jadida, Morocco' and also given a public lecture at Nottingham Contemporary.

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**Dr Jonathan Thompson (Cardiovascular Sciences)** has been awarded the title of Royal College of Anaesthetists Macintosh Professor of Anaesthesia 2010/11. Included in the award was the opportunity to give an accompanying lecture for the Royal College of Anaesthetists.

### University Awards

**Residential and Commercial Services** has won two awards at the Meetings and Incentive Travel Awards. The first was a Silver Award for Value for Money and the second was a Bronze Award for Best Academic Venue.

### Student Awards

At the Mineral Deposits Studies Group of the Geological Society **Adam Jones (4th Year MGeol Student)** won the Lonmin best student talk prize. **Louise Wright** and **Robin-Marie Bell (4<sup>th</sup> Year MGeol students)** received honourable mentions by Anglo American for their poster presentations.

#### (b) 1994 Group

**Senate noted** recent changes to the membership of the 1994 Group of Universities, and agreed that this represented an opportunity for the Group to undertake a period of reflection regarding its activity and focus.

#### (c) University Sports Facilities

**Senate noted** that the new University Sports Centre, formally the Nuffield Health Club, would open on 2 April 2012 with facilities for staff, students and associates.

#### (d) College Hall

**Senate has also noted** that work would shortly commence to convert the College Hall site to a management training conference venue, which would further strengthen the position of the University in this sector. The new development would provide modern facilities and accommodation, and also expand the University's capacity to deliver short residential study programmes.

## 11/M5 STRATEGY AND POLICY

**(a) Amendment to Ordinances**

**Senate considered** a Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the Students Union, and proposed amendments to Ordinance 22 'The Students' Union'. The Memorandum and associated amendments to Ordinances would reflect recent agreements relating to various issues of common interest, in order to ensure a clear and positive relationship between the two parties. **Senate has noted** that the amendments were also reflected in the new Union Constitution.

**Senate approved** the Memorandum and agreed to **recommend** to Council that the amendments to Ordinance 22 be approved.

**(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) Disestablishment of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee**

**Senate considered** a proposal for the disestablishment of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee and the subsequent redistribution of its duties. The role of the Committee had been considered following reviews of the wider University governance structure and strategic planning processes.

The proposal recommended that the Committee be disestablished and that its duties be redistributed. The development of the University Strategic Plan, and monitoring of the University Risk Register and key performance indicators would be undertaken by the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee. The budgetary and forecasting responsibilities would rest with the Finance Committee, as would the monitoring of overall performance against the Strategic Plan, informed by reports and recommendations from appropriate contributing committees.

**Senate approved** the proposal for onward submission to Council.

12/M6 **LEARNING AND TEACHING****(a) Assessment Regulations**

**Senate considered** a paper regarding proposed amendments to the regulations for the assessment of students on taught programmes, and the role and operation of Boards of Examiners.

**Senate noted** that the proposals had been informed by the recent publication of the revised QAA code concerning external examining, and that the amendments had been subject to consultation at Departmental, College and University level. The proposed amendments articulated the core principle that the responsibility for the assurance of standards across the institution lay with the University as the degree awarding body, and proposed a clear institutional framework for assessment and classification of awards.

Under the proposals the role of the external examiner would change, although Senate noted that External Examiners would still play a key role in the assessment and classification process as equal members of Boards of Examiners. The proposal also articulated a number of operational amendments to the timing of examiners' meetings, and also the processes of verifying module outcomes, and the confirmation of awards and classifications. In addition, representatives of the Academic Registrar would attend the meetings of Boards of Examiners to establish a formal mechanism through which Senate could be assured, through its secretary, that the regulations were being applied consistently across the institution. Senate noted that support for the implementation of the regulations would be provided by Student and Academic Services.

**Senate noted** its role in setting the regulatory framework within which the University's degree awarding powers could be safely exercised.

**Senate further noted** that a final version of the full regulations relating to assessment would be considered for approval at its next meeting.

**(b) Academic Policy Committee**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) presented reports of the meetings of the Academic Policy Committee held on 1 December 2011, 26 January 2012 and 23 March 2012.

**Senate approved** the appointment of External Examiners and minor amendments to the regulations regarding academic appeals

**Senate received the report** of the Periodic Developmental Review of the Department of Economics and noted with concern the significant nature of the Panel's recommendations. Senate was reassured to learn of the active steps being taken to resolve the issues identified in the department and also to ensure that the University's quality assurance processes were routinely able to identify concerns in a timely manner.

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**Senate noted** the Committee's ongoing development of new regulations relating to assessment, the operation of Boards of Examiners, the consideration of mitigating circumstances and student discipline and noted that full proposals would come forward to a subsequent meeting of Senate. The Committee was also leading the enhancement of the quality of programme and module specifications for programmes within the institution, both to inform national statistics such as the Key Information Set (KIS) and to improve the information provided to students regarding their studies.

**Senate noted** that the Committee had established a task and finish group to undertake amendments to the University's Code of Practice on Collaborative Provision. **Senate also noted** the ongoing discussions regarding the role of the Higher Education Academy in accrediting the teaching activities of staff within the University.

**Senate approved** the report.

#### **(c) Careers Advisory Committee**

The Vice-Chancellor presented a report of the meeting of the Careers Advisory Committee held on 21 February 2012.

**Senate noted** that detailed consideration was underway to define the future direction of the Careers Service and that arrangements were now in place to provide a clearer structure for the co-ordination of Careers activities across the institution. These involved the creation of a University Employability Strategy and the organisation of an Employability Summit to engage academic leaders and staff. Senate welcomed these developments, in particular the formal recognition and promotion of the role of Careers Tutor within academic departments.

**Senate noted** proposals for the creation of an Employer Advisory Board to engage key external stakeholders, and noted that the membership of this body would be weighted towards employers rather than University staff. Senate welcomed this development, and agreed that it would be important for the Employer Advisory Board to work closely with existing Industrial Advisory Boards within Colleges and Departments.

**Senate approved** the report.

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**(d) Postgraduate Research Policy Committee**

**Senate considered** a proposal for the establishment of a Postgraduate Research Policy Committee. The Committee would maintain strategic oversight of the recruitment, supervision and quality assurance issues relating to the research student community. The Committee would be Chaired by the Graduate Dean and report directly to Senate.

**Senate noted** that the QAA had commended the University's rigorous management and oversight of research student supervision and agreed that the ongoing maintenance and development of this position was essential.

**Senate approved** the proposal.

**(e) Programmes of Study**

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

12/M7

**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 27 February 2012.

Senate noted the Committee's ongoing development of an institutional Enterprise Strategy, and also noted the role of the Business Activities Group in the identification and promotion of projects currently underway within departments and colleges which may have commercial potential.

**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 21 February 2012.

**Senate considered** a proposal to establish two new research centres based in the College of Social Science, namely the Centre for Labour Market Studies and the Institute of Finance. **Senate approved** these proposals.

**Senate noted** ongoing preparations for REF 2014. This included the review of draft case studies, reviews of REF outputs and the development of the REF Code of Practice which would shortly be circulated to staff. Senate noted the development of various aspects of institutional policy including minor amendments to the Research Strategy, development of guidance for research data management, and the collation of an inventory of University research equipment.

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Senate also noted that a project was underway to consider the operation of internal Research Ethics Committees.

**Senate approved** the report.

12/M8 **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

**(a) Staffing Policy Committee**

The Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor presented a report of the meeting of the Staffing Policy Committee held on 9 February 2012.

**Senate noted** that the Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor would be writing to heads of academic departments regarding weekend working for academics. Senate also noted the Committee's approval of policy and procedure relating to academic study leave, flexible working and parental leave.

**Senate approved** the report.

**(b) Information and Communications Technology Committee**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Science and Engineering presented a report of the meeting of the Information and Communications Technology Committee held on 2 March 2012.

**Senate noted** that the Committee had approved the IT Strategy and IT Services would be working with colleagues throughout the institution in order to implement the Strategy. Senate also noted the Committee's consideration of the potential outsourcing of student and staff email services, and that scoping work was underway to identify appropriate options.

12/M9 **DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Senate noted the date of the next meeting as follows:

Friday 6 July 2012 at 2.00 p.m.

**CHAIR**