

**UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER**

**MEETING OF SENATE**

**Minutes of a meeting held on  
Thursday 4 July 2013**

**UNRESERVED BUSINESS**

**13/M18 2013/14 BUDGETS AND FINANCIAL FORECASTS TO 2016/17**

Senate received the proposals for the University budget for 2013/14 and financial forecasts to 2016/17. The central features of the budget and forecasts were presented by the Director of Finance and representatives of the campus trades unions were present for this discussion. It was noted that part of the forecasts would shortly be submitted to HEFCE for the annual accountability process.

Overall, Senate was pleased to note a projected growth in the University's income across the planning period to over £327 million by 2016/17, the primary component of which was a growth in projected total fee income of over £69 million, offsetting reductions in funding council grant income. Senate noted however that development of the budget and forecasts had been particularly complex in light of the reduction in national funding for both fees and capital projects, and continuing challenges in student recruitment within the new fee environment. Contingencies totaling £2.1 million in 2013/14 had been maintained within the budget in order to mitigate these risks, while significant betterment targets across the Colleges and Corporate Services had been incorporated in order to control both pay and non-pay costs.

Senate noted that investment in research, learning and teaching and the University's capital programme continued throughout the planning period, although this was limited in the short term due to the need to maintain contingencies against the potential for poorer than anticipated student recruitment. Capital investment of £165.9 million was forecast over the planning period in order to further enhance the University estate and facilities, while additional funding for key posts in the Colleges and high priority IT developments had been allocated within the budget for 2013/14.

The University strategic priorities for the development of a sustainable financial position remained broadly consistent with previous years. Central to this strategy was the development of a robust operating surplus. Senate considered the proposed growth in the operating surplus from 2.0% of total income in 2012/13 to 5.0% by the end of the planning period. Senate noted that it was essential to maintain a robust surplus to support the University's learning and teaching mission and fund capital investment. It was further noted that through achievement of the projected level of surplus the University would compare favourably with peer institutions in terms of financial sustainability. Senate noted that work was underway to identify the optimum level of operating surplus in the longer term, to inform future planning rounds.

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In addition to the development of a robust surplus, throughout the planning period the University sought to:

- Have in place a prudent portfolio of loans, which included a recently secured loan of £55 million from the European Investment Bank;
- Continue investment into high priority academic, estates and infrastructure developments across the planning period;
- Maintain prudent cash flow, maintaining at all times a minimum of two months payroll cost.

The budget and forecasts initially indicated an increase in the central administrative costs for the University in the short term. However, Senate noted that the ongoing programme of service improvement had resulted in the movement of certain academic support roles and expenditure from the Colleges to the Corporate Services, and therefore proportionately this did not represent a significant overall increase in administrative pay costs.

**Senate approved** the budget and forecasts for submission to Council and thanked the Director of Finance and his team for the work that had gone into their production.

13/M19 **STUDENT RECRUITMENT FOR 2013/14**

Senate considered a report regarding the process of student recruitment for the 2013/14 academic year.

Senate noted that there was additional pressure upon undergraduate recruitment at this time partly due to changing trends in applications and acceptances at national level, and the competing recruitment policies of peer institutions. Senate noted that a range of activities were underway to mitigate the risk of lower than expected recruitment.

Senate noted that particular emphasis would be put upon recruiting additional students through clearing, seeking to increase the number of international students and investigating the academic history of each student in detail to ascertain whether their additional qualifications may allow them to move out of the Student Number Control (SNC). Overall, the University would seek to retain its average tariff score in the 2013/4 recruitment round, with consideration being given to the individual circumstances of each department during the clearing period.

Senate expressed its thanks to admissions tutors and administrative colleagues in academic departments for their hard work to date.

13/M20 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Senate considered the minutes of a meeting held on 13 March 2013.

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

## 13/M21 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BUSINESS

## (a) Degree Classification Profile

Senate received a report on the outcome of the midsummer examinations for undergraduate programmes within the University.

	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
<b>I</b>	352	14.7%	439	18.9%	540	22.0%
<b>2(i)</b>	1340	55.8%	1316	56.5%	1409	57.3%
<b>2(ii)</b>	598	24.9%	473	20.3%	415	16.9%
<b>3</b>	106	4.4%	93	4.0%	92	3.7%
<b>Pass</b>	4	0.2%	5	0.2%	1	.05%
<b>Aegrotat</b>	0	0%	2	0.1%	1	.05%
<b>Total</b>	2400	100%	2328	100%	2458	100%

Percentage of Firsts/Upper Seconds:

2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
71.5%	67.2%	70.5%	75.4%	79.3%

Senate noted with pleasure the increase in the proportion of First and Upper Second Class degrees achieved by students in midsummer 2013, and congratulated the students and staff of the University on the excellent results. Senate noted that further analysis of the results would take place shortly to identify trends in student achievement at departmental, programme and modular level.

## (b) Senate Regulation governing fees

Senate noted that Vice-Chancellor's action had been taken to approve Senate Regulation 3 governing fees.

## (c) Senate Regulation governing postgraduate research degrees

Senate noted that Vice-Chancellor's action had been taken to approve Senate Regulation 9 governing postgraduate research degrees.

## (d) University Orator

Senate noted that Vice-Chancellor's action had been taken to approve the extension of Professor Petersen's term as University Orator for a further and final year, ending in July 2014.

## (e) Staff Distinctions

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the following distinctions:

**Staff Awards**

**Professor Martin Barstow (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Science and Engineering)** has been elected President of the Royal Astronomical Society.

**Mr Rob Bean (Head Chef, Catering Services)** was the winner of the Craft Guild of Chefs Award this year.

**Professor Richard Bonney (Historical Studies)** has been invited to visit Mieji University in Japan as a guest Professor.

**Dr Arnoud Boom (Geography)** has been invited to attend a special event at the University de los Andes in Columbia to give a talk which was specially selected by their faculty.

**Dr Matt Bown (Cardiovascular Sciences)** has been awarded the 2013 Hunterian Professorship by the Royal College of Surgeons for England.

**Professor Hilary Burgess (School of Education)** has been awarded a National Teaching Fellowship from the Higher Education Academy.

**Dr Lex Comber (Geography)** has been awarded the Invitation Fellowship of the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science with Kyoto University on Graph Theoretical Methods for Mapping Land Use.

**Professor Mary Dixon-Woods (Health Sciences)** has been appointed to an advisory group at the instigation of the Prime Minister to look at the findings and implications for the NHS of the Robert Francis Inquiry into Mid-Staffordshire.

**Professor Chris Dyer (Historical Studies)** has won the Henry A. Wallace Award for the best book on agricultural history outside the United States for his monograph *A Country Merchant*.

**Professor David Ekserdjian (History of Art and Film)** has received the Cultural Enterprise award for the book that accompanied the Royal Academy exhibition entitled *Bronze*.

**Professor Pete Fisher (Geography)** has been invited to be a member of an international review committee to evaluate the Department of Geography at the University of Zurich.

**Professor Sarah Hainsworth (Engineering)** has been elected to the Executive Committee of the UK Council for Graduate Education for a period of 3 years.

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**Professor Martin Halliwell (English)** has been named Guest Professor at Shanghai International Studies University.

**Professor Jim Hinton (Physics and Astronomy)** has been successful in his application for a Wolfson Research Merit Award.

**Dr Suzie Imber (Physics and Astronomy)** has been awarded a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship in order to conduct research on the magnetosphere of Mercury.

**Mr Alex Moseley (Academic Practice Unit)** has been awarded a National Teaching Fellowship by the Higher Education Academy.

**Professor Sue Page (Geography)** has been awarded the Busk Medal for her conservation research on tropical peatlands which will be presented at a ceremony at the Royal Geographical Society.

**Dr Jenny Pickerill (Geography)** has been appointed as an editor of the Antipode Journal.

**Professor Nilesh Samani (Cardiovascular Science)** has been invited to serve as a member of the Health Sciences Panel in the Research Assessment Exercise in 2014 for the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong. He has also been invited to serve as an international jury member for the InBev-Baillet Latour Health Prize 2014, which is this year to be awarded in cardiovascular diseases.

**Professor Jon Scott (Cell Physiology and Pharmacology)** has been recognised as a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

**Dr Maciej Tomaszewski (Cardiovascular Sciences)** has been awarded the Young Investigator Research Award for Clinical Research by the European Society of Atherosclerosis.

**Corporate Affairs and Planning** won a Gold Award at the CASE International Circle of Excellence Awards for their communications work around the search for Richard III.

**The Nursery, University Sport Centre**, has improved its OFSTED rating to 'Good' in its recent assessment.

#### **Student Awards**

**Louise Farmer (Ph.D. Department of Cell Physiology and Pharmacology student)**, won the East Midlands Engineering and Science Professionals Master Prize for 2013. This was the third year in a row that the Prize has been won by the University of Leicester's entrant.

**Adam Brown (Ph.D. Engineering student)**, won the 2013 Young Persons' Lecture Competition (May 2013). Adam will now represent the UK at the world final of this competition to be held in Hong Kong in October 2013.

## (f) Student Sporting Distinctions

The Vice Chancellor drew attention range of sporting distinctions achieved by students of the University in the 2012/13 academic year.

## (g) Re-organisation of Lifelong Learning provision

Senate noted the transfer of the lifelong learning provision currently housed at Vaughan College to the main University Campus. This would allow lifelong learning students to access all of the facilities available to full-time students, enhancing their University experience and therefore reaffirming and strengthening the University's commitment to adult education. Senate was pleased to note that the provision of dedicated learning and teaching space on the main campus would allow for the continuation of the supportive lifelong learning community developed through Vaughan College.

## (h) REF Preparations

Senate noted that as part of the ongoing preparations for the Research Excellence Framework 2014, colleagues in academic departments had been contacted with regard to their individual submission status. Senate agreed that, from a strategic perspective, it was appropriate to optimize the level of submission to the REF. Senate however further noted that the individual submission status of academic colleagues would not automatically necessitate any change to their contractual arrangements. Senate noted that a range of options were available for colleagues depending on their circumstances, and that these would be considered on an individual basis with a view to reaching a positive outcome.

13/M22 **MEMBERS OF SENATE ELECTED TO COUNCIL**

**Senate approved** the appointment of the following to serve on Council for the three-year period commencing on 1 August 2013:

Professor Julian Ketley  
Professor Mark Lester

Senate **approved** the appointment of the following Pro-Vice-Chancellors to serve on Council for a two-year period commencing on 1 August 2013:

Professor Martin Barstow, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Science and Engineering  
Professor Mark Peel, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Arts, Humanities and Law

## 13/M23 STRATEGY AND POLICY

## (a) Amendment to Ordinances

Senate considered a proposal to amend *Ordinance 11: Membership of Court*. Senate noted that the proposed amendments had previously been endorsed by Council and referred to Senate for comment. The amendments were intended to simplify the current arrangements regarding members' period of office, and to combine the separate membership category of 'Life Member' with the existing category of 'Other Persons'.

Senate **endorsed** the amendments for final approval by Council.

## (b) Amendment to Regulations

Senate considered a proposal to add a statement on tolerance to Senate Regulation 11 governing student discipline and the University statement on harassment and discrimination. Senate noted that the statement had been drafted in consultation with the Students' Union.

Senate **approved** the addition of the statement within Senate Regulation 11, and the University statement on Harassment and Discrimination.

## (c) University Risk Register

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

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

## (d) League Tables

Senate noted the position of the University in league tables recently published in the Guardian (13<sup>th</sup>), the Complete University Guide (16<sup>th</sup>). Senate noted with pleasure that the University's ranking had increased in both tables, and that fourteen individual departments had achieved rankings within the top 10 within their disciplines.

## (e) Futurelearn

Senate considered a report from the Director of Distance Education regarding the University's involvement in Futurelearn, a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) platform, developed by the Open University. The University had entered into partnership with a range of leading UK Universities and institutions to deliver content through the Futurelearn platform, with one course being launched in October 2013. Senate noted that participation in this project reinforced the University's position as a learning provider of distance learning education, and that it represented an opportunity to be at the leading edge of innovation in technology supported learning.

## (f) HEFCE'S Annual Assessment of University Risk

Senate noted with pleasure that in its recent assessment of institutional risk HEFCE had assessed the University of Leicester as not at higher risk.

## (g) OFFA Agreement

Senate noted the University's submission to the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) for the 2014/15 academic year. Senate noted that the University continued to be one of the few research intensive Universities that successfully met its widening participation benchmarks. The submission outlined the extensive programme of financial support available to students to ensure that they were able to attend University regardless of their background or circumstances, and the growing programme of widening participation and outreach activities in the local community.

## (h) Consultations considered by VCAC

Senate received for information a list of the external consultations received and responded to by VCAC in the period October 2012 to June 2013.

13/M24 **LEARNING AND TEACHING**

## (a) Academic Policy Committee

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) presented reports of the meetings of the Academic Policy Committee held on 18 March, 23 April, 22 May and 24 June 2013.

Senate considered a proposal to amend the scheme of assessment for integrated Masters programmes, in order to raise the pass mark for level 4 modules to 50%. Senate agreed that this was appropriate to ensure consistency of standards across the institution and **approved** the proposal, noting that there would be a transitional arrangement for continuing students to ensure that they were not disadvantaged, as detailed in the report.

Senate also noted the development of new codes of practice regarding Programme Development, Approval and Modification, Joint Degrees and Collaborative Provision. Senate noted that the development of these codes had been informed by the relevant chapters of the QAA Quality Code. Senate further noted the Committee's endorsement of the Transferable Skills Framework, developed by the Career Development Service, as a core reference point for programme design within the institution. Finally, Senate noted that the Committee had approved in principle collaborative arrangements to establish a Foundation Degree in Space Engineering with Loughborough College, and two School Centred Initial Teaching Training Partnerships (SCITT) with the Leicester Secondary SCITT and the Grand Union Teaching Partnership.

Senate **approved** the reports.

## (b) Career Development Advisory Board

The Vice-Chancellor presented a report of the meeting of the Career Development Advisory Board held on 23 May 2013.

Senate noted in particular that the preliminary results from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education for 2011/12 had indicated a significant increase in the number of graduates directly entering employment. Senate noted the work of the Career Development Service in reviewing student aspirations with relation to their backgrounds, and also welcomed the ongoing focus on employability through a range of activities including the Employer Advisory Board and the recent Employability Summit.

Senate **approved** the report.

## (c) Postgraduate Research Policy Committee

The Graduate Dean presented reports of the meetings of the Postgraduate Research Policy Committee held on 18 May and 18 June 2013.

Senate was pleased to note that the recent Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) has indicated a very high satisfaction rating among research students at the University. Additionally, following the approval of the revised Senate Regulation 9 governing research degree programmes, a range of training and workshop activities were underway to support the implementation of the regulations. Senate also noted that the Graduate School Office was working with the Career Development Service to implement a scheme which would permit an extension to visas for international doctoral candidates following their graduation.

Senate **approved** the reports.

## (d) Programmes of Study

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

13/M25 **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 13 June 2013.

Senate noted in particular that the University had received additional Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) on the basis of expansion of its enterprise activities in 2011/12. Senate welcomed this achievement. Senate also noted the Committee's work with individual colleges and the Career Development Service to develop individual enterprise plans.

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 May 2013.

Senate noted in particular that the Committee was considering effective means of promoting Demand Management through the peer review of research grant applications within and between Colleges.

Senate **approved** the report.

13/M26 **REPORTS FROM JOINT COMMITTEES WITH COUNCIL**

## (a) Staffing Policy Committee

The Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Resources) presented a report of the meeting of the Staffing Policy Committee held on 25 June 2013.

Senate noted in particular that the Committee had approved a proposal for an expanded induction programme for new Heads of Department to commence in September 2013. It was further noted that the Committee would be considering the issue of funding for maternity and paternity leave for funded students.

Senate **approved** the report.

## (b) Information and Communication Technology Committee

Professor Ketley presented a report of the meeting of the Information and Communication Technology Committee held on 6 June 2013.

Senate noted in particular the Committee's consideration of the proposed IT Services budget, plan and portfolio management through the development of a Rolling 8 Quarter Plan. Senate also noted that the Committee had considered potential amendments to University policy on web filtering and monitoring, however had agreed to maintain the current policy on the basis that free access to the internet was necessary to protect academic freedom.

Senate **approved** the report.

## (c) Senate Student Discipline Committee

The Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor presented a report of the meeting of the Senate Student Discipline Committee held on 6 March 2013.

Senate noted that following the implementation of the new Senate Regulation 11 governing student discipline in the 2012/13 academic year, the Committee would be undertaking a review of the regulations in light of operational experience and feedback from academic colleagues.

Senate **approved** the report.

13/M27 **VICE CHANCELLOR'S ADDRESS TO UNIVERSITY STAFF**

Senate noted that the Vice-Chancellor's annual address to University staff would take place on Tuesday 9 July at 11am in the De Montfort Hall.

13/M28 **THANKS TO RETIRING MEMBERS**

The Vice-Chancellor thanked all members for their contributions to Senate's business over the course of the year especially those members retiring from Senate, and also those retiring from the University.

13/M29 **APPOINTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY'S NEXT VICE-CHANCELLOR**

Senate considered a paper detailing progress with the process of appointing the University's next Vice-Chancellor. For this item the meeting was Chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students).

Senate noted that there had been a wide consultation among colleagues throughout the institution via a range of focus groups and direct feedback obtained through a secure website. In addition, external advice on the national context of higher education in the coming years had been provided by Professor David Eastwood, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham. Senate noted that this information, along with the feedback obtained from staff would inform the development of the appointment details for the post, due to be finalised by the end of August.

Senate noted the report.

CHAIR