

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

MEETING OF SENATE

Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 28 June 2017

Present: The President and Vice Chancellor (Chair)

Professor Atkinson	Dr G Lewis
Professor Barstow	Professor Martin
Professor Chakraborti	Professor Mattingly
Professor Challiss (<i>vice Professor Schwabe</i>)	Mr A Mitchell
Professor Clark	Professor Monks
Professor Coleman	Professor Norman
Dr R Crole (<i>vice Professor Heckel</i>)	Professor O'Brien
Professor Cullis (<i>vice Professor Ellis</i>)	Professor Pritchard
Dr R Dickinson	Professor Radnor
Professor Dixon	Professor Scott
Professor Du Bois	Professor Tansey
Professor England	Ms C Taylor
Dr C Gibson	Dr K Williams
Dr L Gibson	Professor Wood
Professor Gillespie	Professor Wynn
Professor Goodall	

In attendance: Professor Holland, Academic Registrar (Secretary) and Mr A Petersen (Assistant Secretary).

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs E Bailey, Professor Baker, Professor Ellis, Professor Griffiths, Professor Hainsworth, Professor Heckel, Professor Knell, Professor London, Professor Peel, Professor Purnell, Professor Robinson and Professor Wardlaw

UNRESERVED (ONLY) BUSINESS

17/M06 **STANDING BUSINESS**

(a) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

(b) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Senate considered the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2017.

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

(c) Matters Arising

Arising from M02(c) regarding departmental restructuring, Senate noted that a revised title of School of Geography, Geology and the Environment had been considered and approved by Chair's action.

(d) Chair's Business

The President and Vice-Chancellor reported that he had taken action on behalf of Senate to approve a minor amendment to Senate Regulation 3 regarding the payment of a non-refundable deposit to secure a student's place on a pre-sessional English Language programme.

The President and Vice-Chancellor also reported that the University had achieved a Silver rating in the recent Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Exercise. Although it was disappointing not to achieve the highest ranking Senate noted the wide distribution of institutions across the Gold, Silver and Bronze categories. Senate noted that the next meeting of the University Executive Board would be looking in greater detail at the various data sets and ranking systems, in particular the value added rankings in which the University's performance was lower than might be expected. A series of briefing sessions regarding the data and rankings had been organised in advance of the UEB meeting and the President and Vice-Chancellor encouraged members of Senate to attend these sessions.

The President and Vice-Chancellor also reported that UK Universities were continuing to seek to influence the process of Britain leaving the EU, and following the recent General Election outcome there appeared to be a greater opportunity to achieve a 'softer' Brexit than originally proposed. The President and Vice-Chancellor encouraged colleagues to continue to apply for EU funding via Horizon 2020. He also noted that Framework Programme 9 had a greater emphasis upon mission driven submissions and this should be taken into account where bids were under development.

(e) Summary Report of Items for Approval

Senate considered a summary report of business for consideration arising from reports from subsidiary Committees and other areas where Senate's approval is required.

Amendments to Senate Regulations

Senate considered a range of proposed amendments to Senate Regulations arising from the Academic Policy Committee and the Postgraduate Research Policy Committee respectively, as follows:

i) Senate Regulation 2 governing admissions and registration

Senate noted that the restructuring of the academic year from 2017/18 onwards and the process improvements in the management of student progression arising from the Student Lifecycle Change Project required minor amendments to Senate Regulation 2 in order to ensure that this accurately reflected the new timescales and procedures. Senate **approved** amendments to SR 2.32, SR 2.33 and SR 2.36 in light of this, for implementation from August 2017.

ii) Senate Regulation 8 governing examinations

Following feedback from the previous meeting of Senate (M01(e) refers), Senate Regulation 8.3 had been further revised to confirm that examination timetables would be published 4 weeks in advance for both the January and the May examination periods, but that due to the changes in the academic year it would not be possible to meet this timescale for the summer re-sit period from 2018.

For the latter the timetable would be published as far in advance of the examination period as possible.

Senate also considered a proposal to move to three examination sittings per day. Senate noted that this was in light of the need to increase capacity resulting from greater curriculum complexity. Senate noted that modelling on previous data had indicated that it was unlikely that students would have three examinations per day and that efforts would be made to ensure that this did not occur.

Senate **approved** both amendments for implementation in 2017/18.

iii) Senate Regulation 9 governing postgraduate research

Senate noted that the UK Visa and Immigration service had recently clarified the requirements for the monitoring of overseas doctoral students. In light of this an amendment was required to Senate Regulation 9.100 to state that supervisory meetings must take place a minimum of every 60 days for full time students and 90 days for part time students. Senate **approved** the amendment for immediate implementation.

iv) Senate Regulation 11 governing student discipline

As part of a review of student discipline procedures it had been agreed that the current regulations could be streamlined to more clearly articulate the lines of authority with regard to consideration of individual discipline cases. It was recommended that SR 11.16 and SR 11.23 be removed. Senate **approved** the removal of the two regulations with immediate effect.

Summary report on External Examiners' reports for PGT programmes

Senate considered summaries of the reports from the external examiners for taught postgraduate programmes in the 2015/16 academic year. A summary of the reports had been considered by the Academic Policy Committee and proposals for action agreed.

Senate was pleased to note that the reports confirmed that Senate could have confidence in the standards of the University's awards and the operation of the external examining process. The reports also noted that the quality of the learning opportunities for students were at an appropriate level and identified many examples of good practice. There no issues raised which required further action at University level.

Senate noted and **approved** the output of the external examining process.

Annual Developmental Review

Senate noted that the Academic Policy Committee had considered summaries of the output of the Annual Developmental Review process for undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes within the institution for the 2015/16 academic year. The reports had demonstrated a range of good practice across departments and Colleges, and had also highlighted a number of areas for further consideration and action. The proposed actions were summarised in the relevant reports from APC.

Senate noted the reports and **approved** the output of the process and proposals for action.

Appointment of Members of the Senate Student Discipline Committee

Senate considered and approved the following additions to the membership of the Senate Student Discipline Committee, effective immediately.

Dr Sam King, Department of Criminology

Mr Andrew Norman, Department of Engineering

Dr Sarah Scott, School of Archaeology and Ancient History

Ms Laura Brace, School of History, Politics and International Relations

Dr Bernard Attard, School of History, Politics and International Relations

Dr Simon Vaughan, Department of Physics and Astronomy

Appointment of Senate Representative on the Finance Committee

Senate noted that one nomination had been received to fill the post of Senate representative on the Finance Committee. Senate approved the nomination of Professor Zoe Radnor, School of Business, to sit on the Finance Committee for a three year term commencing in 2017/18.

Pricing Policy

Senate considered a Pricing Policy for research and enterprise activities. The policy was designed to ensure that research and enterprise projects were fully costed and appropriately priced before any discussions with external parties regarding costing and pricing were held. The policy would apply to Industry-Funded Collaborative Research, Contract Research for any type of funder, Consultancy, Facilities and Equipment-Related Services and Short Courses including Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The policy identified those colleagues in the Division of Research and Enterprise (RED) who supported the process of costing, and required that colleagues work with RED to ensure appropriate pricing for these activities.

Senate **approved** the Pricing Policy, and noted that implementation notes and a communication plan had been developed and would be circulated to relevant colleagues shortly.

17/M07

BUSINESS TO CONSIDER

- (a) Departmental Structure in the College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology

Senate considered proposals to amend the departmental structure within the College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology. Following an external review of the College structure and further internal work it was proposed to create a matrix of cross-cutting teaching schools and research focussed departments.

Under the proposed structure there would be four teaching Schools, each of which would have a core team of staff on teaching focussed contracts embedded in departments. All academic staff in the research focussed departments would also be affiliated to a teaching school.

Senate considered the following specific changes:

- The creation of four teaching schools namely:
 - School of Biological Sciences
 - School of Medicine
 - School of Psychology
 - School of Allied Health Professions
- Reorganisation of the College into six Research departments, a reduction from the previous eight departments:
 - Department of Neuroscience, Psychology and Behaviour
 - Department of Infection, Immunity and Inflammation
 - Department of Health Sciences
 - Department of Cardiovascular Sciences
 - Department of Molecular and Cell Biology
 - Department of Genetics and Genome Biology (see below)
- The disestablishment of the Department of Medical Education, with the associated staff assigned to relevant research departments and affiliated to the School of Medicine.
- The renaming of the Department of Genetics to become the Department of Genetics and Genome Biology.
- The disestablishment of the Department of Cancer Studies, with a Cancer Research Centre to be created and hosted within the Department of Genetics and Genome Biology.

Senate **approved** the revised structure for the College for implementation from August 2017. Senate also noted that the creation of the new School of Allied Health Professions would be submitted to Council for final approval at its upcoming meeting. Finally, Senate noted the ongoing consultation regarding the title of the College, and that a revised title would be put forwards for consideration shortly.

(b) Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Regulations

Senate considered a new Mitigating Circumstances Policy and associated revisions to Senate Regulation 7 governing Assessment.

The revised policy had been developed via extensive consultation with academic departments, students and the Professional Services. The revised policy included a number of process and system enhancements which included electronic submission of mitigating circumstances forms and the move to consideration by individual Mitigating Circumstances Experts rather than Panels in the first instance. The Policy also established an expectation that if a student had attempted an assessment they were declaring themselves fit to do so and therefore would not subsequently be able to claim mitigating circumstances. The Senate noted that the amendments to Senate Regulation 7 slightly altered the definition of mitigating circumstances so as to be clearer for students, and reflected the above procedural changes.

Senate welcomed the principles of the new policy. Senate agreed that there were a small number of places where some further revision to wording would be helpful for

the purposes of clarity, but this would not affect the core principles of the policy. Senate noted that although the bulk of consideration would take place by Mitigating Circumstances Experts, Heads of Department or School would still need to ensure that there was a pool of wider staff able to act as a Panel where required. Senate also agreed that it would be helpful to clarify the wording of the policy to confirm how it would address instances of regular religious observance other than festivals.

Senate was pleased to note that as part of the communication plan for the new policy a series of further documents would be produced, including a student guide which would articulate the requirements of the policy in more accessible language. Finally, Senate agreed that it would be important to ensure that there was a clear link between the operation of this policy and the local pastoral support system in the department. This should ensure that relevant colleagues were kept informed, that confidentiality was observed and students knew how and when they would receive feedback on decisions.

Subject to the minor amendments to wording discussed above, Senate **approved** the Mitigating Circumstances Policy for implementation in 2017/18. Senate also approved the associated amendments to Senate Regulation 7, also for implementation in 2017/18.

(c) Timetabling Policy

Senate considered a new Timetabling Policy. The Policy had been subject to wide ranging consultation with academic departments, Professional Services and student representatives and was presented to Senate for final approval. The Academic Registrar drew Senate's attention to key aspects of the policy.

The development of the policy had been informed by detailed analysis of timetabling data from previous years and by a gradual decrease in student satisfaction levels with respect to timetabling. The new policy signalled a clear commitment to achieving a student focussed timetable which made the most effective use of the teaching estate and was also consistent, equitable and transparent with respect to the arrangements for teaching staff.

The policy introduced clear criteria for considering requests for amendments to the timetable post-publication. Such late amendments were generally detrimental to the student experience and therefore would only be accepted where there were genuinely unavoidable reasons or the alternative would have a greater negative effect on the students involved.

The policy also set out a core teaching day of 09:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday, within which time all staff would be required to be available to teach unless there was a formally approved flexible working request in place. Senate noted that an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) had been undertaken as part of the policy's development, and that a further EIA would be completed as part of the implementation plan.

Senate welcomed the development of the Policy. Senate agreed that paragraph 6.9 should be amended to reflect the fact that making allowances for students with disabilities, caring responsibilities or other issues covered under equalities legislation was a legal requirement. Senate was pleased to note that a transitional year had been incorporated to ensure that all flexible working requests could be processed but noted that the current forms to support the process were not user friendly and requested that this be fed back to the Division of Human Resources.

Senate noted in addition that further functionality was being explored through the new timetabling software which included zoning by cohort so that students do not have to regularly move between sites, and the potential for a staggered timetable. Finally, Senate welcomed the planned earlier production of the teaching timetable for 2017/18 but noted that if there was the opportunity to bring this further forwards in future years it could potentially enhance student satisfaction.

Senate **approved** the policy. Senate noted that the post-publication change controls would be implemented for 2017/18. A transitional period in 2017/18 would allow for the formalisation of flexible working requests before full implementation in 2018/19.

(d) Implementation of the Research Strategy

(i) Progress against strategy commitments

Senate received a report on progress against the commitments set out in the Research Strategy from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise).

Senate was pleased to note that following a period of slow growth up to 2015/16, the number and value of the research grants captured up until the end of May 2017 had shown a significant increase on previous years. It was anticipated that the University would meet its target of 7.5% growth in this area by the end of the year. Senate was particularly pleased to note the average value of the grants achieved during this period had increased significantly.

Senate noted that despite this welcome growth there were a number of areas where further work was required. The University had received very positive feedback on a number of the bids submitted for very large grants, however had not been successful in winning these. Work was therefore required to take the feedback received and use it to inform future bids, and in particular those bids with external consortia. Senate noted that the University had been successful in achieving grants from foundations and charities which carried low overhead contribution, when compared with grants from Research Councils which carried greater contribution in this area.

Senate wished to record its thanks to the academic staff of the University and the Division of Research and Enterprise for this significant upturn in research grant capture.

(ii) Formation of the Doctoral College

Senate received a presentation on the formation of the Doctoral College from the Interim Graduate Dean.

Senate noted that the Doctoral College represented a step-change in the development and support of the overall research environment at the University. It was not focussed upon an administrative unit for the management of postgraduate research, but was envisioned as a pan-university approach to enhancing the support available to researchers at all levels.

There would be a small core team consisting of the Researcher Development Team with the Graduate Dean as academic lead. There would be a greater level of co-ordination with the other specialist teams located across the University. The Doctoral College would be positioned to support colleagues in the identification and exploitation of opportunities for bids, consortia or partnership building and oversee a more cohesive strategy for the recruitment of PGR students. Closer central monitoring of PGR

submission and completion combined with an enhanced training programmes for students and support for supervisors would further enhance this aspect of the research environment at the University.

The formation of the Doctoral College reflected the direction of travel across the sector. This was partly driven through the expectations of the Research Councils. In part this was in response to a need to develop leadership and management skills in the area of professional research. In addition the majority of PGR funding was now dispersed via Doctoral Training centres or partnerships and a level of central expertise and co-ordination was required to support effective bids and the management of such arrangements.

Senate welcomed and endorsed the formation of the Doctoral College.

17/M08 **BUSINESS TO NOTE**

(a) Risk Register, Spring Term 2017

Senate received for information an extract from the Strategic Risk Register for the Summer Term 2017. Senate noted that the Strategic Risk Register represented a higher level summary of high level risks, with the Corporate Risk Register providing a greater level of granularity. Senate noted in particular those sections with reference to the Learning, Research, Enterprise and International Strategies, for which Senate maintained oversight. Senate noted that there had been no changes to the risks under the above categories, and that there had also been no amendment to the rating of the existing risks.

Senate noted that it would receive the full Risk Register and University Risk Appetite Statement at its meeting in November 2017.

(b) Reports from Committees

(i) Academic Policy Committee

Senate received reports of the meetings of the Academic Policy Committee that had taken place on 24 March, 25 April, 17 May and 16 June 2017.

Senate noted that those elements which required approval had already been considered under item M06(e).

Senate noted that the Committee maintained oversight of the Learning Strategy through regular monitoring and progress update, and had also considered a number of underpinning strategies for Assessment and for Learning Spaces.

Senate also noted that the Committee was leading and overseeing a very wide range of projects. In particular, Senate noted the development of more detailed policies and guidelines for both staff and students in the avoidance of plagiarism and the Committee's work with the Students' Union to enhance the course representative system and the flow of information between the Union, academic departments and the central governance system.

Senate noted the Committee's ongoing oversight of the review and revision of Senate Regulation 5, a final version of which was due to be considered at a future meeting and presented to the first meeting of Senate in 2017/18 for final approval.

Senate noted the Committee's oversight of the Curriculum Transformation process, and in particular noted the approval of a proposal for further embed the Leicester award into the undergraduate curriculum through making it a core element of the majority of undergraduate programmes. Senate also noted the role that the Committee had played in the development and approval of the University's partnership with Dalian University of Technology, Panjin Campus and welcomed this new venture.

Senate noted the Committee's ongoing oversight of programme development, approval, monitoring and review as detailed in the reports. Senate also noted the appointment of External Examiners, as detailed in the reports.

Senate **approved** the reports.

(ii) Postgraduate Research Policy Committee

Senate received reports of the meetings of the Postgraduate Research Policy Committee that had taken place on 8 May and 6 June 2017.

Senate noted that those elements which required approval had already been considered under item M06(e).

Senate noted the Committee's ongoing oversight of the development of the Doctoral College (M07(d) refers). Senate also noted that the Committee was seeking to further develop policy in guidance in a number of areas including joint doctoral degrees, terms and conditions of studentships, and plagiarism.

Senate **approved** the reports.

(iii) Research Strategy, Policy and Performance Committee

Senate received reports of the meetings of the Research Strategy, Policy and Performance Committee that had taken place on 16 March and 11 May 2017.

Senate noted the Committee's ongoing oversight of grant application and capture rates. Senate also noted that the Committee had focussed upon the communication and marketing of the University's research in order to highlight the successes in this area and make more effective use of internal and external mechanisms for the promotion of research success. Senate also noted the approval of changes to the Research Infrastructure Advisory Group to achieve a more strategic approach towards research equipment purchase and replacement.

Senate **approved** the reports.

(iv) Enterprise Strategy, Policy and Performance Committee

Senate received the report of the meeting of the Enterprise Strategy, Policy and Performance Committee that took place on 13 June 2017.

Senate noted that those elements which required approval had already been considered under item M06(e).

Senate noted that the Committee was co-ordinating the University's response to the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. Senate also noted that the Committee was overseeing the process of applications for funding from various sources

including the HEFCE Connecting Capability Fund and the LLEP, with the University achieving some significant successes, particularly for the Space Park Leicester.

Senate **approved** the report.

(c) University Officer Appointments

Senate received for information a list of all University Officer level appointments that had been made since 9 March 2017.

(d) Programmes Approved and Withdrawn

Senate received a list of programmes and pathways that had been approved in principle, in full and withdrawn.

(e) Senate Student Discipline Panels

Senate received the outcomes of recent Senate Student Discipline Panels.

17/M09 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Senate noted the date and time of its meetings in 2017/18 as follows:

Wednesday 8 November 2017, 2pm

Wednesday 7 March 2018, 2pm

Wednesday 27 June 2018, 2pm

17/M10 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Senate wished to record its sadness upon hearing the news of death of the former Senior-Pro-Vice Chancellor and member of the School of Law, Professor Mark Thompson. Senate also wished to record its appreciation for the contribution of Professor Thompson to the work of Senate and to the wider University over his long period of service to the institution.

Senate also wished to record its thanks to Professor Sarah Hainsworth, who would shortly be departing the University, for her contribution to the institution over many years.

Duration of meeting: 1 Hour

CHAIR