

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

MEETING OF SENATE

Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 18 November 2015

Present: The President and Vice-Chancellor (Chair)

Dr Aissaoui	Professor Ketley
Professor Andrew	Professor Lester (<i>vice Professor O'Brien</i>)
Professor Atkinson	Dr Macleod
Professor Baker	Professor Marshall
Professor Barstow	Professor Martin
Dr Cameron (<i>vice Professor Lilley</i>)	Dr Parry
Professor Challis (<i>vice Professor Schwabe</i>)	Professor Peel
Professor Clark (<i>vice Professor Davidchack</i>)	Professor Phythian
Professor Coffey	Professor Raven
Dr Dickinson	Dr Shaw
Professor Du Bois	Professor Tansey
Professor England	Ms Taylor
Professor Fulcher	Dr Thomas
Professor Garter (<i>vice Professor Hughes</i>)	Mr Wilcock (<i>vice Mr Athwal</i>)
Dr Gibson	Professor Wood
Professor Hainsworth	
Professor Heckel	Ms Holland (SU)
Dr James	Ms Patrick (SU)

In attendance: Director of Finance, Registrar and Secretary, Academic Registrar (Secretary) and Mr A Petersen (Assistant Secretary)

Trade Union members in attendance for M30(c) Ms P Lorber (UCU) and Ms S Lee (UNITE)

Apologies for Absence were received from Mr Athwal, Professor Chapman, Professor Coleman, Professor Davidchack, Professor Hughes, Professor Lilley, Professor London, Dr Maltby, Professor Monks, Dr Norman, Professor O'Brien, Professor Pan, Professor Pritchard, Professor Schwabe, Professor Scott, Professor Wallace and Professor Yeoman

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

15/M26 MEMBERSHIP AND POWERS OF SENATE

Senate received its Membership and Powers for the 2015/16 academic year. The President and Vice-Chancellor welcomed new members to their first meeting of Senate.

Senate considered proposed Standing Orders for the conduct of its business and meetings in the 2015/16 academic year. Senate noted that the Standing Orders provided a clear framework for the exercising of Senate's powers and approved them for the current and future meetings.

15/M27 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Senate considered the minutes of the meetings that had taken place on 1 July 2015.

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

15/M28 **MATTERS ARISING**

No matters arising were identified that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

15/M29 **CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

(a) Honorary Degrees Board

Senate considered a report of the meeting of the Honorary Degrees Board held on 3 November 2015. Senate noted the nominations of candidates for the award of honorary degrees as set out in the report and **approved** these for submission to Council.

Senate noted that within the range of nominees there was a gender imbalance. It was noted that the Honorary Degrees Board would welcome further nominations for consideration and recommended that members submit any further nominations for this and future rounds. It was also noted that it would be helpful to emphasise in the initial call for nominations that Departments were invited to nominate potential recipients from as wide a range as possible.

Senate **agreed** that the President and Vice-Chancellor should be authorised to take action on behalf of Senate to endorse further nominations for consideration by Council.

(b) Higher Education Review

The President and Vice-Chancellor reported that the Self-Evaluation Document and evidence base for the forthcoming Higher Education Review of the University by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) had been submitted. Senate noted that the review visit would take place in the week commencing 1 February 2016.

Senate wished to record its particular thanks to Louise Masterman, Deputy Academic Registrar (Quality and Standards) and also to the Quality Office for their work in preparing the University's submission ahead of the review. Senate also wished to record its thanks to the Students' Union for its positive engagement throughout the preparation and review process.

(c) Senate Regulation 3 governing fees

The President and Vice-Chancellor reported that he had taken Chair's action on behalf of Senate to approve an amendment to Senate Regulation 3 governing fees with respect to the University's policy regarding the refund of tuition fees.

(d) Senate Representative on Finance Committee

The President and Vice-Chancellor reported that one nomination had been received for a representative of Senate to sit in the Finance Committee, and therefore Professor Richard England had been appointed to this role.

(e) Green Paper

The President and Vice-Chancellor drew Senate's attention to the publication of the government Green Paper entitled *Fulfilling Our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*. Senate noted the following core principles:

- (i) The merger of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Office for Fair Access (OFFA);
- (ii) The introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF);
- (iii) The variation of the fees permitted to be charged by universities on the basis of several factors including student satisfaction levels, student employment levels and the proportion of staff holding teaching qualifications such as fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA);
- (iv) Development of the GPA approach to classifying degrees;
- (v) The role of new providers in the HE sector;
- (vi) Processes for providers withdrawing from HE.

Senate noted that there were extensive opportunities for consultation and that Professor Scott would be co-ordinating the University's response. Senate noted in particular the importance of enhancing key metrics such as the NSS and then number of staff holding HEA fellowship to strengthen the University's position within this process.

(f) Internationalisation

The President and Vice-Chancellor reported that he had visited a range of countries including the USA, Canada and China to explore potential opportunities for international collaboration in teaching and research.

(g) Nurse Review of Research Councils

Senate noted that the Nurse Review was underway and the outcome was anticipated to propose changes to the structure of Research Councils in the UK.

15/M30

STRATEGY AND POLICY

(a) Discovery led and Discovery Enabling Learning Strategy

Senate considered a final draft of the University Learning Strategy.

In line with the wider suite of enabling strategies, the Learning Strategy comprised a statement of principles and commitments, which were linked to specific projects in order to deliver against the stated commitments. These included the development of a more flexible approach to programme delivery, supporting and resourcing a culture of innovation and further emphasising the role of the student voice within the learning experience.

Following initial consideration by Senate in July 2015 the Strategy had been developed in consultation with a wide range of colleagues to provide further definition to the projects and priorities and to more clearly articulate the measures of success that would be used. Senate noted that as part of the process academic departments and student services would be requested to develop shorter local statements of their commitments and projects which reflected their roles within the Strategy.

Senate **approved** the Learning Strategy, noting that this would be reported to the next meeting of Council.

(b) Restructuring of departments in CSSAH

Senate considered a proposal to restructure the current Schools of English and Modern Languages and the Department of History of Art and Film into a single School. Senate noted that the revised structure would facilitate closer co-operation in teaching and research as well as achieve operational efficiency.

Senate noted that the initial consultation phase had been completed and a new Head of School had been appointed to manage the remaining phases focussing on the integration of processes across the new School. Senate also noted that the Schools of English, Modern Languages and the Department of History of Art and Film would continue to be used for the purposes of research reporting and funding.

Senate **approved** the restructuring, noting that further proposals regarding the title of the new School would be presented to its meeting in March 2016.

(c) Financial Statements

Senate received an extract from the University accounts for the 2014/15 academic year. The central features of the accounts were presented to Senate by the Director of Finance. Representatives of the Campus Trade Unions were present for this item.

Senate noted that 2014/15 had been a strong financial year for the University, with total income of £302 million representing a growth of 2.1%. The University had achieved a healthy surplus of £15.5 million equal to 5.1% of income which was significantly above forecast largely due to an exceptional Research and Development Expenditure Credit award of £5.7 million.

Senate noted recruitment had been strong for 2015/16 in some areas (M30 (h) refers) however that due to lower international recruitment there would be a shortfall in income of over £9 million compared to the budget for the year. Although this was partly absorbed through contingency funds it represented a significant loss of income which would require careful management to ensure that the University could continue to invest in enhancing its research and learning and teaching infrastructure.

Senate noted that lower recruitment in 2015 was perceived to be directly linked to the University's fall in league table rankings, as this was a major factor in attracting overseas students. Senate noted that the impact of lower NSS scores within the league table metrics had been particularly significant in this regard. Senate noted that a range of activities were underway to address the issues raised (M32 (a) refers) and encouraged all departments to engage with this process in order to support the University's aim to regain a higher ranking and support future recruitment.

Senate further noted additional actions being taken in response to falls in recruitment including more closely aligning the activities of the International Office and the Student Recruitment Office.

Senate **endorsed** the Financial Statements for submission to Council and thanked the Director of Finance and his team for their production.

(d) Discovery enabling Financial Strategy

Senate received the Discovery enabling Financial Strategy. The Strategy was consistent with the wider development of a revised financial model and planning process. The Strategy articulated a number of key principles in terms of financial sustainability and generation of surpluses for investment, the development of a transparent and accountable financial model and achieving an appropriate balance between liquidity, investment and debt financing. The Strategy articulated a number of measures which would be used to evaluate its implementation. These included establishing an appropriate operating model, overall financial results in terms of surplus and operating cash flow, appropriate and balanced policies towards borrowing and debt financing, and the management of cash levels.

Senate noted that among these measures there was a reference to income per FTE academic staff. Senate noted that this would be sensitive to the disciplinary differences in income potential, and would be used primarily as a means of benchmarking at institutional level against peer institutions. Furthermore, it was also noted that while underperformance in key areas would be considered in detail, this would not be purely formulaic in approach and was intended to allow the institution to respond in a pragmatic manner as circumstances arose.

Senate **endorsed** the Financial Strategy for submission to Council.

(e) Discovery Led and Discovery Enabling Research Strategy

Senate received the Discovery led and Discovery enabling Research Strategy. Senate noted that following initial consideration in July 2015 the Strategy had been modified to expand and clarify the measures of success that would be used to monitor and evaluate the University's progress towards meeting its aims.

Senate welcomed the Strategy, noting its commitment towards undertaking a focussed approach on the University's existing strengths as well as providing support for innovation and growth and seeking to develop wider national and international collaborations. Senate also welcomed the commitment to the development of a world class research environment through initiatives such as the Digital Campus and the Leicester Educational Quarter.

Senate noted that one of the measures within the Strategy was increasing the proportion of staff holding research grants. Senate agreed that it would be helpful to clarify that this would include both Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators for collaborative grants.

Subject to the minor amendment above Senate **endorsed** the Research Strategy for submission to Council.

(f) Discovery Enabling Enterprise Strategy

Senate received the Discovery Enabling Enterprise Strategy. Senate noted that the focus of the Strategy was to maximise income growth from enterprise activity, drive the HEIF grant income and improve the reputation and standing of the University in the area of enterprise.

Senate noted that the Strategy related to a number of the other discovery enabling strategies. Although there was clear synergy between this and other strategies such as

those for research and learning, enterprise activities represented a particular opportunity for the University and would therefore benefit from a separate strategy. The interdependencies between strategies would however be considered in detail in terms of their implementation with the Research Strategy, Policy and Performance Committee considering the engagement between enterprise and research, and further supporting policies being developed to support student enterprise activities.

Senate **endorsed** the Enterprise Strategy for submission to Council.

(g) League Tables

Senate received a paper outlining the University's position in recently published league tables. Senate noted that the University's position had fallen in a number of tables including the Times Higher (THE) Table of Tables and the Good University Guide. There had been a slight improvement in the THE World Rankings, and Senate noted that a number of the domestic league tables had yet to be published.

Senate noted that a range of targeted activities were underway to address the issues identified in the metrics underlying the league tables, with particular reference to enhancing the student experience in order to improve NSS scores, which formed a significant element of many league tables.

(h) Registration Figures for 2015

Senate received a summary of registration figures for 2015 entry. Senate was pleased to note that recruitment at undergraduate level had been strong despite a slight shortfall in overseas students. Home/EU recruitment at taught postgraduate level had been strong however there had been a significant reduction of 25% in the number of overseas students. Recruitment at PGR level remained strong, however Senate noted that there had been an 8% reduction in DL admissions.

15/M31 **RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE**

Senate received a report detailing the research applications and awards across the University in the 2014/15 academic year.

Senate noted that the overall value of grant applications in 2014/15 had seen a significant increase to £228 million, which represented a 21% increase on the previous highest record. Research income had fallen slightly short of target however had still grown compared with previous years and achieved the target contribution rate. Senate noted the top ten grants that had been achieved by researchers at University and College level and congratulated those colleagues on their achievements.

15/M32 **LEARNING AND TEACHING**

(a) National Student Survey

Senate received a report from the Provost on the activities that were underway within the institution to promote the student experience and address the issues which had been raised in the 2015 NSS Survey.

An Assessment and Feedback campaign had been launched, working closely with the Students' Union, and departments would feed back on the action taken through the Annual Developmental Review Process. Improving Student Experience Teams had also

been formed leading to a positive and constructive dialogue with departments and the production of action plans to target those themes identified.

Senate welcomed the work that was underway to enhance the quality of the learning experience for all students in the institution.

(b) Report on the operation of the Code of Practice for Periodic Review

Senate received a report which analysed the operation of the Code of Practice for Periodic Developmental Review over the 2014/15 academic year. Senate was pleased to note that the report confirmed that it could have confidence academic standards and the student experience were being rigorously tested through the review process.

Senate noted that the Academic Policy Committee had approved a recommendation that good practice identified through the review process should be more effectively disseminated to the wider University community, and noted that APC was identifying good practice for referral to College Academic Committees.

Senate considered what role the process could play in reviewing the research activity within departments. Senate noted that the current process did not address this theme and agreed that this should be referred to the Academic Policy Committee for consideration.

Senate **approved** the report and **endorsed** the proposals for action.

(c) Report on the operation of the Code of Practice for Programme Development, Approval and Modification

Senate received a report which analysed the operation of the Code of Practice for the Development, Approval and Modification of Taught Provision over the 2014/15 academic year. Senate was pleased to note that the report confirmed that it could have confidence that the operation of the Code of Practice was ensuring the academic standards and quality of the University's new programmes of study.

Senate noted that the Academic Policy Committee had approved two recommendations arising from the report. Programme Development Groups had been established in all Colleges to support new programme teams through the development and approval process. The Code of Practice had also been amended to reflect a number of internal and external factors such as the process for the approval of pathways and the requirements of the new Consumer Protection Legislation.

Senate **approved** the report and **endorsed** the proposals for action.

(d) Report on the operation of the Code of Practice for the Management of Higher Education Provision with Others

Senate received a report which analysed the operation of the Code of Practice for the University's' procedures for the Management of Higher Education Provision with Others during the 2014/15 academic year.

Senate noted that 2014/15 had been the first year of operation for the new Code of Practice, which was mapped directly against the requirements of Chapter B10 of the UK Quality Code. Senate noted that 2014/15 had been an effective first year of operation, however as the cycle of monitoring and review becomes fully embedded 2015/16 would see further development of the University's processes in this regard.

Senate noted that the Academic Policy Committee had approved a recommendation in the report that further training be developed for colleagues throughout the institution looking to develop new collaborative links to support them in identifying appropriate partners and in the process of approval.

Senate **approved** the report and **endorsed** the proposals for action.

15/M33

BUSINESS TO REPORT**Research and Enterprise****(a) Research Strategy, Policy and Performance Committee**

Professor Marshall presented the reports of the meetings of the Research Strategy, Policy and Performance Committee held on 15 June and 15 October 2015.

Senate considered and **approved** the Terms of Reference for the Committee for the 2015/16 academic year.

Senate noted the Committee's management of the process for the creation of new research institutes, the development of processes for the management of research ethics and integrity, and the Committee's work with the Library to develop training for researchers to support data management.

Senate **approved** the reports.

(b) Enterprise Strategy, Policy and Performance Committee

Professor Marshall presented the reports of the meetings of the Enterprise Strategy, Policy and Performance Committee held on 20 October 2015.

Senate considered and **approved** the Terms of Reference for the Committee for the 2015/16 academic year.

Senate noted the Committee's work to standardise College level governance structures for the promotion and management of enterprise activities. Senate also noted the Committee's work towards the development of the Enterprise Strategy (M29 (f) refers).

Senate **approved** the report.

Learning and Teaching**(a) Academic Policy Committee**

The Provost presented reports of the meetings of the Academic Policy Committee held on 16 September and 16 October 2015.

Senate considered and **approved** the Terms of Reference for the Committee for the 2015/16 academic year.

Senate noted in particular the Committee's consideration and approval of amendments to the Codes of Practice for Programme, Development, Approval and Modification, and for Annual and Periodic Developmental Review, to reflect minor developments in each respective process. Senate also noted the Committee's oversight of the University's response to the requirements of new Consumer Rights Legislation. Senate also noted

the range of Programme Approval and Periodic Developmental Review reports considered by the Committee.

Senate noted the approval of External Examiners for a range of programme as detailed in the reports.

Senate **approved** the reports.

(b) Career Development Advisory Board

The Provost presented reports of the meetings of the Career Development Advisory Board held on 20 October 2015.

Senate considered and **approved** the Terms of Reference for the Committee for the 2015/16 academic year.

Senate noted in particular the work of the Career Development Service to implement the Career Development Journey. Senate also welcomed the report on the Festival of Careers that had taken place in October 2015 and had included 3 separate employer fairs and 60 fringe events, with the festival as a whole achieving a 24% increase in the number of student attendees.

Senate **approved** the report.

(c) Postgraduate Research Policy Committee

The Graduate Dean presented a report of the meeting of the Postgraduate Research Policy Committee held on 5 October 2015.

Senate considered and **approved** the Terms of Reference for the Committee for the 2015/16 academic year.

Senate noted that a Task and Finish Group had been established to review the support structures in place for Postgraduate Research students. Senate also noted the Committee's oversight of the research degree programmes and awards at partner institutions validated by UOL.

Senate **approved** the report.

(d) Programmes of Study

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

15/M34 **DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS IN 2015/16**

Senate noted the dates and times of its meetings in 2015/16 as follows:

Wednesday 9 March 2016

Wednesday 29 June 2016

DURATION OF MEETING: One Hour and Twenty Minutes

CHAIR