

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

MEETING OF SENATE

Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 14 June 2023 in Council Room 1 & 2, Fielding Johnson Building

Present:	Nishan Canagarajah (Chair)	
Anwar Afhim		Liz Jones
Phil Baker		Sally Kyd
Huw Barton		Dan Ladley
Tilly Blyth		Ljiliana Marjanovic-Halburd
John Challiss		Catherine Morley
Krista Cowman		Henrietta O'Connor
Sarah Davies		Gemma Parker
AnneMarie Deeb		Gabrielle Provan
Nuala Devlin		Linda Ralphs
Tracey Dodman		Anex Saju
Elizabeth Draper		Leena Sodha
Stewart Fishwick		Ian Somerville
Zoe Groves		Simon Vaughan
Pranabashis Haldar		Chris Wilkins
Richard Holland		David Wright
Rhiannon Jenkins		

In attendance: Prachi Bhatt (2023/24 SU Education Officer), Alison Benson (Assistant Secretary), Sarah Graham (for item 23/M11d) Geoff Green (Registrar and Secretary), Aash Khadia (for item 23/M11a), Archie Robinson (2023/24 SU President) and Joe Suffield (Governance Office)

Observers: Jose Carvajel Lopez (UCU representative), Marcin Idaszak (Unite representative)

Apologies for absence were received from Yassine Amrani, Steven Bull, Sandeep Handa, Eamonn Mallon, Jayne Marshall, Mark Purnell, Teela Sanders, Jacqui Shaw, Alison Snape, Richard Thomas and Geerten Vuister

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

23/M08 WELCOME

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed Senators, attendees and observers to the meeting.

23/M09 STANDING BUSINESS

(a) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

(b) Minutes of the Previous Meetings

Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2023 as an accurate record, subject to one amendment.

Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting held by correspondence on 29 March 2023 as an accurate record.

Senate **approved** the minutes of the Urgency Committee held on 25 May 2023. Concern was raised by some Senate members about the decision for Senate Regulation 13 to be invoked by Urgency Committee, rather than a Special Meeting of Senate.

In response, it was highlighted that due process had been followed and the Urgency Committee had considered whether it was appropriate for a Special Meeting of Senate to take place. There was minimal impact of the invocation of Senate Regulation 13, with only thirteen students likely to be impacted, and the decision needed to be made urgently, as it was crucial for students to graduate on time, and the industrial action would prevent this from occurring.

(c) Matters Arising

Senate **noted** the responses to the matters arising.

23/M10 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Vice-Chancellor provided a report on key developments within the wider HE sector and the University.

Senate **noted** that the Heritage Hub had successfully launched on 7 June, enabling closer links with city and region partners.

Senate **noted** that the Vice-Chancellor had recently visited India and the United States to build international partnerships with other higher education institutions. These partnerships would link with the University Strategy, with a focus on academic endeavour and to strengthen opportunities for international student recruitment.

Senate **noted** that Arif Ahmed had been appointed the director for freedom of speech and academic freedom at the Office for Students (OfS). There was a lack of clarity over the remit for the role, however the passage of recent legislation would engender further regulation for universities and Students' Unions.

23/M11 STRATEGIC BUSINESS TO CONSIDER

(a) University Strategy: Annual KPI Report

Aash Khadia joined the meeting

Senate **considered** the annual update on the KPIs associated with the University strategy. These highlighted the performance of the Strategy against its milestone progress indicators and against the ultimate target for each KPI. The Strategy had started to become embedded within the University at every level.

Senate **noted** that the ULIIHE no longer had a Director, which meant that it may be difficult to undertake the work necessary to address the awarding gap. [**ACTION:** to provide an update on ULIIHE]

Senate **noted** that the finance milestone was represented as on track despite the contradictory tone of recent communications within the University. It was clarified that the indicator was green because it related to a specific reporting period, however it would be updated in the coming weeks to reflect the latest draft 5-year financial plan.

Senate **noted** that the information on the Strategy and its KPIs were currently not easy for colleagues to find. However, a SharePoint site was due to be launched in July which had links to the Strategy indicators and dashboards.

Aash Khadia left the meeting

(b) Strategic Theme Update: Research Inspired Education

Senate **considered** an update on the Research Inspired Education theme of the University Strategy from Liz Jones, PVC Education. As part of this theme, there had been a focus on the TEF submission during 2022/23. It was important to embed a culture of evaluation into education oversight. There remained a number of risks, which included the importance of aligning staffing to areas of student growth; institutional culture and appropriate infrastructure to support the aims of the theme. There were a number of areas of focus for the next academic year, including a new model for module evaluation, a black student academic experience task and finish group, and development of the apprenticeships offer.

Senate **noted** that the awarding gap had been analysed further to identify trends relating to different ethnic groups. There had been a number of differences identified, with the most significant of these being the awarding gap between black and white students. International analysis was intended to be prepared for future reference.

(c) Students' Union End of Year Report

Senate **considered** a presentation from Rhiannon Jenkins, President of the Students' Union, and AnneMarie Deeb, Education Officer at the Students' Union which summarised the work of Students' Union Officers over the 2022/23 academic year. There had been a successful refresh of academic representation across the University, which had led to more tailored events for each Course. Additional funds had been made available to the Students' Union which had enabled further support to be provided to students.

On behalf of Senate, the Chair of Senate thanked the President and Education Officer for their hard work over the past two years. Their engagement with the University to represent student interests and contribution to the TEF submission was acknowledged as vital.

(d) Student Discipline Update

Sarah Graham joined the meeting

Senate **considered** a presentation on how student discipline was approached at the University, and the proposed changes to Senate Regulation 11. It was noted that the Senate Student Discipline Committee oversaw conduct and discipline regulation policies and procedures, and ensured that the policies were implemented fairly. Senate Regulation 11 had been updated to incorporate the views of Senate expressed at its previous meeting in February 2023, which included:

- Sanctions were applied at the level of assessment
- Training and support for markers would continue to be provided

- No changes were made in the Fitness to Practice procedures.

The Regulation changes were supported by Education Committee, Senate Student Discipline Committee and the Students' Union.

Senate **approved** the changes to Senate Regulation 11.

Sarah Graham left the meeting.

(e) College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities Task and Finish Group

Senate **considered** proposals to establish a task and finish group which would examine whether a fourth College should be established. The College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities was substantially larger than the other Colleges, mainly due to the size of the School of Business and the Law School. The working hypothesis was that the School of Business and the Law School would be taken together to form a fourth College, however the task and finish group would look at a wide range of options rather than making this assumption.

Proposals were separately being considered to reorganise activity within the School of Media, Communication and Sociology, proposing a School of Sociology and Criminology, with Media and Communications being merged into the School of Arts. Senate approval would be required for any changes to the structure of the Colleges and Schools. This would likely be in February 2024.

It was clarified that staff redundancies were not proposed within the scope of the task and finish group and the planned School reorganisation.

Senate **noted** that there should be more staff representation on the task and finish group, particularly from professional services. [**ACTION:** PVC & Head of College, CSSAH]

Senate **noted** that senior management and Heads of Schools had been consulted on the proposed changes to the School of Media, Communication and Sociology. The changes would be shared with the wider School, and their input would feed into the final proposals which would be put to Senate for approval in due course.

Senate **noted** that changes to the College structure may mean that the model of College and School targets should be reconsidered. The task and finish group would closely examine points such as these.

Senate **noted** that interdisciplinary Research Institutes remained a key priority for the University, and were not linked to a College.

Senate **noted** that there would need to be clarity over joint degrees, as these may be linked to more than one College as a result of the proposals.

Senate **noted** that students would form part of the process for consultation for any changes. At the early stages it was not yet appropriate to seek their input, however they would be an important stakeholder group in the wider work of the task and finish group and school reorganisation proposals.

Senate **approved** the formation of the task and finish group in relation to the organisation of the College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, subject to reassessment of group membership.

(f) University Distinguished Teaching Fellow Awards [RESERVED]

Senate **considered and approved** the award of University Distinguished Teaching Fellow Awards.

23/M12 SECRETARY'S BUSINESS

Senate **considered** a summary report of business items for approval.

In relation to Senate Regulation 4, it was clarified that the exemption for medical students still applied. Additionally, more clarity would be provided about how much time students were eligible to work for in LSP. [**ACTION:** Registrar & Secretary]

Senate **recommended** the following items **to Council for approval**:

1. Proposed changes to Ordinance 34

Senate **approved** the following items:

1. Amendment to Senate Regulation 4: Regulations governing student obligations (Education Committee)
2. Annual Programme Review (Education Committee)
3. Amendments to Senate Regulation 7 (Reasonable Adjustments) (Education Committee)
4. Postgraduate External Examiners Summary (Education Committee)
5. Research Ethics Policy and Research Code of Conduct (Research and Enterprise Committee)
6. Appointment of Turi King as a Public Orator

Senate **noted** the following items:

1. Proposals for nomination of Senate member to the University Council

Senate **noted** the proposals for an Effectiveness Review of Senate, which would take place in the 2023/24 academic year. Members commented that the papers for Senate meetings were extensive, with a significant amount of time required to read the papers, which meant it was important to receive these in a timely manner within the stipulations of Standing Orders. Members also requested that the review should consider the time available for discussion at Senate and transparency in relation to all items considered. It was clarified that Senate members would have the opportunity to input into the Effectiveness Review.

23/M13 REPORTED BUSINESS

Senate **considered** the following reports from Committees

a. Education Committee

Senate **noted** reports from the meetings of the Education Committee held on 1 March 2023, 30 March 2023 and 16 May 2023.

Senate **noted** the other business set out and **approved** the reports.

b. Research and Enterprise Committee

Senate **noted** reports from the meetings of the Research and Enterprise Committee held on 8 March 2023 and 5 June 2023.

Senate **noted** the other business set out and **approved** the reports.

c. Reputation, Recruitment and Performance Board

Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Reputation, Recruitment and Performance Board held on 28 February 2023.

Senate **noted** the other business set out and **approved** the report.

d. Senate Student Discipline Committee

Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Senate Student Discipline Committee held on 29 March 2023.

Senate **noted** the other business set out and approved the report.

e. University Officer appointments

Senate **noted** the senior recruitment update summary report.

f. Programmes Approved and Withdrawn

Senate **noted** the report of programmes approved in principle, in full and those withdrawn since its last meeting.

g. Outcomes of Senate Discipline Panels

Senate **received** the outcomes of recent Senate Student Discipline Panels.

23/M14**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair thanked Senate members for their contribution over the 2022/23 academic year. The results of the TEF and NSS would be shared with Senate members when they were published over the summer.

23/M15**DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Senate **noted** the meeting dates scheduled for 2023-24 as follows:

- Wednesday 4 October 2023 at 2pm
- Wednesday 14 February 2024 at 2pm
- Wednesday 12 June 2024 at 2pm

CHAIR

Duration of meeting: 115 minutes