

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

MEETING OF SENATE

Meeting to be held on Wednesday 25 February 2026
at 2.00 p.m. in the Council Room, Fielding Johnson Building

MINUTES

Attendees: Nishan Canagarajah (Chair), Henrietta O'Connor, Richard Thomas, Linda Ralphs, Teela Sanders, Dirk Schaefer, Dan Ladley, Carolyn Tarrant, Eleanor Jackson, Rebecca Draper, Steve Williams, Hilary Coyle, Mary Ann Lund, Alison Snape, Leena Sodha, Emma Sleath, Matthias Dahm, Chris Wilkins, Ljiljana Marjanovic-Halburd, Stewart Fishwick, Ruth Young, Carlo Panara, Simon Gay, Deborah Price, Steve Conway, David Cousins, Simon Vaughan, Kevin Paterson, Claire Brock, Edward Jones, Sandeep Handa, Simon Gill, Julie Morrissey, Neil Greening, James Fitchett, Paul Baines, Adam C. Povey, Caren Frosch, Sarah Knight, Nicola Bateman, Cleo Cornou, Grace Lewis-Bettison, Joshua Soetan, Fatma- Zahra Hassan, Thompson Robinson, Steven Bull, David Wright, Andrew Johnstone and Krista Cowan

In attendance: Geoff Green (Registrar and Secretary), Joseph Choonara (UCU) and Sally Priddle (Assistant Secretary)

Apologies: Matt Schofield, Mitesh Vaghela, and Pragna Srinivas

INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS

1. Welcomes and declarations of interest

1.1 No declarations were made in advance.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Resolved:

2.1 Senate APPROVED minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2025.

3. Chair's Business

3.1 Senate received an update from the President and Vice-Chancellor, including an update on the January graduations and the annual Court meeting. It was noted that the President and Vice-Chancellor was undertaking visits to all Schools and Professional Services divisions, a recent visit to School of Engineering provided the opportunity to see how the school had grown and also closed the awarding gap. The School of Physics & Astronomy visit showed how the school had managed to support students and research through the unforeseen building move. It was reported that the College of Life Sciences had achieved a Gold Athena Swan award.

3.2 Senate noted that the Chair had taken two formal actions on behalf of Senate since the last meeting approving the conferral of 9 degrees on 3 December 2025 and 1 degree on 17 December 2025. The Chair's Action had been requested to ensure students received their awards without unnecessary delay.

STRATEGIC BUSINESS

4. Our Citizens Update

6.1 Senate CONSIDERED the Annual Our Citizens Annual Report 2024-25 and noted that there had been positive progress of one KPI- Student Engagement had improved from 60% in 2023-24 to

70% in 2024-25. The performance of the Staff Engagement KPI had maintained at 75% against a target of 80% by 2030. Senate noted that there had been negative progress on one KPI Net Zero (carbon emissions) increasing from 88k in 2023/24 to 95k in 2024/25. Senate noted key achievements in 2024-25 delivery including that the University had secured £4m in external funding for projects including a major new community research initiative 'Collaboratory'.

- 6.2 Senate discussed the challenge around the delivery of KPI 8 (Net Zero), the driving factor behind the decline was a result of the University having a better understanding of its emissions derived from partners and supply chains. The University was undertaking a review of how it would achieve its environmental goals, work on the estate was difficult due to existing contracts and financial capacity to invest.

5. Research and Enterprise Matters

- 7.1 Senate considered an update from the Research and Enterprise Committee. On the recommendation of Research and Enterprise Committee, Senate approved changes to Regulation 9: Regulations governing Research Degree Programmes to amend maximum part-time registration periods for PhD/MD, minimum registration periods for PhD, MD and MPhil, and part-time thesis pending period. Senate discussed that a minimum 3-year period for MD was unlikely to attract students and it was recommended that the minimum term be reduced to 2 years.
- 7.2 Senate considered and approved the amendments to the Research Ethics Policy to reflect changes to the University's structure, clarification of supervision responsibilities and responsibilities relating to the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023.
- 7.3 Senate considered the Research risks on Strategic Risk Register, noting that the risks had been updated to include the potential impact of the Strategic Review. Senate discussed the potential negative implications of the Strategic Review on the REF as some colleagues believed that the review implied that research excellence was not important to the University. It was reported that the University was 11th in the UK for research income and all research income required subsidy so the operations demonstrated the importance of research to the University.
- 7.4 Senate considered the Annual Research Integrity Statement for recommendation to Council. It was noted that the annual statement was a requirement of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, it set out a summary of actions that have been undertaken to support and strengthen the understanding and application of research integrity issues, as well as statements on the University's approaches to dealing with alleged instances of misconduct. Subject to Council approval, the statement would be published on the University's website.
- 7.5 Senate considered an update on the University's REF2029 preparations including priorities for the next 6-12 months. It was reported that since the last report 400 additional output scores had been agreed by output review panels. Based on the current modelling ambitions, a minimum of 800 4* outputs were required for REF2029. At the 60% stage of the REF cycle, approximately 474 (60%) of the outputs have been scored as 4*.

- 7.6 Senate noted the Higher Education Business & Community Interaction (HE-BCI) report for 24/25, including that there has been an 11% decrease (£5.2m) in overall HE-BCI income, from £45.6m (2023-24) to £40.4m (2024-25). The reduction was the result of decreased income from consultancy, Intellectual Property (reduced licence income), and several other categories of income, including collaborative research and Continuing Professional Development. There had been an 23% increase in contract research (from £10.9m to £12.2m). Senate noted that it was estimated that the University's HEIF qualifying income would be £338m, which was a 9% decrease from 2023-24 income (£371m), it was reported that this fall could result in the University no longer receiving the additional HEIF supplement in 2026-27, which was worth £515k in 2025-26.

Resolved:

- 7.7 Senate **APPROVED** changes to Regulation 9: Regulations governing Research Degree Programmes, subject to making the minimum MD programme two years.
- 7.8 Senate **APPROVED** amendments to the Research Ethics Policy.
- 7.9 Senate **RECOMMENDED** the Annual Research Integrity Statement for Council approval.

6. Education and Student Matters

- 8.1 Senate considered an update from the Education Committee including noting progress on the 100 Hours Work-Related Learning project, the Future Fit Framework project and the development of the Portfolio and Curriculum Management system. On the recommendation of Education Committee, Senate approved changes to Regulation 8: Regulations governing examinations to reflect a move towards a greater use of internal invigilation for campus-based examiners. Senate discussed the detail within the University's regulations and whether they enabled appropriate institutional agility.
- 8.2 Senate also approved changes to Regulation 6: Regulations governing taught postgraduate degrees to add "with professional practice" to the list of award titles the University can offer, which would enable students to undertake masters' projects/dissertations in partnership with industry.
- 8.3 Senate considered the Education risks on Strategic Risk Register, noting that the risks had been updated to include the potential impact of the Strategic Review.
- 8.4 Senate considered the Annual Academic Assurance Statement 2025 for Council approval. The report provided assurance of the effectiveness of controls in place including the processes for identifying academic risks and establishing credible and active mitigation plans. Senate noted the inconsistencies in revalidation and module review processes which would be addressed by the introduction of Education Quality Reviews in 2025/26. Senate noted strong Academic Professional Development (APD) with over 76% of teaching staff holding a recognised teaching qualification. Senate noted the reasonable adjustment processes and learning support contracts in place.

- 8.5 Senate considered the Student Protection Plan 2026-27 for Council approval. There were only minor technical updates from the previous academic year. Senate discussed the minimum notice period for informing students of changes to programmes and whether it gave students sufficient time, it was reported that the notice period was consistent with previous iterations of the plan. Senate discussed whether the risk ratings within the plan should be revised in light of the Strategic Review. It was reported that the plan reflected the position and risks of the whole institution; therefore, although risks may be heightened in some areas, the overall ratings were appropriate for the University's position.
- 8.6 Senate considered the Degree Outcomes Statement for 2024 for Council approval, noting that the University operates consistently with Senate approved Codes of Practice governing programmes approvals, assessment, marking, moderation, external examining and collaborative provision. It was noted that key actions undertaken in 2024/25 included the roll out of the Succeed@Leicester induction framework, the launch of the Centre for Academic Achievement and targeted work with schools on curriculum, assessment and student progression. Senate noted that ongoing risks included ensuring the consistent recovery of outcomes following 2024 decline, managing assessment design in the context of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and reduction of awarding gaps.
- 8.7 Senate noted the Programme Development, Approval and Modification annual report which provided Senate with assurances on the operation of the Code of Practice programme development, approval and modification provided, which ensured the academic quality and standards of changes to the University's portfolio.
- 8.8 Senate noted that Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey went live on 25 February 2026 and members were asked to encourage engagement, the University was currently at 63.3% completion.

Resolved:

- 8.9 Senate **APPROVED** the revisions to Regulation 8: Regulations governing examinations.
- 8.10 Senate **APPROVED** the Professional Practice proposal.
- 8.11 Senate **RECOMMENDED** for the approval of Council Annual Academic Assurance Statement 2025.
- 8.12 Senate **RECOMMENDED** for the approval of Council Student Protection Plan 2026-27.
- 8.13 Senate **RECOMMENDED** for the approval of Council Degree Outcomes Statement for 2024.

SECRETARY'S BUSINESS**7. Code of Practice for Academic Governance- Committee Terms of Reference**

- 10.1 Senate considered the revised Code of Practice for Academic Governance- Committee Terms of Reference that sets out Terms of Reference for the Standing Committees of Senate, the Sub-Committees of Senate and select Departmental Level Committees. The terms of reference

set out the roles and remits of Sub-Committees, therefore how Senate's powers were delegated and operated in practice.

Resolved:

- 10.2 Senate **APPROVED** the Code of Practice for Academic Governance- Committee Terms of Reference 2025-26.

REPORTED BUSINESS**8. Reputation Performance Board***

- 11.1 Senate noted the report of a meeting held 9 October 2025.

9. Senate Student Discipline Committee *

- 12.1 Senate noted the report of a meeting held 10 December 2025.

10. For Senate to Note*

- 13.1 Senate noted the University Officer Appointments.

- 13.2 Senate noted the Programme withdrawals.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**11. Dates of future meetings***

- 14.1 Senate noted the dates for future meetings.

12. Any Other Business

- 15.1 No additional business was raised.