

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

MEETING OF SENATE

**Unconfirmed Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 3 November 2021 online via Teams**

Present: Nishan Canagarajah (Chair)

Y Amrani	P Baker
H Barton	E Burke
J Challiss	K Cowman
A Deeb	J Dunham
J Devlin	E Draper
S Dudley	A Ellis
S Fishwick	M Flanagan
R Fryer	S Handa
K Herbert	C Hewitt
R Holland	E Jones
S Kyd	D Lambert
L Liu	L Masterman
C Morley	A Ng
H O'Connor	K Paterson
T Robinson	M Purnell
J Shaw	J Schwabe
L Smith	I Somerville
R Thomas	C Wilkins

D Wright

In attendance: G Green (Registrar and Secretary), T Everley (IT support), R Lord (Assistant Secretary) and A Benson (Secretariat).

In attendance for 21/M19 Students' Union Priorities for 2021-2022: N Farmer, G Henton, M Kanikanti and K Wagener.

Observing: B Hassan, Unison representative and D O'Sullivan, UCU representative.

Apologies for absence were received from E Bunce, S Davies, S Garrett, R Jenkins and A Thomas.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

21/M17 WELCOME

Professor Canagarajah welcomed Senators, attendees and observers to the meeting.

Professor Canagarajah welcomed the following colleagues to their first meeting of Senate:

- Professor David Wright, Head of School of Allied Health Professionals
- Professor Lisa Smith, Head of School of Criminology

- Professor Krista Cowman, Head of School of History, Politics and International Relations
- Professor Kevin Paterson, Head of Department of Neuroscience, Psychology & Behaviour
- Joanne Dunham, University Librarian (Interim)
- Annemarie Deeb, SU Education Officer

21/M18 STANDING BUSINESS**(a) Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

(b) Membership, Powers and Standing Orders

Senate **received** its Membership, Powers and Standing Orders for the Academic year 2021-22.

(c) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021 as an accurate record, subject to a correction relating to the name of Professor Sandra Dudley within 21/M12.

Senate **approved** the minutes of the Urgency Committee meetings held on 23 July 2021, 30 July 2021 and 18 October 2021 as accurate records.

(d) Matters Arising

Senate **noted** that the matter arising relating to the sharing of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) Compliance Review had been completed.

(e) Chair's Business**(i) Update from President and Vice-Chancellor**

The President and Vice-Chancellor reported on key University developments.

Senators were commended on the work that had been completed since the previous meeting, including preparations for the start of term and supporting recruitment. The University's recruitment position was reported as strong in spite of a challenging period across the sector.

The success to date of the Centenary celebrations was highlighted, including high level of attendance at events. Senators were encouraged to continue to engage with the celebrations and attend future events.

It was reported that the University Strategy would be launched formally with the wider community on Thursday 4 November, following its approval by Council and consideration by the Senior Leadership Team.

Professor Canagarajah noted his appreciation for the feedback he had received thus far from School and Departmental visits.

The University's continued commitment to the Botanical Gardens was highlighted. The Oversight Board was to be reinstated and opportunities for external funds to renovate the properties would be considered.

It was reported that the University had been awarded £7.2 million from the Wellcome Trust for the 'Leicestershire Healthcare Inequalities Improvement PhD Programme'.

Professor Canagarajah highlighted the achievement of Professor Emma Bunce in being awarded the David Bates Medal of the European Geophysical Union and congratulated her on behalf of the Senate.

(ii) Q & A session

No questions were received.

(f) Summary Report of Items for Approval

Senate considered and **approved** a summary report of matters brought forward for approval from subcommittees and other areas:

1. University Strategy – Delivery Plans and Official Launch

Senate **noted** the consideration of the Strategy Delivery plans by Education Committee and Research and Enterprise Committee. Senate also **noted** the timeline for the official launch.

2. Terms of Reference – Education Committee

Senate **approved** the Terms of Reference and Membership for Education Committee for the 2021/22 academic year.

3. Annual Assurance Statement regarding Compliance with OfS Ongoing Conditions of Registration B1-B6 – Education Committee

Senate **noted** that the report outlined the operation of the University's processes for the overall assurance of academic quality and standards in the 2020/21 academic year, which incorporated the University's ongoing response to the impact of the pandemic.

Senate **approved** the report for submission to Council in due course.

4. Terms of Reference – Research and Enterprise Committee

Senate **approved** the Terms of Reference and Membership for Research and Education Committee for the 2021/22 academic year.

5. Proposed changes to Output Quality Policy – Research and Enterprise Committee

Senate **noted** that the Policy replaced the previous 'Policy for ongoing evaluation of research output quality' (2017). Significant lessons learned between 2017 and the submission to the REF2021 exercise had driven the update.

Senate **approved** the proposed Output Quality Policy.

6. Proposed changes to Research Code of Conduct – Research and Enterprise Committee

Senate **approved** the proposed changes to the Research Code of Conduct.

7. Research Institutes call for applications – Research and Enterprise Committee

Senate **noted** the call for Research Institute applications with a deadline of 18 October 2021. A review process would take place during November, with interviews in December, leading to the launch of the new institutes in April 2022.

8. University Distinguished Teaching Fellow (UDTF) Awards

Senate **approved** the staff/citations for the award of UDTF.

21/M19 BUSINESS TO CONSIDER

(a) Student Wellbeing Update

The Registrar and Secretary provided an update regarding student wellbeing matters at the University.

It was reported that, following approval in 2019, the implementation of the Student Wellbeing Strategy had been delayed due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. A strategic refresh was now being undertaken which would be presented for Senate consideration in March 2022.

The Strategy would focus on a whole University approach, as reflected in the themes of community, learning, living and support.

The current situation was outlined, with 3,782 contacts made by students for welfare support during Sept and Oct 2020, compared with 3,580 during the same period in 2021. Reports of Sexual violence and harassment had increased, as had Cause for Concern cases.

New developments for 2021 were highlighted, which included the recruitment of a dedicated PGR Wellbeing Project Officer, training initiatives for staff regarding mental health awareness and Consent training for students. Other initiatives were outlined, including the introduction of Health Assured Assistance, an external counselling and wellbeing service available for students in residence. This service was expected to provide a significant development in terms of managing wait time for students.

The significance of School support for students was emphasised. A summary of access points for signposting student to support services was outlined. It was **noted** that the Student Support team would provide additional support as required to Schools.

Senate **commended** the approach and **noted** the importance of consultation and engagement with Schools. It was **noted** that the presentation would be shared with Senators alongside the minutes from the meeting. [ACTION: Secretariat]

It was **noted** that a query raised regarding the triaging system for counselling would be progressed outside the meeting. [ACTION: Registrar and Secretary]

(b) Students' Union Priorities for 2021-2022

Senate **received** an update on the Students' Union Priorities for 2021-22.

The Students' Union Sabbatical Officers highlighted the following University-facing priorities for 2021-22 and their associated KPIS:

- a. Fulfilling Education Standards: Work would be undertaken to ensure consistency across Schools and Colleges in communication, provision and quality.
- b. Sustainability: Noted that a sustainability framework would be developed to be considered alongside the EDI framework to inform University and union decision making.

- c. Employability and Carers: Highlighted an initiative which would enable the translation of student skills onto their CVs.
- d. Inclusion: Noted the approval of a liberation fund and developing safe spaces for marginalised students to fully participate, including women only gym classes.
- e. Welfare: Highlighted the importance of improved availability and resourcing for counselling, including outsourcing where expertise was required.
- f. Accessibility and Affordability: Outlined the work which would continue regarding Tuition Fee transparency. Noted that an outsourced Accessibility audit would be undertaken which would centre the needs of disabled students.

It was summarised that that the overwhelming priority of the Union was to increase student engagement through improved visibility, and support the University as it sought to rebuild trust within the student community.

Senate **noted** that a Blended Learning Standard had been drafted for discussion in Schools and Senators were encouraged to engage with its further development.

It was **noted** that consideration should be given to including relevant testimonials from high profile employers within student recruitment materials and activities.

Senate **commended** the Students' Union Officers on the presentation and requested that it was shared separately with Senators to enable wider engagement across Schools (ACTION: Secretariat)

21/M20 BUSINESS TO NOTE

- (a) National Student Survey 2021

Senate **noted** a report providing Senate an update on NSS 2022 and the OfS' wider review of the NSS.
- (b) University Distinguished Teaching Fellow (UDTF) award

Senate **noted** and **approved** a report requesting approval of UDTF awards.
- (c) Reports from Committees
 - a. Education Committee

Senate **noted** reports from the meetings of the Education Committee held on 9 June 2021, 8 September 2021 and 20 October 2021.

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 11 May 2021, 29 June 2021 and 29 September 2021.

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 7 September 2021.

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

- d. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
Senate **noted** the report of the meeting of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee held on 29 June 2021.

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

- e. University Officer appointments
Senate **received** for information a list of all the University Officer appointments made since 4 June 2021.

- 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.

21/M21

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Senate noted the meetings scheduled for 2020-2021 were as follows:

Wednesday 2 March 2022, 2pm

Wednesday 22 June 2022, 2pm

CHAIR

Duration of meeting: 49 minutes