

## **UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER**

### **MEETING OF SENATE**

**Meeting was held on Wednesday 11 June 2025  
at 2.00 p.m. in the Council Room, Fielding Johnson Building**

#### **MINUTES**

**Attendees:** Isuri Dimasha Mannapperuma, Hilary Coyle, Ruth Young, Catherine Morley, Alison Snape, Leena Sodha, Emma Sleath, Matthias Dahm, Chris Wilkins, Ljilijana Marjanovic-Halburd, Don Jones, David Wright, Krista Cowman, Carlo Panara, Simon Gay, Deborah Price, Steve Conway, John Challiss, Kevin Paterson, David Cousins, Gemma Parker, Claire Brock, Sandeep Handa, James Fitchett, Paul Baines, Jayne Marshall, Linda Ralphs, Geerten Vuister, Gabrielle Provan, Zoe Groves and Nicola Bateman.

**Apologies:** Andre Ng, Steven Bull, Reed James, Stewart Fishwick, Krista Cowman, Ayomide Irene Akinsinmade, Grace Lewis-Bettison, Timi Joshua Soetan, Sandra Dudley, Simon Vaughan, Frank Dudbridge, Tracey Dodman, Mark Purnell, Eamonn Mallon and Pranabashis Haldar.

**In attendance:** Caren Frosch (UCU), Dr Marialuisa Crosatti (Unite), Joanna Watson (Good Governance Institute observer), Geoff Green, Sally Priddle and Hannah Grosvenor (item 8)

#### **INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS**

##### **1. Declarations of Interest**

###### **1.1 There were no declarations reported.**

##### **2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

- 2.1 Senate considered the minutes from the previous meeting and noted that all actions had been completed.

##### **Resolved:**

- 2.2 Senate APPROVED the minutes from the meeting on 12 February 2025 as an accurate record.

##### **3. Chair's Business**

- 3.1 Senate considered an update from the Chair of Senate, Vice-Chancellor and President. It was reported that the Government's Immigration White Paper had been published and the sector welcomed news that the graduate visa terms had not been removed although the terms had been reduced. The Government had announced a 6% levy on universities recruiting international students that would be introduced in 2026/27, this would put additional pressure on institution's budgets.
- 3.2 It was reported that the University had been awarded a £3.3 million research project grant for the social sciences, arts and humanities to research drugs and mental health in prison settings globally.

##### **4. Provost's Business**

- 4.1 Senate noted an update from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost.

## **STRATEGIC BUSINESS**

### **5. For the Consideration of Senate**

#### **5a. Deputy Vice-Chancellor's Report**

- 5.1 Senate received a presentation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost regarding Senate's role in the Strategic Review. The Strategic Review had been launched to address the University's financial pressures. The University was facing financial strain due to inflation in expenditure outpacing income, real-term cuts to tuition fees, declining international student numbers and underfunded research. The University's operating cash levels were low and had insufficient to meet the infrastructure needs. Staff costs were at 56.6% of income which was above sector benchmarks. As a result, the University was not financially sustainable in its current state and lacked resilience.
- 5.2 The Strategic Review aimed to establish financial sustainability to enable investment in growth areas, student experience and infrastructure. A restructure of the College of Life Sciences and digital services was underway and a proposal for the Division of Biomedical Sciences had been developed. Pre-Change Engagement had been launched for Chemistry, Geography, Education, History, Film Studies, Modern Languages and parts of Professional Services. Pre-Change Engagement was a consultative process led by Heads of School/Department to gather input before any formal change proposals and had been developed 2018 in agreement with trade unions. No decisions had been pre-determined.
- 5.3 Senate was the senior academic body at the University and was responsible for overseeing academic standards, research, teaching, and student experience, advising Council on academic implications of structural changes and ensuring compliance with Office for Students (OfS) regulations. Senate would be responsible for critiquing the academic implications of proposals. Individual Senators were asked to actively participate in discussions and make decisions in the University's best academic interests.
- 5.4 Senate would receive regular updates on the programme and be asked to consider formal proposals post-engagement as set out in governance processes.

#### **5b. Code of Practice Concerning Freedom of Speech**

- 5.5 Senate considered the academic implications of the revised Code of Practice Concerning Freedom of Speech. The Code of Practice had been revised ahead of the implementation of the Higher Education Freedom of Speech Act 2023. Key changes included updating references to related legislation and adding clarity on how the University articulates its Freedom of Speech obligations with other legislation, adding reference to the University's values and how these interact with Freedom of Speech duties, appending the External Speaker Procedure to the Code of Practice to ensure it is read as a single document, and clarifying the requirement to register and risk assessment visiting speakers applied to all events held in the University's name including but not limited to on campus, virtual or satellite locations.

#### **5c. Academic Risks on Strategic Risk Register**

- 5.6 Senate considered the academic risks on the Strategic Risk Register:

- 5.7 Failure to deliver a consistently inclusive and high-quality education and student experience, that enables students to achieve their full potential, regardless of background.
- 5.8 Failure to adapt to and resource, sufficiently quickly, the teaching and learning methods and environment (including estate capacity) required to meet the needs of our taught student cohorts as a result of the changing size and shape of the student population.
- 5.9 Trusted research non-compliance leading to lack of institutional oversight and management of reputational, financial, legal and national security risks to research through international collaborations.
- 5.10 Sub-optimal Performance in REF2029.
- 5.11 Senate discussed the need to cross reference the maintenance of the estate risk with the education and research risks as investment in facilities and infrastructure had implications for the quality of provision and outputs.

#### **5d. College of Life Sciences Restructure**

- 5.12 Senate considered the proposed College of Life Sciences (CLS) restructure which would deliver an academic and structural transformation aimed at enhancing its ability to deliver world-class research, research-inspired education, and civic engagement. The proposal had been developed by the CLS Restructure Development and Implementation Task and Finish Group and was recommended to Senate for approval to transition from the development to the implementation phase, with a go-live date of 1 September 2025. The proposal included a four-school model with a revised senior leadership model. A series of success measures, aligned with the institution's strategic key performance indicators, had been proposed to assess the implementation of the re-structure
- 5.13 Senate noted the recommendation to consider how the new structure would impact the composition of Senate.

#### **Resolved:**

- 5.14 Senate **APPROVED** the proposed re-structure, in particular the four-school model and underpinning divisional structure.
- 5.15 Senate **APPROVED** the leadership model, including the proposal to manage the transitional period to facilitate implementation of the new structure with existing and appropriately aligned Heads of School/ Department that remain in their tenure of office.
- 5.16 Senate **APPROVED** the principles in respect of staff alignment and sub-divisional structure for the implementation phase.

#### **6. For the Consideration of Senate from the Research and Enterprise Committee and Education Committee**

##### **6a. Output Quality Policy Revisions**

- 6.1 Senate considered the proposed revisions to the Output Quality Policy that aimed to develop and implement distinct processes for REF output review, and academic promotions, probation and performance management and set out that final panel output scores and comments should remain visible to the respective authors.

**Resolved:**

- 6.2 Senate **APPROVED** the revised Output Quality Policy.

**6b. Open Publications and Dissemination Policy**

- 6.3 Senate considered the Open Publications and Dissemination Policy that had been approved in 2024 for implementation for a year as a pilot. It was deemed that the pilot was successful and it was proposed that the policy was approved for full implementation. Two minor changes were recommended, firstly as long form outputs were not being considered in REF the wording around these would be changed and secondly, the wording would state that the University would strongly encourage deposit on acceptance but mandate deposit on publication.

**Resolved:**

- 6.4 Senate **APPROVED** the Open Publications and Dissemination Policy subject to the agreed revision to revert 'date of publication' to 'date of acceptance' as set out in the previous policy.

**6c. Annual Research Integrity Statement**

- 6.5 Senate considered the annual Research Integrity Statement which was a requirement of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, it set out how employers of researchers would support and strengthen understanding and the application of research integrity issues for publication on the University's website.

**Resolved:**

- 6.6 Senate **APPROVED** the Annual Research Integrity Statement for recommendation to Council.

**6d. Affiliation Policy**

- 6.7 Senate considered the revised Affiliation Policy that had been updated to clarify the requirement that the University needed to be able to demonstrate that researchers belonged to the institution.

**Resolved:**

- 6.8 Senate **APPROVED** the revised Affiliation Policy.

**6e Fair Attribution Policy**

- 6.9 Senate considered the revised Fair Attribution Policy that aimed to improve the visibility of technicians' contributions to research by ensuring they were acknowledged or listed as authors.

**Resolved:**

- 6.10 Senate **APPROVED** the revised Fair Attribution Policy.

**6f. Undergraduate External Examiners Summary**

- 6.11 Senate considered the Undergraduate External Examiners Summary that provided an annual assurance on academic standards. The report confirmed that the University's Undergraduate awards were in line with sector practice and identified areas of good practice including standard of feedback. The report identified a small number of areas for improvement and set out how the University had considered and responded to the findings.

**6g Annual Programme Review Summary Report**

- 6.12 Senate considered the annual Programme Review Summary Report that provided assurance on the effective operation of academic quality assurance processes and the oversight of school level action planning. Feedback from Schools was collated and used to inform support needs for the future academic year. The process also provided the opportunity to collate best practice and potential case studies for the Teaching Excellence Framework, thereby reducing the reporting requirements on Schools.

**6h. Postgraduate Taught External Examiners Summary**

- 6.13 Senate considered the Postgraduate Taught External Examiners Summary that provided an annual assurance on academic standards. The report confirmed that the University's Postgraduate Taught awards were in line with sector practice. The report identified a small number of areas for improvement and set out how the University had considered and responded to the findings.

**SECRETARY'S BUSINESS**

**7. Senate Effectiveness Review**

- 7.1 Senate considered the implementation of the Senate Effectiveness Review and noted that a series of initiatives would be implemented over the summer ahead of the new academic year including establishing a Teams resource site, a revised induction, development sessions and revised paper expectations. Senate noted that a proposal to revise its composition, reflecting upon the College of Life Sciences restructure, would be brought to Senate in the 2025-26 academic year.

**Resolved:**

- 7.2 Senate **APPROVED** the revised Senate Role Descriptor.
- 7.3 Senate **APPROVED** the proposed buddying scheme.

**8. Access and Participation Plan Update**

- 8.1 Senate considered the Access and Participation Plan monitoring report. The Access and Participation Plan was a regulatory requirement for Higher Education Institutions who charged higher tuition fees that set out how the University would support underrepresented undergraduate students to access, progress and succeed at the University. All Colleges had Inclusion Action plans that aligned with the institutional priorities. The Succeed at Leicester transition, induction and study skills programme had a positive impact with 53% of students feeling a stronger sense of belonging and 83% valued shared experiences for building confidence. MedRACE and MedRACE+ celebrated five years of inclusion and advocacy in healthcare.

- 8.2 Senate noted that the new Access and Participation Plan would be implemented from September 2025, it would continue some of the positive interventions from the existing plan including Black Excellence and Leadership programmes, Inclusive curriculum and assessment and mentoring schemes. The plan would focus on addressing barriers to representation, financial pressure and mental health. The awarding gap targets were aligned with the institutional KPIs. Senate discussed how the initiatives could be expanded to benefit postgraduate students.

## **9. University Distinguished Teaching Awards**

- 9.1 Senate considered the recommendations for three awards of University Distinguished Teaching Fellow and two team citations for the award of University Distinguished Teaching Team.

### **Resolved:**

- 9.2 Senate **APPROVED** the award of University Distinguished Teaching Fellow to Dr Nicole Fayard from School of Arts, Media and Communication.
- 9.3 Senate **APPROVED** the award of University Distinguished Teaching Fellow to Dr Roy Crole from School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences.
- 9.4 Senate **APPROVED** the award of University Distinguished Teaching Fellow to Dr Arwen Joyce from School of Law.
- 9.5 Senate **APPROVED** the award of University Distinguished Teaching Team to PGCE Team School of Education.
- 9.6 Senate **APPROVED** the award of University Distinguished Teaching Team to Biological Sciences Careers and Employability Team in School of Biological Sciences.

## **10. Ordinances, Statutes and Regulations**

### **10a. Senate Regulation Four**

- 10.1 Senate considered the proposed changes to Regulation Four that would clarify student attendance expectations including the requirement to attend on campus teaching and assessment unless for an approved reason.

### **Resolved:**

- 10.2 Senate **APPROVED** the revisions to Regulation Four.

### **10b. Senate Regulation Nine**

- 10.3 Senate considered the proposed changes to Regulation Nine and noted that concerns had been raised in advance from senators from the College of Life Sciences. The proposed changes had been informed by a task and finish group and input from Postgraduate Researcher students. The changes aimed, in part, to support the progression of Postgraduate Researcher Students and provide an opportunity for early intervention if students were not on track to complete within four years, when there are not mitigating circumstances.

- 10.4 Senate noted that if the changes were approved then guidance would be developed to support the implementation of the changes and enable local nuisance.

**Resolved:**

- 10.5 Senate **APPROVED** the revisions to Regulation Nine.

**11. Senate Membership**

**11a. Appointment of New Senate Member to Council**

- 11.1 Senate noted that Professor Catherine Morley's term on Senate and Council was coming to an end therefore an open call for nominations had been launched. Following an election process, Professor Alison Snape had been appointed as the Senate representative on Council and was recommended to Senate for ratification.

**Resolved:**

- 11.1 Senate **APPROVED** the appointment of Professor Alison Snape as the Senate Representative on Council from 1 July 2025.

**11b. Retirements from Senate**

- 11.2 Senate noted the retirements from its membership and thanked members for their contributions.

**REPORTED BUSINESS**

**12. Education Committee\***

- 12.1 Senate noted the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February, 7 April and 20 May 2025.

**13. Research and Enterprise Committee\***

- 13.1 Senate noted the minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2025.

**14. Recruitment Performance Board**

- 15.1 Senate noted the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January, 20 March and 20 May 2025.

**15. For Senate to Note**

**16. Programmes Approved and Withdrawn**

- 16.1 Senate noted the Programmes Approved and Withdrawn.