

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

MEETING OF SENATE

**Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 4 March 2020**

Present: Nishan Canagarajah (Chair)

P Baker	E Jones
M Barer	S Kyd
S Barry	D Lambert
H Barton	G Lewis
E Burke	P Monks
N Chakraborti	B Norman
H Challiss	H O'Connor
S Davies	A Rahman
J Devlin	I Somerville
S Dudley	C Taylor
I Forsythe	R Thomas
R Fryer	S Garrett
C Wilkins (vice W Cajkler)	A Goodall
M Williams	M Halliwell (vice G Dawson)
G Wynn	S Handa
C Hewitt	

In attendance: G Green (Registrar and Secretary), A Khadia (Director of Planning), L Gibson (DPVC Research), A Erdlenbruch (Chief of Staff) and R Lord (Assistant Secretary).

Apologies for absence were received from N Armstrong, S Dudley, L Liu, F Du Bois, Z Skidmore, A Thomas, O Obioha, M Nemhard and A Ridpath.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

20/M01 **WELCOME**

Professor Canagarajah welcomed Mark Williams from the College of Science and Engineering to the meeting as one of three attendees nominated by each College to attend Senate whilst formal changes to Statutes were being made to increase membership.

Professor Canagarajah welcomed Jacqui Shaw, Head of the Department of Genetics and Genome Biology, to her first meeting of Senate.

20/M02 **STANDING BUSINESS**

(a) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

(b) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Senate considered the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2019.

Senate **approved** the minutes as an accurate record.

(c) Matters Arising

i) Update on implementation of Revised Regulations for Student Conduct and Discipline

It was noted that following extensive consultation, revised regulations and procedures would be launched during March 2020. Significant investment was being made to increase the size and depth of the Student Complaints, Conduct and Resolution team. In addition, mandatory consent training for students had been planned to commence from 2020/21.

ii) Other matters

Senate noted the action log from its previous meeting, and further noted that all actions were completed.

(d) Chair's Business

Senate noted an update from the Registrar and Secretary on the University's response to the emerging coronavirus situation. It was noted that significant effort was being put into enhanced business continuity planning, and that further advice would be provided to staff and students over the coming days on key areas such as examinations and graduation. It was confirmed during the discussion that the University Special Leave policy would apply in cases of school closure and where staff had caring commitments.

The President and Vice Chancellor provided a report into key matters concerning the University.

Professor Canagarajah noted that he had now completed visits to all departments within the University, which had been very positive.

It was noted that a key area of focus for the University was to improve its financial position. The three key sources of income for the University were fees, research, and philanthropy. The Committee was asked to consider where the University could maximise this income, including reviewing where there was capacity to increase student numbers within courses. Meeting the University target would lead to an additional £6.5 million in income. Professor Canagarajah encouraged colleagues to support the aim of improving the University's financial position and to share any concerns.

Professor Canagarajah provided an update on the annual planning process, including resourcing. It was noted that the post-control process would be discontinued after July 2020. Senate members were encouraged to engage with the Planning Process to ensure that Colleges had the resources they needed. Heads of Schools and Departments would be empowered to manage their own budget position, and held responsible for achieving

their budgets; once confirmed, budgets would only change on exception. Work was also underway to ensure that the data underpinning the process was sound. Professor Canagarajah stated that this approach represented a change of culture within the University and asked for feedback on any improvements that could be made.

The President and Vice-Chancellor thanked the former Registrar & Chief Operating Officer, Dave Hall, for the service he had provided to the University over several years and Senate recorded its thanks, wishing him well for the future. Senate noted the new structure for the University's Professional Services team as follows:

- Martyn Riddleston – Chief Operating Officer
- Geoff Green – Registrar and Secretary
- Kerry Law – Chief Marketing and Engagement Officer

(e) Summary Report of Items for Approval

Senate considered and approved a summary report of business for consideration arising from reports from subsidiary Committees and other areas where Senate's approval was required.

Undergraduate External Examiners

Senate noted that the Learning and Teaching Committee had considered a summary report of the External Examiners' reports and departmental responses for undergraduate programmes in 2018/19. Senate was pleased to note that the reports confirmed that Senate can have confidence in the overall standards of the University's awards, and in particular that there were no significant areas of thematic improvement recommended by external examiners this year. The Learning and Teaching Committee had referred the report to Council for consideration at its meeting on 18 March, for information.

Senate noted the report and **endorsed** the actions taken.

Research Output Quality Policy

Senate approved the revised Research Output Quality Policy.

Research and Enterprise Committee Terms of Reference

Senate considered and **approved** minor amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Research and Enterprise Committee.

20/M03

BUSINESS TO CONSIDER

(a) University Strategy

Senate noted a presentation on the progress made in developing the new University Strategy. The presentation highlighted current thinking on the University's mission, vision and strategic aims which had been developed through the recent staff and student consultation process.

The following points were noted from the session:

- i) Environmental Sustainability was stated as one of the guiding principles of the strategy, however did it go far enough to ensure the University would meet its stated goal around becoming Carbon Neutral? Consideration should also be taken that the Strategy was for the University not the City.
- ii) There was an acknowledgement that it would be important to take the University community with the new strategy, and the associated culture change needed. Thought would be put into new and different ways of enabling positive engagement with staff.
- iii) The importance of access to education was emphasised. The use of scholarships would enable this, including outreach work with local communities.
- iv) The changing view of government towards Universities should also be considered when planning the Strategy.
- v) There was positive feedback provided from the Students' Union on both the Strategy and the engagement of students within the consultation.

Senate noted that further opportunity to input into the strategy development would be provided in the Senior Leadership Team meeting due to take place on 5 March 2020.

(b) Amendments to Statutes and Ordinances

Senate considered proposed amendments to Ordinances and Statutes, to reflect some of the recommendations of the recent Senate Effectiveness Review.

Senate requested that the period of consecutive tenure should be amended to four years from three years. (ACTION: Registrar and Secretary)

Senate **approved** the proposed amendment to Statute 6, for endorsement by Council and subsequent submission to the Privy Council. Senate also **approved** amendments to Ordinances 34 and 10, for approval by Council.

(c) Learning and Teaching Strategic Update

Senate noted that the University Learning Strategy is currently under review, alongside the development of the main University Strategy. Senate received a summary of progress against each of the priority projects, led by the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Educational Excellence Programme.

An update was provided on TEF which included the timeline of the TEF activities from TEF2 in 2016-17 and confirmation that there would be no TEF exercise in 2020.

NSS completion for 2020 had been led by Schools with focus on completion within Schools, and the institutional threshold for publication had now been met.

Although central communications on NSS had now ceased, Schools should, at their discretion, continue to encourage students to complete the NSS.

An update was provided on the University work to close the Awarding Gap, including information about the following key projects:

- i) Leicester Institute for Inclusivity in Higher Education
- ii) Towards Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Curriculum: Advance HE collaborative project
- iii) Curriculum Consultants: A Student-Led Investigation into Structural Inequality in the Curriculum
- iv) Role of Belonging in Tackling Ethnicity-Related Disparities in Retention, Attainment and Outcome
- v) QR funded policy research focused on inclusive assessment
- vi) Creation of Awarding gap data packs and ongoing data analysis

(d) Report from Senate Members on Council

Senate received an oral report from Senate members on Council on the meeting highlights of Council held on 19 November 2019 and the Council/Executive Board away day session held on 17 February 2020.

An update was provided on the Academic Pairing Scheme and members were asked to contact Neil Cox should they wish to register their interest.

In their meeting on 19 November 2019, Council had noted the success of the mock REF.

The Council/Executive Board away day session had been positive and was focussed largely on the University's strategic vision. The ongoing portfolio review was also discussed, including the work of Data HE which would be shared with colleagues in the coming weeks.

20/M04 **BUSINESS TO NOTE**

(a) Reports from Committees

i) Learning and Teaching Committee

Senate noted reports from the meetings of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on 19 November 2019 and 23 January 2020, and that the elements that required Senate's approval had already been considered under item 20/M01.

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

ii) Research and Enterprise Committee

Senate noted reports from the meetings of the Research and Enterprise Committee that had taken place on 31 October 2019, 12 December 2019 and 29 January 2020.

Senate noted that the elements that required Senate's approval had already been considered under item 20/M01.

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

(b) University Officer Appointments

Senate received for information a list of all University Officer level appointments that had been made since 6 November 2019.

(c) Programmes Approved and Withdrawn

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

(d) Senate Student Discipline Panels

Senate received the outcomes of recent Senate Student Discipline Panels.

20/M05 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Senate noted the date of its final meeting in 2019/20 as follows:

Wednesday 24 June 2020 at 2pm

CHAIR

Duration of meeting: 2 hours 3 minutes.