

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

MEETING OF SENATE

**Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 6 March 2019**

Present:

Edmund Burke (Chair)

Natalie Armstrong	Colin Hewitt
Phil Baker	Richard Holland
Wasył Cajkler	Jason Hughes
John Challiss	Liz Jones
Jonathan Chambers	David Lambert
Roy Crole (vice Reiko Heckel)	George Lewis
Sarah Davies	Peter Lunt
Francois Du Bois	David Mattingly
Andrew Ellis	Galina Mukamolova (vice Mike Barer)
Ian Forsythe	Paul Monks
Rob Fryer	Bob Norman
Stephen Garrett	Henrietta O'Connor
Iain Gillespie	Jose Prados
Alison Goodall	Mark Purnell
Lisanne Gibson	Tom Robinson
Sandeep Handa	Caroline Taylor
Martin Halliwell	Graham Wynn

In attendance: Dave Hall, Martyn Riddleston, Dawn Turpin (observing), Deidre O'Sullivan (UCU), Geoff Green (Secretary) and Andrew Petersen (Assistant Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Azza Abdulla, Simon Barry, Paul Boyle, Martin Barstow, Liz Bailey, Mike Barer, Andrew Fry, Reiko Heckel, Amy Moran and Jon Scott

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

19/M01 **STANDING BUSINESS**

(a) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor welcomed Dawn Turpin as an observer of the meeting as part of the Senate Effectiveness Review, covered under M01(f) below.

(b) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Senate considered the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2018.

Senate approved the minutes as an accurate record, noting that Edmund Burke should be added to the list of those members that had sent their apologies.

(c) Matters Arising

Arising from M10(g) Senate noted that the revisions to the Schedule of Delegation had been approved by Council.

Arising from M11(d) Senate noted that the annual assurance statement had been received and approved by Council.

(d) Chair's Business

The Deputy Vice Chancellor reported:

i) University Leadership Team

Changes to the University Leadership Team which included:

- The President and Vice-Chancellor leaving the institution to take up the post of Vice-Chancellor at Swansea University. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor would undertake the role of Acting Vice-Chancellor while the appointment process for a successor was underway.
- The Pro-Vice Chancellor Research and Enterprise portfolio would be split into two portfolios: PVC Research and PVC Enterprise & Partnerships.
- Professor Jon Scott would be leaving the University at the end of the academic year and a new PVC (Education) would be appointed.

Senate noted that in addition to the current Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Deputy PVC roles in both Education and Research would be appointed internally to ensure an appropriate transition in the key preparation periods for TEF 2020 and REF 2021.

Following this, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor emphasised that he was looking forward to working with all members of Senate and the wider University community in the coming months.

ii) NSS 2019

The University had met the institutional reporting threshold for NSS 2019, with only a small number of departments yet to meet the individual thresholds. The current response rate was slightly below the equivalent point in 2018 but a wide range of events had taken place across campus to encourage engagement.

iii) Personal Tutor Dashboard

The Personal Tutor Dashboard had been launched. Senate noted that it allows staff to view a range of data regarding their personal tutees, in order to further enhance pastoral support. Senate also noted that this has been a very positive development but that there are a few data issues still to resolve.

iv) Research Update

The University is continuing to show strong numbers on research awards, with success in some very large grant applications. The University is also improving

performance with regard to many of the Research Council funding streams such as achieving a significant ESRC Impact Accelerator Award, resulting in the University now ranking inside the top 20 UK HEIs for income from ESRC.

v) International Foundation Year

The University has signed a contract with Navitas to deliver a range of new International Foundation Year pathways, commencing in September 2019. The initial pathways offered would be:

- Engineering and Technology
- Society and Culture
- Economics and Management

(e) Summary Report of Items for Approval

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

Programme Approval Annual Report

Senate noted that the Learning and Teaching Committee had considered an annual report on the operation of the Programme Development and Approval Process in the 2017/18 academic year. Senate noted the following actions arising from the report:

- Publication of a revised Programme Development and Approval form;
- Formalised and standardised role of College Programme and Portfolio Development Groups;
- Increased opportunities for engagement with supporting services such as the Leicester Learning Institute and the Career Development Service;
- Authorised Colleges to sign off business cases for new programmes, with the exception of certain categories of major development;
- Permitted advertising of new programmes following business case approval.

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

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 2017/18. Senate was pleased to note that the reports have once again confirmed that Senate can have confidence in the overall standards of the University's awards. Senate noted the following actions in response to specific issues raised by External Examiners:

- Clarity over the extent of external examiner comments expected outside of the core confirmation of academic standards;
- To explore the provision of further statistics to allow comparison of student performance year on year.

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

Research and Enterprise Committee Terms of Reference

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

Policy of Pricing of Research and Enterprise Activities

Senate considered and **approved** minor amendments to the Policy on Pricing of Research and Enterprise Activities.

Amendments to Senate Regulation 9

Senate considered and **approved** minor amendments to Senate Regulation 9 governing research degrees, to remove the exception for staff from the former MRC Toxicology Unit to act as first or second supervisors for PhD students, subject to minor technical amendment.

(f) Senate Effectiveness Review

Senate received a report on a review of its effectiveness that would be undertaken over the course of the spring and summer terms in 2019. As part of the review, the views of Senate members would be sought through questionnaires and interviews, and members were encouraged to engage with requests for input.

19/M02

BUSINESS TO CONSIDER

(a) Award of Honorary Degree

Senate considered and **approved** a recommendation to award an Honorary DSc to Sir Gregory Winter, recent recipient of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry and who was born in Leicester. Senate noted that it had not been possible to consider this nomination in the standard cycle due to the timing of the award of the Nobel Prizes. Senate noted that the nomination would be submitted to Council with Senate's endorsement.

While welcoming a worthy nomination in this case, Senate further emphasised the importance of encouraging nominations from a wider range of backgrounds to put forward for consideration for Honorary degrees.

(b) Review of Regulations

Senate received a presentation from Geoff Green regarding a proposal to restructure and simplify the presentation of the University's Senate Regulations.

Senate noted that there were a number of drivers for the review which included internal student and staff feedback regarding the accessibility and clarity of the regulations, and also the external policy environment.

Senate noted the actions already underway which included the production of written and animated student guides to key regulations and the provision of a degree classification calculator. Further guidance regarding the application of the current regulations would be provided ahead of the midsummer 2019 assessment round.

Benchmarking has been undertaken to compare the University's policies and processes with those of peer institutions. Analysis of trends in degree classification outcomes is also underway but Senate noted that this was a complex and nuanced issue nationally.

Senate endorsed the proposal to significantly restructure the regulations, simplify their content and remove references to issues of policy and procedure to other appropriate documents.

Senate noted that the review would include a consultation on amendments to the existing regulatory principles and academic requirements, which would present an opportunity to consider some of the more complex aspects of the progression and award requirements for future review.

(c) University Recovery Plan

Senate received a report from Dave Hall and Martyn Riddleston on the implementation of the University Recovery Plan. Senate noted that the plan represented a means of clearly articulating and measuring the actions that were being taken across the institution under the three identified priorities of improving the student learning experience, maximising research performance and improving student recruitment.

Senate welcomed the articulation of the purpose and function of the plan as expressed in the meeting. Senate noted from the discussion that the plan was also designed to support the upcoming review and refresh the University's Strategy and mission, and that it needed further work to recognise the importance of raising institutional morale in the current challenging circumstances.

Senate considered the University's current financial position, the various factors which influence this and the impact of cost control measures. Senate noted that although strategic investment is essential in order to enhance performance, the fundamental issue which remained is the need to raise income, particularly via increased student recruitment.

Senate noted that although the plan had been circulated previously, it was expected that it was shared actively with all staff in academic departments, to allow colleagues to use the priorities and actions set out in the plan to drive and align the most effective allocation of resources.

19/M03

BUSINESS TO NOTE

(a) Risk Registers

Senate received for information extracts from the Strategic Risk Register and the Corporate Risk Register relating to those areas under Senate's remit.

Senate received a report which highlighted amendments to the registers since they were last received by Senate in November 2018. Senate noted the areas of very high risk and also noted the increase in the risk associated with performance in REF 2021 and the reduction of risk associated with industrial action.

Senate noted that the registers would be presented to Council.

(b) Reports from Committees

i) Learning and Teaching Committee

Senate received reports from the meetings of the Learning and Teaching Committee that had taken place on 20 November 2018 and 14 January 2019.

Senate noted that the elements that required Senate's approval had already been considered under item M01(e).

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

ii) Research and Enterprise Committee

Senate received reports from the meetings of the Research and Enterprise Committee that had taken place on 1 November and 13 December 2018, and 1 February 2019.

Senate noted that the elements that required Senate's approval had already been considered under item M01(e).

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

(c) University Officer Appointments

Senate received for information a list of all University Officer level appointments that had been made since 7 November 2018.

(d) Programmes Approved and Withdrawn

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

(e) Senate Student Discipline Panels

Senate received the outcomes of recent Senate Student Discipline Panels.

19/M04

TEF PREPARATIONS

Senate considered a report on the University's TEF 4 metrics and initial hypotheses, and an update on the preparations underway for submission to TEF 5 in early 2020. Senate noted that this item had originally been marked as reserved due to the externally enforced confidentiality of the metrics. Senate agreed that in the interests of transparency it would be appropriate to consider the item in the unreserved section, but on the expectation that the details of the metrics remained strictly confidential.

Although the University is not submitting to TEF 4, the metrics provided a useful indicator of current performance. Senate noted the changes to the national TEF methodology which may have the effect of significantly redistributing the award of gold, silver and bronze ratings across the sector. Senate noted the metrics in the area of continuation and agreed that improving continuation, most notably among some underrepresented groups, was a very high priority going forwards. Senate also noted

the importance of using data to evidence the impact of enhancement work underway across academic departments.

Senate noted that extensive preparations for TEF were ongoing. A local TEF exercise will be undertaken during 2019 in order to produce a provider level submission and 22 separate subject level submissions, which will then be subject to internal and external review. These will then form the basis of the formal mandatory TEF 5 submission that is anticipated in early 2020. Senate noted that that this exercise is being supported through the Education Excellence programme.

Senate noted that nominations for subject level leads in each area had been received, but also noted the extent of the workload that would be required in order to develop subject level submissions and engage effectively with the institutional preparations for TEF. Senate agreed it was of critical strategic importance that there was wide communication about the TEF process, and that colleagues were both trained and supported in contributing to the writing teams, and that this should be reflected in their wider workload allocation. Senate agreed that Heads of College would work with the subject level leads and their respective Heads of Department or School, to identify what actions were necessary to ensure that they have the capacity to contribute fully to this process.

19/M05 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Senate noted the date of its final meeting in 2018/19 as follows:

Wednesday 26 June 2019, 2pm