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Senate – Minutes

3 November 2021

(in person meeting)

PRESENT: Professor Andy Schofield, Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair); Dr Marina Anderson; Professor Paul Ashwin; Professor Phil Barker; Professor Alex Belton; Dr Chris Boyko; Professor Steve Bradley; Professor Kate Cain; Dr Deborah Costain (*for Professor Jim Wild*); Dr Casey Cross; Professor Jonathan Culpeper; Sarah Fox; Professor Magnus George; Professor Robert Geyer; Dr Karen Grant; Professor Simon C. Guy; Professor Rich Haley (*for Professor Peter Atkinson*); Rebecca Heron; Dr Derek Hird; Dr Willem Hollmann; Professor Isobel Hook (*for Professor Roger Jones*); Professor Gill Hopkinson; Dr Andrew Jarvis; Dr Jennifer Logue; Professor Alan Marsden; Dr James Mawdesley; Dr Paul McKean; Professor Claudio Paoloni; Professor Efthymios Pavlidis; Oliver Robinson; Professor Wendy Robinson; Professor Sharon Ruston; Professor Jo Rycroft-Malone; Gayatri Shewani; Leanne Taher-Bates; Professor Jane E. Taylor; Professor Imogen Tyler; Professor Catherine Walshe; Professor Nigel Watson; Dr Karen Wright.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms Misbah Ashraf; Mr Paul T. Boustead; Mr John S. W. Dickinson; Mr Simon J. Jennings; Ms Heather Knight; Ms Alison M. Mullan; Ms Nicola C. Owen; Mrs Sarah J. Randall-Paley.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Dr Lorna Ashton; Professor Peter M. Atkinson; Mr Andrew Barker; Professor Dame Sue Black; Dr Pavel Chakraborty; Professor Paul Connolly; Mr Stuart Franklin; Professor Ian Gregory; Dr Claire Hardy; Professor Niall Hayes; Professor A. Louise Heathwaite; Professor Roger W. L. Jones; Professor Claire Leitch; Dr James McDowell; Dr Sandra Nolte; Professor Jim Wild.

INTRODUCTION

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND THANKS

1.1 Senate noted the apologies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 No new declarations of interest were made.

3. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

3.1 There were no questions to the Vice-Chancellor.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: 16 JUNE 2021

PAPER A

4.1 Senate approved the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2021.

5. ACTIONS AND DECISIONS BY CORRESPONDENCE: SEPTEMBER 2021 PAPER B

5.1 Senate noted the actions and decisions made by correspondence in September 2021.

6. REPORT OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

6.1 The Vice-Chancellor provided an oral report, including the following.

- (i) A new Minister for Education had been appointed by the government. In addition, the Minister for Higher Education would now be attending cabinet meetings.
- (ii) The recent spending review contained few references to higher education, there was, however, an increased commitment to supporting research and development.
- (iii) The government's continuing expectation in its most recent guidelines relating the national emergency engendered by the Covid-19 pandemic that teaching would be delivered face-to-face wherever possible.
- (iv) The University would be recruiting a new Pro-Vice-Chancellor Engagement with the departure of Dame Professor Sue Black. Professor Angus Laing would be taking on a new pan-institutional role relating to engagement beyond Lancashire. Professor Leitch would continue as interim Dean of LUMS.
- (v) UCU had balloted for industrial action.

6.2 Senate noted the report.

7. SUMMARY OF UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE BOARD (UEB) BUSINESS RELEVANT TO SENATE (1 JUNE TO 19 OCTOBER 2021) PAPER C
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ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

8. HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE: RECOMMENDATIONS NOVEMBER 2021 PAPER D
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9. REVOCATION OF HONORARY AWARDS PROCEDURE: MINOR AMENDMENTS PAPER E

9.1 Senate received a paper setting out minor amendments and clarifications to the Revocation of Honorary Awards procedures. The Honorary Degrees Committee had recommended the changes for onward approval at its meeting on 13 October 2021.

9.2 Senate agreed to recommend the minor amendment to Council.

**10. ANNUAL REPORT TO UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ON TEACHING
QUALITY ASSURANCE**

PAPER F

- 10.1 The Vice-Chancellor welcomed Professor Wendy Robinson, the incoming Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education).
- 10.2 Professor Robinson introduced the Annual Report to University Council on Teaching Quality Assurance, noting that the paper provided details of Lancaster University's academic quality assurance processes undertaken in 2020-21, including information on the exceptional arrangements put in place to ensure appropriate maintenance of academic standards and quality during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its purpose to provide assurance to Council of the University's continued focus on improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes, and the maintenance of standards of awards.
- 10.3 It was noted that it had been an exceptional year. Academic standards, however, had not been affected and Senate could continue to have confidence in the processes where by the University provided assurance of both the quality and standard and its academic provision.
- 10.4 Senate agreed to recommend the report to Council.

**11. OFFICE FOR STUDENTS PHASE 2 CONSULTATION ON QUALITY
AND STANDARDS**

PAPER G

- 11.1 Senate received for information the Office for Students' Phase 2 Consultation on Quality and Standards.
- 11.2 Professor Robinson set out some of the implications of the work associated with the consultation. There was likely to be increasing regulation in the light of the increasing complexity of the higher education sector. Expectations regarding the evidential nature of academic quality were also likely to rise, with possible ramifications to the current understanding of academic judgement. There was a concern reported from the sector that aspects of collaborative provision, most notably the dual degree, were being subject to additional scrutiny that could risk disincentising the civic benefits such partnerships supported.
- 11.3 In discussion support to upheld the principle of the independence of academic judgement was supported.
- 11.4 Senate noted the report.

12. LANCASTER UNIVERSITY WIDENING PARTICIPATION 2020-21: PAPER H
ANNUAL REPORT

12.1 Senate received a report providing an overview of Lancaster's Widening Participation work in 2020-21. It was noted that Lancaster University remained highly committed to supporting students from all backgrounds to access higher education and to succeed during their time at the University. This commitment was reflected in Lancaster's success in the National Education Opportunity Network (NEON) annual awards where Lancaster won HE Institution of the Year. The University was particularly noted for its commitment to the life cycle of the student.

12.2 In discussion it was noted that the widening participation team would be working with the Race Equality Project Manager to under a research project looking at attainment gaps and this would identify potential projects.

12.3 Senate noted the report.

13. ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS REPORT 2020/21 PAPER I

13.1 Senate received a report summarising the work of the Academic Promotions Committee, and the associated teams that support the academic promotions process, over the last 12 months. Senate welcomed the information that cases did not decline during the national emergency.

13.2 The new criteria around engagement were noted as was the evidence of a growing cultural awareness around the response to the gender pay gap.

13.2 Senate noted the report.

14. ADMISSIONS STATEMENT ORAL UPDATE

14.1 Senate received a report detailing admissions for 2021/22 and recruitment for 2022/23. The importance of maintaining contact to enable conversion was noted as was the draw of the physical campus. The return to onsite open days was recognised as a positive benefit.

14.2 In discussion the co-ordination of activities between departments, faculties and central services was noted as was the necessary engagement between them to maximise conversion. It was noted that the lack of social life in the city was dissuasive to potential students although this could be, in part, countered by the social experiences offered through the colleges and the Students' Union.

14.3 Senate noted the report.

15. DEGREE RESULTS INFORMATION PAPER J
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- 16. NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY** **PAPER K**
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ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 17. SENATE CHAIR'S ACTION** **PAPER L**

17.1 Senate noted the actions made by the Chair of Senate since the last meeting.

- 18. FACULTY ASSOCIATE DEANS AND HEADSHIPS OF DEPARTMENTS: APPOINTMENTS** **PAPER M**

18.1 Senate noted the report of the appointments.

- 19. WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS** **PAPER N**

19.1 Senate noted the written reports of meetings.

- 20. NEW AND REVISED PROGRAMMES** **PAPER O**

20.1 Senate noted the report of new and revised programmes.

- 21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

21.1 A Joint Council/Senate event will be held in person at 6:00-7:30 p.m. on Thursday 25 November 2021 in the Private Dining Room, County College.

The next Senate meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday 9 February 2022 (via Teams).