LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Minutes of a meeting of the Senate held on 9 November 2016

PRESENT: Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair); Professor P. Ashwin; Professor P. M. Atkinson; Professor P. Barker; Professor P. Bates; Ms J. Bennett; Professor S. Bushell; Professor K. Cain; Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Dr A. Collins; Mr F. Dawes; Mr N. Dearman; Professor S. P. Decent; Professor J. Faulconbridge; Professor R. Geyer; Ms O. Gomez-Cash; Dr K. Grant; Professor S. R. A. Huttly; Professor N. Johnson; Mr R. Jones; Mr M. Khokhar; Dr R. Lauder; Professor A. Lazarev; Dr A. Leeson; Professor C. Leitch; Professor N. Lockett; Professor C. May-Chahal; Dr C. Melville; Professor C. Paoloni (until 3.00 p.m.); Professor I. Paya; Professor M. Piacentini; Ms C. Povah; Professor E. Semino; Professor M. M. Smyth; Dr J. Taylor (from 3.00 p.m.) Mr M. Topps; Dr W. Tych; Professor S. Walter; Professor J. Whittle; Professor M. B. Wright; Professor S. Young.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P. Boustead; Ms C. Geddes; Ms R. Hughes; Ms H. Hunter; Mr S. J. Jennings; Dr I. Lyne; Ms A. Mullan; Ms N. C. Owen; Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley; Mr M. Swindlehurst.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Professor A. M. Atherton; Dr S. Awanis; Dr P. Bishop; Professor S. Bradley; Mr T. Buckley; Professor M. Ehrgott; Professor P. Fielden; Professor S. Guy; Professor M. Hughes; Dr S. Hughes; Professor A. W. Laing; Mr P. Maggs; Mr P. Montague; Ms T. Walters; Dr S. Weare.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

No questions had been received for the current meeting.

MINUTES

S.2016/71 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 21 September 2016

Senate approved the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2016 (SEC/2016/2/1173).

SECTION 1: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

S.2016/72 Report of the Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor provided an oral report on national and University activities of interest to Senate, including:

(a) the need to monitor and respond to impacts from the outcome of the US election on the UK higher education sector;

(b) that views would be sought from across the University to inform the institutional response to the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework (REF) consultation;
(c) that the University was preparing its submission to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) in the New Year, and TEF assessor appointments included one staff and two student members from the University;

(d) that a Council Effectiveness Review was being undertaken and some Senate members would be asked to provide feedback;

(e) that the Staff Survey was currently open and Heads of Department were asked to encourage their staff to complete the survey;

(f) that student recruitment for 2016/17 showed a strong performance for UK/EU undergraduate and postgraduate taught student enrolment, but international undergraduate and postgraduate taught enrolment numbers were below target.

S.2016/73 Summary of UMAG Business Relevant to Senate

The report (SEC/2016/2/1288) was noted.

S.2016/74 Forward Schedule of Senate Business

The report (SEC/2016/2/1304) was noted.

SECTION 2: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION REQUIRING DECISION

S.2016/75 Honorary Degrees

Restricted and Confidential

S.2016/76 Education Strategy

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) introduced the report (SEC/2016/2/1305), including outlining the process for consultation and development of the draft education strategy and next steps.

Key points from the discussion included:

(a) suggestions to further identify the extra-curricular role provided by Colleges and strategic/ Organisation & Educational Development (OED) level activity;

(b) the draft provided a 'map to achieve distinctiveness'.

Senate approved the direction of travel for the future work for the education strategy.

S.2016/77 Council, HEFCE and Quality Assurance

The Vice-Chancellor provided an overview of the context for the new assurance requirement, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) summarised the University’s proposed approach to enable Council to provide these quality-related assurances to HEFCE, as set out in the report (SEC/2016/2/1306). The approach synthesised information reviewed by the Senate during the academic year, and identified some areas where additional reports may be provided in the future in the light of sector developments.
Senate noted the challenge for Council to have sufficient expertise and oversight to confirm the setting of standards of awards, and that the critical external review and input was provided at the programme level.

Senate noted its role in the assurance process and agreed to:

(i) approve the report for submission to Council;
(ii) recommend to Council that the information contained within the report provides full assurance for the HEFCE return.

S.2016/78 Amendment to Ordinances

Senate agreed to recommend to Council the proposed amendments to Ordinances as set out in the report (SEC/2016/2/1307).

SECTION 3: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION NOT REQUIRING DECISION

S.2016/79 Strategy Update: Consultation

The Vice-Chancellor and the Director of Strategic Planning and Governance introduced the report (SEC/2016/2/1308), setting out the arrangements and rationale for updating the Strategic Plan for 2020. The activity was considered timely as strategic objectives had evolved alongside changes within the operating context since the Strategy was prepared in 2013.

Key points from the discussion included:

(a) the revised document would be intended for both internal and external audiences;
(b) a suggestion to indicate that the University was performing well despite the challenging environment;
(c) a suggestion to include questions within the consultation document in order to elicit broader feedback;
(d) the opportunity to provide reassurance about attracting and retaining EU staff and students following the EU Referendum.

S.2016/80 Strategic Partnership Opportunity: Update

Restricted and Commercial in Confidence

S.2016/81 Implementation of Research Enhancement

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) introduced the report (SEC/2016/2/1256), outlining the outcomes of two working groups established to inform the implementation of research enhancement in relation to rating research outputs and an annual research enhancement process.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) noted the sensitivities around rating research outputs, but emphasised the approach was intended to be part of a mentoring and developmental culture, and this activity was an important element of preparing for the next REF. There would be a report on the aggregate outcomes of research output ratings to a future meeting of Senate.
Key points from the discussion included:

(a) to ensure the arrangements and documentation for rating research outputs aligned with the forthcoming REF consultation proposals;
(b) the importance of encouraging staff to submit as many high quality publications as possible, though quantity should not be at the expense of quality, and recognising that outputs likely to be rated as world-leading are especially important for the REF;
(c) the final selection of publications for REF will be a separate exercise to the annual rating of research outputs.

Senate noted the report.

S.2016/82 REF Steering Group

Senate noted the report (SEC/2016/2/1255).

S.2016/83 Review of Research Centres

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) introduced the report (SEC/2016/2/1247), summarising the outcomes of the review of Research Centres ahead of reporting to Research Committee, which was responsible for approval of the recommendations and oversight of their implementation, noting that relevant and specific recommendations would be brought back to Senate at a future meeting. Senate noted the report.

S.2016/84 N8 Research Partnership

Senate noted the report summarising N8 collaborations (SEC/2016/2/1310) ahead of it being reported to Council.

S.2016/85 Relocation of the Centre for Training and Development (CETAD) from Faculty of Health and Medicine (FHM) to the Lancaster University Management School (LUMS)

The Dean of FHM and the Associate Dean for Engagement in LUMS introduced the report (SEC/2016/2/1311) setting out the rationale for transferring CETAD from FHM to LUMS, including to broaden the focus of activity and provide increased collaboration across the University. Senate noted the report.

SECTION 4: ITEMS FOR DECISION UNLIKELY TO REQUIRE DISCUSSION

There were no items under Section 4 on this agenda.

SECTION 5: ITEMS FOR REPORT

S.2016/86 Lancaster Arts Annual Report

Senate noted the report (SEC/2016/2/1336).
S.2016/87  Chair's Actions

Senate noted the report (SEC/2016/2/1312) of decisions taken by the Chair on its behalf since the previous meeting.

S.2016/88  Heads of Departments: Appointments

Senate noted the report (SEC/2016/2/1313).

S.2016/89  Written Reports of Meetings

Senate noted the reports as set out on the agenda.