15 November 2017

PRESENT: Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair); Professor N. Alexander; Professor P. Ashwin; Professor A. M. Atherton; Professor S. Bainbridge; Mr D. Barcroft; Professor P. Barker; Professor P. Bates; Dr A. Belton; Ms J. Bennett; Dr P. Bishop; Professor S. Bushell; Professor K. Cain; Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Dr A. Collins; Professor S. P. Decent; Professor A. Friday; Ms O. Gomez-Cash; Dr K. Grant; Professor B. Hollingsworth; Professor M. Hughes; Dr S. Hughes; Professor S. R. A. Huttly; Professor N. Johnson; Professor R. W. L. Jones; Mr M. Khokhar; Ms H. Laycock; Professor C. Leitch; Professor C. May-Chahal; Mr P. Montague; Professor J. Mottram; Professor C. Paoloni; Professor R. Pickup; Ms C. Povah; Professor E. Semino; Professor M. M. Smyth; Mr J. Thornberry (for Ms A. Pradhan); Dr W. Tych; Dr S. Weare; Mr J. Woolf; Professor M. B. Wright; Professor S. Young; Professor M. Zanardi.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P. Boustead; Mr S. Franklin; Ms C. Geddes; Ms H. Hunter; Mr S. J. Jennings; Ms H. Knight; Ms A. Mullan; Ms N. C. Owen; Mr M. Swindlehurst.

OBSERVERS: Mr A. Curren-Rooke; Ms R. Monks; Ms L. Robertshaw (Year 2 Fine Art students).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Professor D. Angwin; Professor P. Atkinson; Dr S. Awanis; Professor J. Boylan; Mr T. Buckley; Professor J. Faulconbridge; Ms A. Jennings; Dr R. Isba; Professor A. W. Laing; Mr P. Maggs; Ms M. Rahman; Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley; Ms V. Tyrrell; Ms T. Walters; Ms L. Wilkinson.

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 Senate noted the apologies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

From Dr Siobhan Weare, Lecturer in Law/Early Career Representative:

3.1 Given one of the University’s institutional priorities is to increase the UG population by a further 5%, can you confirm whether there are plans to build any more large lecture theatres on campus (i.e. with capacity for more than 300 students), that are not restricted in their usage (i.e. restricted to use by particular departments)? Currently degrees with a large intakes, for example with 270 students or more on their core modules, are extremely restricted in the teaching space they can use, making timetabling very challenging for all involved. In turn this issue has potential implications for the University’s other institutional priorities, e.g. the NSS.

3.2 In response the Deputy Vice-Chancellor noted that a large lecture theatre was included within the capital plan, but that this was only one element of how the University would need to respond to increasing cohort sizes, in order to ensure a flexible and adaptable approach that delivered a strong all-round student experience, and that the University was looking at this delivery in an increasingly planned way.
4. MINUTES

4.1 Senate approved the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2017.

SECTION 1: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

5. REPORT OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

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

(a) the current consultation on the future regulatory framework for higher education;
(b) the upcoming consultation concerning the future of the USS pension;
(c) the announcements at the recent Conservative Party Conference covering maintaining the tuition fee level at £9,250 for the 2018 intake, increasing the graduate income threshold for loan repayments to £25k, and that there would be a review of student finance;
(d) there had been a successful launch of the UA92 proposition as part of the public phase of consultation;
(e) over 80 students had graduated at the first graduation ceremony at Lancaster University Ghana, which had been presided over by the Chancellor, the Rt. Hon. Alan Milburn;
(f) the University had recruited strongly for the 2017/18 student intake;
(g) the University having been named The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2018, alongside being ranked 6th overall in the corresponding league table, was testament to its achievements, particularly over the past five years.

5.2 Senate noted the report.

6. SUMMARY OF UMAG BUSINESS RELEVANT TO SENATE

6.1 Senate noted the report.

7. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF SENATE BUSINESS

7.1 Senate noted the report.

SECTION 2: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION REQUIRING DECISION

8. ANNUAL REPORT TO UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ON TEACHING QUALITY ASSURANCE

8.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) introduced the report, which summarised the University’s approach to quality assurance during 2016-17, to enable Council to provide these quality-related assurances to HEFCE, as set out in the report.

8.2 Senate recommended the report to Council.
SECTION 3: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION NOT REQUIRING DECISION

9. COURT EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW PAPER E

9.1 The Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary introduced the report, which set out the context and approach for the review of Court effectiveness, and provided the opportunity for Senate members to provide further comment and feedback to Council.

9.2 Key points from the discussion included:

(a) that it was important the University was able to continue and strengthen its ability to engage with external stakeholders, including those that already engaged through Court;
(b) the diversity of University engagement was broader than that currently represented by Court, and included national and international stakeholders;
(c) the need to ensure that the future arrangements supported increased external engagement with the University and that resources were targeted to the best advantage;
(d) the student voice had been a particularly valued element of Court meetings;
(e) the need to be clear about the role of Court as there was confusion and consequent difficulties around the perception of it holding a role in governance.

10. REPORT OF ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS SUB-COMMITTEE’S DISCIPLINE PROFILES WORKING GROUP PAPER F

10.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) and Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development introduced the report which set out the findings of the Discipline Profiles Working Group, including a proposal that each Academic Department updated their discipline profile(s) and adopted the standard format and approach.

10.2 Key points from the discussion included:

(a) that the proposals were intended to reflect different disciplinary practices, as well as embed interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work;
(b) that the proposals would relate to the promotions criteria;
(c) that it would be useful to consider the intended audience(s) for the documentation;
(d) whether ‘departmental profiles’ would be more appropriate terminology.

11. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17 PAPER G

11.1 Senate noted the Annual Report summarising the University’s equality, diversity and inclusion activities during 2016-17.

12. KPIs: YEAR END REPORT FOR 2016-17 PAPER H

12.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Director of Strategic Planning and Governance introduced the report, which provided an update on progress against the University’s Key Performance Indicators in 2016-17.
12.2 Discussion included the importance of ensuring continued focus, and associated activities, to support the University to improve its retention rates.

SECTION 4: ITEMS FOR DECISION UNLIKELY TO REQUIRE DISCUSSION

There were no items under Section 4 on this agenda.

SECTION 5: ITEMS FOR REPORT

13. WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS

13.1 Senate noted the reports and approved minor amendments to the membership of Education Committee as set out in the paper.

13.2 Senate noted that the Review of Part 1 would include a consultation with departments on proposed changes and this would be reflected in a revision to the Education Committee report and minutes.

14. NEW AND REVISED PROGRAMMES

14.1 Senate noted the report.