SENATE – MINUTES

21 June 2017

PRESENT: Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair); Professor P. Ashwin; Professor A. M. Atherton; Dr S. Awanis; Ms J. Bennett; Dr P. Bishop; Professor S. Bradley; Mr T. Buckley; Professor K. Cain; Dr A. Collins; Mr N. Dearman; Professor S. P. Decent; Professor M. Ehrgott; Professor J. Faulconbridge; Professor R. Geyer; Professor A. Gillespie; Ms O. Gomez-Cash; Dr K. Grant; Professor S. Guy; Professor B. Hollingsworth; Dr S. Hughes; Professor S. R. A. Huttly; Dr R. Isba; Ms R. L. Jones; Professor A. W. Laing; Professor A. Lazarev; Professor C. Leitch; Professor C. May-Chahal; Professor J. Mottram; Professor C. Paolini; Professor R. Pickup; Ms C. Povah; Ms A. Pradhan; Professor E. Semino; Professor M. M. Smyth; Dr S. Weare; Professor M. B. Wright; Professor S. Young; Professor M. Zanardi.

PRESENT FOR ITEM 1: Professor S. Bainbridge; Mr N. Fragel; Professor R. Geyer; Dr P. Harness; Dr W. Hollmann; Dr P. McKeand; Professor J. F. O’Hanlon; Professor V. Reid; Professor M. Shackleton; Dr C. Shirras; Professor S. Skogly; Professor K. Zografos.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P. Boustead; Mr S. Franklin; Ms C. Geddes; Ms R. Hughes; Mr P. Maggs; Ms N. C. Owen; Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley; Ms C. Stevenson (acting Secretary); Ms H. Laycock (observer); Ms L. Wilkinson (observer); Mr J. Woolf (observer).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Professor P. Atkinson; Professor A. Binley (for item 1); Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Mr T. Finnigan (for item 1); Professor A. Friday; Professor N. Hayes (for item 1); Ms H. Hunter; Ms A. Jennings; Mr S. J. Jennings; Professor N. Johnson; Mr M. Khokhar; Professor M. Piacentini; Mr D. Tsang; Dr W. Tych; Professor S. Walter, Ms T. Walters.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

No eligible questions had been received for the current meeting.

1. UNIVERSITY PRIORITIES

1.1 The Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced the proposed University Priorities for 2017/18, noting that they built on the priorities set in 2016/17, with some adjustments to align the priorities to the Strategy 2020 update.

1.2 Key points from the discussion included: understanding how the priorities interacted; the scale of challenge in reaching the top 20 for Research Council grants awarded; the challenge of maintaining league table position; the potential for incorporating a metric in the future relating to postgraduate students within the priorities; the focus of the University Priorities in relation to financial priorities; and the scope of the meaning of ‘engagement’.

1.4 The Vice-Chancellor noted that there may be other opportunities for earlier discussion of the University Priorities with Heads of Departments and Divisions in the future prior to bringing to Senate for formal approval.
1.5 Senate approved the University Priorities for 2017/18.

2. MINUTES

PAPER B

2.1 The minutes of the Senate meeting held on 10 May 2017 were approved.

SECTION 1: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

3. REPORT OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

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

(a) the latest Guardian league table results had seen Lancaster retain its top ten position, although dropping a single place to 9th. QS World University Rankings league table results had seen Lancaster move from 129th to 135th place, noting this was relative to a general drop in places for UK universities;
(b) the impact of the general election results upon Lancaster were not fully known; however, in the short term, the Higher Education and Research Act would be implemented. The results would bring tuition fees back into debate and universities could help to shape this conversation;
(c) TEF results had been received, but were embargoed until the following day. A paper on implications would be brought to a future meeting.

3.2 Senate noted the report.

4. SUMMARY OF UMAG BUSINESS RELEVANT TO SENATE

PAPER C

4.1 The Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary noted that the University had become a signatory to the Race Equalities Charter.

4.2 In light of the Competition and Markets Authority rulings a briefing note was being distributed to departments advising of their responsibility to be vigilant regarding the full provision of information for students via departmental websites.

4.3 Senate noted the report.

5. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF SENATE BUSINESS

PAPER D

5.1 A review of academic promotions would be brought to Senate.

5.2 Senate noted the report.
SECTION 2: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION REQUIRING DECISION

6. REVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY RULES AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE

6.1 The Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary presented a paper which had been written following broad consultation working through disciplinary issues to reduce the risk to the University, including through the Office for the Independent Adjudicator. The Non-Academic Discipline Regulations had been developed to replace the University Rules and would clarify terminology and process and had been discussed at and endorsed by the Colleges and Student Experience Committee (CSEC). Taken together with Council’s anticipated approval of the updated Response to Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy the changes would also address matters raised in a related UUK report, ‘Changing the Culture’, published in October 2016.

6.2 Further work would be required in the longer term to consider the consistency of disciplinary case management as the Lancaster model was a more distributed system than at many other universities.

6.3 Key points from the discussion included: transparency of college fine income spending; timescales within the process and meetings with local police representation. It was noted that these issues had been explored with the Deanery and the College and Student Experience Committee which had recommended the proposals to Senate.

6.4 Senate approved the Non-Academic Discipline Regulations, subject to minor revisions to wording, and wished to note thanks to the Director of Strategic Planning and Governance and his team for the careful and consultative approach to developing the process changes in the available time frame.

7. AMENDMENTS TO ORDINANCES

7.1 The Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary presented proposed changes to Ordinance 10 and Ordinance 11.

7.2 The change to Ordinance 10 would see the responsibility for the approval of the appointment of the Pro-Chancellor move from the Court to the Council. The Council had supported the proposal and referred this to the Court Effectiveness Review Group which had agreed that this should be taken forward with immediate effect. The Court had not been consulted on the change of Ordinance as this was considered to be a governance decision within the remit of the Council as the primary governing body, also noting that approval for changes to Ordinances lay with Senate and Council, not the Court.

7.3 The recent Council effectiveness review had found that the current process did not accord with good governance practice and did not align with Element 1 of the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance and the HEFCE Memorandum of Assurance and Accountability.

7.4 The change to Ordinance 11 would see the elimination of duplicate information also included within the Student Non-Academic Disciplinary Policies and Procedures.

7.5 Key points from the discussion included: whether there should be consultation with the Court concerning the proposed amendment to Ordinance 10, and suggestions for improvements to wording.
7.6 Following a show of hands, Senate recommended to Council the proposed amendments to Ordinance 10 (34 for; 2 against) and Ordinance 11 (36 for; 0 against).

8. HONORARY DEGREES MARCH 2017 SENATE PROPOSAL (Reserved)

SECTION 3: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION NOT REQUIRING DECISION

9. ACADEMIC RESEARCH AND EDUCATION LEAVE

9.1 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) presented the final draft of the Academic Research and Education Leave Policy (formerly the Sabbatical Policy before significant review). The updated policy would see academic leave extended to enable all academic staff to apply and be considered for a period of leave to spend dedicated time on education and other developmental activities of benefit to the University.

9.2 Key points from the discussion included: communication and planning ahead to reduce the impact of this type of leave upon students; setting a statement of intent at application, with detail nearer to the time of leave; staff were still employees of the University during periods of leave; and nomenclature and recognition of the policy as applicable to sabbatical leave in an international context.

10. POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH REVIEW: INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

10.1 Senate noted the initial implementation plan.

10.2 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) agreed to consider extending the student representation to both a PGR student representative and the LUSU Vice-President (Education).

SECTION 4: ITEMS FOR DECISION UNLIKELY TO REQUIRE DISCUSSION

11. UNIVERSITY EMERITUS PROFESSOR APPOINTMENTS: PROPOSALS UNDER STATUTE 10 (Reserved)

12. FACULTY ASSOCIATE DEANS: APPOINTMENTS

12.1 Senate noted the report.
13. WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS

13.1 Senate noted the reports.

14. NEW AND REVISED PROGRAMMES

14.1 Senate noted the report.