



MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL SENATE

MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH 2023

Present:	Professor T Jones (Vice-Chancellor, Chair), Dr A Adeyemi, A Al-Irhayim (Student Representative), Dr A Alsalloum, Dr H Arnolds, Professor K Atkinson, Professor L Anderson, Professor J Balogun, Dr C Belfrage, Professor K Bennett, Dr M Berenbrink, Professor G Brown, Professor I Buchan, Professor P Buse, Professor P Clegg, Professor L Crolley, Professor K Coleman, Dr S Cornell, Dr C Costello, Professor J Curran, L Dubbins (Guild Vice-President), Professor M D'Onofrio, Professor G Endfield, Dr L Gahman, Professor A Fell, Dr K Furman, Professor B Gibson, Professor L Harkness-Brennan, E Hatch (Guild Vice-President), Dr N Helassa, Professor A Hollander, B Holt (Student Representative), Professor D Jeater, Professor G Kemp, Professor L Kenny, Professor B Konev, Professor C Leek, Professor G Lynall, Professor A Lyons, Professor D Mair, Professor D MacEwan, K Manley (Guild Deputy President), Professor A Marshall, Professor P Murray, Professor V Mitsilegas, Professor K O'Halloran, Dr S Parameswaran, Professor E Patterson, Professor S Pickard, Professor D Prescott, Professor I Prior, Professor S Rocha, Dr M Rose, Professor H Scott, Professor S Sheard, Professor L Sheffield, V Samuels (Guild President), Professor P Shirlow, Professor M Speed, Professor H Stalford, Professor T Teubner, Professor M Towsey, Professor W van der Hoek, Professor T Walley, Professor F Watkins, Professor C Welsch, Dr B Wilm and Dr J Wolf.
Apologies:	Professor M Baylis, Professor R Bearon, Professor N Berry, Professor F Beveridge, Professor J Bridgeman, Professor R Chiverrell, Dr L Corner, Professor C Eyers, A Lavercombe (Student Representative), Dr H Little, Dr C Malathouni, Professor C McGowan, Dr E Ormandy, Professor R Smith, Professor J Surroca, Professor R Williams.
In Attendance:	University Secretary and General Counsel, K Ryan, Governance Officer, L King, Governance Officer, K Cross and Head of Governance and Deputy Secretary, E Leonard.

1. Disclosures of Interest

Members of the Senate were invited to disclose any interests in relation to the items on the agenda. None were raised.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

2.1 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 25 January 2023

AGREED:

- i. The minutes of the previous meeting should be accepted as an accurate record.

2.2 Matters Arising on the Minutes

REPORTED:

- i. Item 5.ix TEF Submission: The final copy of the TEF submission was circulated to Senate members on 26.01.23.

2.3 Report on Action Taken by the Chair on Behalf of Senate

- i. Since the last business meeting of Senate, the Vice-Chancellor had acted on its behalf as follows:
 - To approve a renewal of the MPhys Astrophysics/BSc Physics with Astronomy Programmes with LJMU.

AGREED:

- ii. The action taken by the Chair on behalf of Senate should be endorsed.

3. **Vice-Chancellor's Report**

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- i. A report from the Vice-Chancellor on University and sector wide news, including:
 - The University's contribution to activities around the upcoming Eurovision Song Contest
 - The upcoming launch of the National Student Survey
 - Events for International Women's Day and Women's History Month
 - A pilot scheme for Disability Coaches
 - The recruitment of new lay members of Council and sub-committees
 - Wider sector news on industrial action, updates from Universities UK, Horizon Europe and the cost of living crisis.

STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

4. **Strategy 2031**

RECEIVED:

- i. A presentation from the Vice-Chancellor covering: Purpose; Strategy 2031 Core Components; Framework and Leads; Timeline and Key Activities.

REPORTED:

- ii. The purpose of the new strategy would be to:
 - Build on the existing strategy and take the University through its 150th anniversary and into the next decade
 - Provide a high level, enabling framework that sets the direction of travel for the next 5-10 years – it would be flexible to take advantage of unseen future opportunities
 - Identify what is unique about the University, what is/can be genuinely world-leading, and what should be different about the University by 2031

- Set the ambition, build confidence and ensure an outward-looking approach
 - Be a guide for planning, prioritisation, investment and growth.
- iii. The Strategy would be developed using a framework which consisted of:
- Four core pillars (Research and Impact, Education and Student Experience, Civic and Innovation and Global Engagement and Partnerships)
 - Two cross cutting themes (People and Culture and Sustainability)
 - Enabling Plans (Size and Shape, estates and facilities, finance, faculty and departments, digital and fundraising).

NOTED:

- iv. Senate was informed of the timeline for the development phase of the strategy which would conclude in October 2023. This would allow a clear understanding of strategic ambition by the Autumn, so that it could be used to inform plans in the 2024 planning round. Members were assured that consultation events would run throughout May, June and July 2023, providing all staff and students the opportunity to contribute to the detail.

5. Project SHAPE PwC Report

RECEIVED:

- i. A copy of the independent advisory internal audit by PwC on Project SHAPE.

REPORTED:

- ii. Commissioned by the Audit Committee, an independent advisory internal audit took place to examine the processes and approach followed by the University in implementing Project SHAPE. The purpose of the audit was to identify any learnings for the University to incorporate into future change projects. Senate received a copy of the final audit report and associated recommendations, as had previously been agreed given some Senate members' concerns with the project.
- iii. From the interviews and documentation review conducted, PwC made observations and identified learnings for the University to incorporate into future strategic change projects. These observations centred on the following themes: Risk Assessment; Communications; Consultation; Business Case and Benefits; and Staff Training and Support.

NOTED:

- iv. The review was commissioned by Audit Committee and therefore focused on the key controls rather than granular details of the change process in order to provide assurance from a governance perspective. However, it was felt by some members of Senate that as a result the scope of the audit was limited, and did not cover the project in its entirety, which had been promised 'to ensure complete transparency and scrutiny' in the minutes of Senate and Council in June 2021 and July 2021, especially as the audit only covered the period until May 2021, whereas the University itself had announced the end of Project SHAPE in September 2021. Members commented that it would have been

beneficial to include the redundancy process and the financial risks arising from the contravention of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA).

- v. The report covered the impact on staff involved, and stated that “those interviewed shared how difficult the negotiation meetings had been” and that they “would have benefited from increased pastoral support on their mental health and wellbeing”. However, it was felt that there could have been more time spent on reviewing the impact on staff more broadly and the relationship between staff wellbeing and strategic aims.
- vi. It was also noted that the project at the time had been necessary in order to improve an untenable situation, and the courage to approach this change should be applauded. Further to this, some members commented that they would be keen to receive information on the benefits resulting from Project SHAPE pertaining to the original business case.
- vii. Whilst there were no plans to carry out an additional review, it was recognised that the project had been a challenging time for many colleagues, and Senate was reassured that rebuilding trust and relationships was a priority. Leadership hoped to look forward, whilst adopting the lessons learned from the review and reflecting on the comments received by Senate members.
- viii. The findings of this report would be further considered by SLT and Council.

6. Project RISE Update

RECEIVED:

- i. An update on Project RISE Phase 3 and its focus.

REPORTED:

- ii. The focus of Project RISE Phase 3 was:
 - a) A new contributions framework which would adopt a new, rounded approach to research and impact assessment.
 - b) Replacing the existing reading programme with new support and evaluation processes that separated REF output selection from evaluation as part of the PDR.
- iii. Senate was informed that the consultation had high levels of engagement, with circa 500 participants drawn from across the University community. There was very strong interest across all areas of consultation, including particularly consistent feedback on the additional workload resulting from the proposal to separate evaluation of outputs for REF and PDR processes.
- iv. In view of this and the lack of clear consensus on some crucial issues, further time would be taken to re-review and re-consider all feedback. Key findings and recommendations would be presented to Senate in June 2023. This timing would also enable reflection on emerging messages from the Future Research Assessment Programme consultation (FRAP) in designing the REF output evaluation processes.

7. EDI Annual Report

RECEIVED:

- i. The Annual Diversity & Equality Report (2021-22).

REPORTED:

- ii. The Annual Diversity & Equality Report (2021-22) outlined activities identified under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by providing an overview of: key equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) related data trends, activities and progress made over the last academic year, as well as some key data trends over a four-year period for comparison. The report highlighted a number of challenges to Senate around:
 - Gender median pay gap
 - Disability median pay gap
 - EDI monitoring information
 - Increase in reported figures of harassment and sexual misconduct.
- iii. The team were progressing a number of initiatives, including improvements to maternity / paternity and adoption policies, accessibility improvements on campus, the implementation of an LGBTQ+ friendly name change policy, the successful roll out of the Race Equality Charter staff and student survey and a decrease in the BAME median pay gap of 0.89%. EDI Committee continued its work, and was focused on streamlining EDI focused actions across the organisation.

NOTED:

- iv. Senate welcomed the report and its findings and raised the following comments:

Data – members asked whether reported increases in certain areas could be attributed to actual increases or simply an increase in people disclosing protected characteristics. The EDI team confirmed that in order to achieve the best data possible, encouraging disclosure was key, and they continued to focus on this as a means of improving the quality of data in their reports.

Divergence of Disability – members were informed that whilst disability wasn't broken down into sub groups within the report (i.e. neurodivergence vs other groups), this information was available on the EDI webpages.

Intersectionality – Senate members emphasised the importance of considering the intersectionality of protected characteristics, and the additional impact this can have on individuals. They were assured that this was a focus for the EDI team, with Athena Swan and REC groups working together to address intersectional issues.

Part Time Staff – it was confirmed that all Full Pay Relevant Employees (FPRE) were included in pay gap calculations, which included part time staff. This was particularly relevant in relation to roles such as disability and career coaches, who were predominantly female.

Diversity as a positive – Senate commented that diversity should be focused on as an asset; a perspective which could improve participation in surveys and help to move diversity into a more positive front foot movement. This work would be underpinned by effective governance including a robust and proactive EDI governance structure and concerted action to improve committee diversification.

BUSINESS FROM FACULTIES

No business received from the Faculties

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

8. Education Committee

RECEIVED:

- i. A report on the meeting of the Education Committee held on 3 March 2023, covering the following items:
 - Annual Update on Degree Apprenticeships
 - 100 Days Survey Outcomes
 - Update on Progress Against NSS Action Plans
 - PGT Student Experience Priorities
 - Interim Graduate Outcomes Survey Update
 - Implementation of Student Success Framework: Update.

9. PGR Committee

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- i. A report on the meeting of the PGR Committee held on 1 March 2023. Senate was asked to approve the following:
 - PGR Leadership and Governance Update
 - Review Report for the Dual PhD between Chulalongkorn University and the University of Liverpool

And to note the following:

- School of Electrical Engineering, Electronics and Computer Science Internal Periodic Review Report and Action Plan
- Institute of Life Course & Medical Science PGR Internal Periodic Review Report
- Actions Taken by the Chair Since the Previous Meeting of PGR Committee (16 January 2023).

10. Collaborative Provision Committee

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- i. A report on the meeting of the Collaborative Provision Committee held on 2 February 2023 covering the following items:
 - XJTLU

- Annual Monitoring Reports
- Global Opportunities
- Updated Grade Conversions
- Advanced Tertiary College – Site Visit Report
- Institutional Review / Programme Review of LJMU.

OTHER ITEMS

11. Annual Complaints Monitoring Report

RECEIVED:

- i. The annual summary report on complaints considered under Stages 1 and 2 of the Student Complaints Policy and Procedure.

REPORTED:

- ii. The Student Complaints Policy and Procedure includes a requirement for an annual summary report on complaints considered under Stages 1 and 2 of the Procedure to be made to Senate and Council, to any other appropriate committee and to the Liverpool Guild of Students. The purpose of this report was to provide assurance and evidence that the University's procedures are correctly followed in considering student cases and that those procedures and the decisions taken were adjudged to be fair and reasonable.
- iii. In 2021/22 a total of 54 stage one complaints were received, of which 25 (46%) were upheld in full or in part. This was a significant increase on 2020/21 where 28 stage one complaints were received.

AGREED:

- iv. The length of time to consider complaints varied widely, and whilst this was always clearly communicated to students, it should be included in future reports.
- v. Support for staff working in this area was key, with complaints becoming increasingly complex. Additional training, post panel support and the development of a community of practice would be beneficial.

12. Annual Compliance Report

RECEIVED:

- i. The annual anonymised summary of the cases brought before the Assessment Appeals Committee, the Research Degree Appeals Board, the Board of Discipline and the Board of Appeal, the Fitness to Practise Panel and the Senate Committee on the Progress of Students.

REPORTED:

- ii. There had been a 71% increase in Section One Appeals compared to the previous year but this was comparable to the years prior to the pandemic and demonstrated a return to pre covid levels which was expected to continue. The number of Section One Appeals that had been upheld had also increased but this was to be expected with the increase in numbers.

13. Date of Next Meeting

NOTED:

- i. The next meeting of Senate would be held at 2pm on Wednesday 28 June 2023.