

**Senate****MEETING HELD: Wednesday 19 March 2025, 2:00 PM — 4:00 PM GMT****The Brett Building, Oxford Street****Present:**

Professor T Jones (Vice-Chancellor, Chair), Professor T Ali, Dr H Arnolds, Dr C Belfrage, Professor K Bennett, Dr M Berenbrink, Professor F Beveridge, Professor R Black, Professor J Bridgeman, Professor G Brown, P Brown, Professor P Buse, Dr V Chauvet, Professor R Chiverrell, Professor P Clegg, Professor K Coleman, Professor D Colquitt, Professor L Colton, Dr L Corner, Professor A Cowan, Professor L Crolley (from 2.55pm), Professor J Curran, Professor M D'Onofrio, Professor G Endfield, L Everest, Professor C Evers, Professor A Fell, Dr K Furman, Professor B Gibson, Professor L Harkness-Brennan, Dr N Helassa, Professor A Hollander, Professor P Hunter-Jones, Professor B Konev, Dr H Little, Professor W Liu, Professor G Lynall, Professor P Lunn, Professor D Mair, Dr J Major, Professor C Mallanaphy, Professor T Marson, Dr S Maruna, Professor J McInerney, Professor V Mitsilegas, Dr S Parameswaran, Professor E Patterson, Professor I Prior, Dr M Rose, Dr R Rylance-Graham, Professor H Scott, Professor C Semple, Professor J Slupsky, Professor J Sweeney, Professor T Teubner, Professor M Towsey, Professor W van der Hoek, Professor F Vis, Professor T Walley, Professor F Watkins, Professor M White, Dr B Wilm, Dr J Woolf.

Student Representatives: R Bradbury, O Crosby, N Elbana, O Ibrahim, J Inturi, H Thompson, Y Wells.

**Apologies:**

Professor J Balogun, Professor I Buchan, Professor S Das, Professor P Drake, Professor M Gairing, Professor M García- Fiñana, Professor D Jeater, Professor L Kenny, Professor D Lane, Professor P McCormick, Professor M Senior, Professor S Sheard, Professor R Stokes, Professor J Surroca, Dr V Vass and Professor S Voelkel.

**In attendance:**

K Ryan (University Secretary and General Counsel), M Edge (Committee Secretary), M Keeley-Adamson (Governance Officer), E Leonard (Head of Governance and Deputy Secretary).

**1. Committee and Membership Matters****1.1 Welcome**

Dr Rebecca Rylance-Graham, Dean of the School of Allied Health Professions and Nursing, was welcomed to their first meeting of Senate.

**1.2 Disclosures of Interest****NOTED:**

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

## 2. Minutes

### 2.1 Minutes of the Meeting Held 29 January 2025

#### **RECEIVED and AGREED:**

- a. The minutes of the previous meeting should be approved subject to the following:
  - i. Addition – The spirit of SEN6 of the Senate Standing Orders, *"Senate operates on the principle of transparency, unless there is good reason to impose confidentiality"*, should be followed, and that it would be of value from time to time for Senate members to share non-confidential papers with specific colleagues for feedback, which was not possible with current Convene settings (minute 2.2.1 c).
  - ii. Clarification – The DVC had recently met with representatives of UCU (minute 2.2.4 a).
  - iii. Addition – The DVC was in ongoing discussions with UCU representatives regarding the institutional approach to evaluation of research performance (minute 2.2.4 b).

### 2.2 Matters Arising

#### 2.2.1 Progress Update on Additional Considerations Policy Work (minute 6 refers)

##### **REPORTED:**

- a. Following feedback provided at Senate, work had continued on the development of a unified policy to streamline and replace the current policies and processes on extenuating circumstances, exemption from late penalties, and extensions for disabled students.
- b. A key focus of the work would be to simplify processes and it was expected that a final policy would be presented to Senate in June 2025, taking account of feedback provided from across the University.

#### 2.2.2 Convene (minute 2.2.1 refers)

##### **REPORTED:**

- a. Following its first year of implementation, the Governance team would undertake a review of Convene over summer 2025 to ensure that it was working as effectively as possible for committee members. Senate members were encouraged to provide any feedback direct to the Governance team.

##### **NOTED:**

- b. A number of Senate members highlighted concerns around some of the wording in the recently circulated guidance document on Committee Member Roles & Responsibilities, for example, the need to more effectively balance confidentiality and transparency in committee documentation.
- c. Whilst the guidance has been developed to support all the institutional committees using Convene, the document would be revisited to take account of comments raised, and members were encouraged to send any feedback direct to the Governance team.
- d. In the meantime, colleagues were reminded that, should they have a specific accessibility request please do approach the Committee Secretary for support.

### 3. Report on Action Taken by the Chair on Behalf of Senate

**RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. A paper summarising the activity taken by the Chair on behalf of Senate. Since the last meeting, Chair's action had been taken on the following matters:
  - i. To approve revisions to the Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy) Programme Ordinance, which had resulted in separating Ordinance 59 into two ordinances:
    - ORDINANCE 59(A): Degree of Doctor of Clinical Psychology (applicable to students who commenced their studies from 2025-26 onwards).
    - ORDINANCE 59(B): Degree of Doctor of Clinical Psychology (applicable to students who commenced their studies prior to 2025-26).
  - ii. To approve the following appointments to the Fitness to Practise Panel Chairs:
    - Professor Vince Bissell, to replace Professor Tom Walley.
    - Professor Bev Ball, an additional member.

**AGREED:**

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

### 4. Vice-Chancellor's Report

**RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. A report from the Vice-Chancellor on University, sector wide and political news, covering:
  - i. University Updates: Voluntary Leavers Scheme (VLS), international collaborations, Liverpool University Press, University of Liverpool Maths School, plus the launch of this year's National Student Survey.
  - ii. Sector & Political Updates: Comprehensive Spending Review, political engagements, MP visits to campus plus sector wide news.

### STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

### 5. Update on India Opportunity

**RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. An oral update on progress to establish a University of Liverpool campus in India. In line with expected timelines, the University was awaiting a decision from the University Grants Commission (UGC) on its recent application. Whilst awaiting a response, the University had continued developing plans and expected that a full business case would be presented to Council in April 2025.
- b. It was the intention to provide a fuller update to Senate at a subsequent meeting.

## 6. Senate Effectiveness Review: Update on Action Plan

### RECEIVED:

- a. A paper detailing the initial work of the Senate Task and Finish (T&F) Group which was established to formally respond to the two strategic recommendations that arose from the Advance HE Senate Effectiveness Review (reduction in Senate composition, and changes to Education and Research & Impact Committee structures). Also appended to the report was an action plan developed in response to the full 14 recommendations that arose out of the Advance HE Senate effectiveness review report.

### REPORTED:

- b. This paper was primarily focussed on responding to recommendation 1: *Review the overall composition of the Senate with incremental reductions in the numbers of APVCs and Level 1 Heads. This process would be kept under review through the recommended programme of review.*
- c. In developing its recommendation, the T&F Group has spent considerable time in reviewing a range of information including: the current constitution of the University's Senate and comparable universities; attendance of Senate meetings; a review of both the Associate Pro Vice Chancellors (APVC) and Heads of Level 1 academic unit roles on Senate.

#### *Consideration of Reduction in APVCs*

- d. Following the consideration of various options, the T&F Group believed that overall, there appeared a logical argument for the six APVCs for Education and Research and Impact to remain on Senate given their unique role in both policy development and implementation, although some members believed that these roles on Senate created duplication. Retaining such roles also aligned with the principal purpose of Senate, which was to promote and maintain quality of education and research. Retaining these six roles (two per Faculty) would also achieve an equitable split of APVCs across each Faculty. In addition:
  - i. It was also felt that the APVC Research Environment and Postgraduate Research was a critical (institutional) role on Senate, and it would be important to retain for oversight of the PGR constituency.
  - ii. This would potentially leave four APVC Directorate roles to be removed from Senate, all from the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences.
  - iii. The Group noted that this would also result in there being other APVCs (Global and Engagement / Interdisciplinary Centre for Sustainability Research / Place & Innovation) who would not be Senate members.

#### *Consideration of Reduction in Level 1 Heads*

- e. Overall, there was less of an appetite from the T&F Group to make significant reductions in the numbers of Level 1 Heads, noting their significant role in the implementation of policies and procedures locally, and also that many of these roles would not be well represented on Senate's sub-committees. However, the Group did recognise that it had been tasked with developing a proposal aligned to the Advance HE recommendation.
- f. The Group agreed to recommend that the overall numbers of Level 1 Heads be reduced by one per Faculty (so from eight per Faculty to seven). This would result in a reduction of three Heads of Level 1 academic units overall.
- g. Given the small reduction, the Group felt that this would not diminish the influence of this important Group, but recognised the need for clear and concise communications from Senate,

and also between colleagues in Faculties, Schools/Institutes and Departments.

#### *Appointment Process of Heads of Level 1 Academic Units*

- h. Whilst the T&F Group recognised that the process for appointing Heads of Level 1 academic units resided with the relevant EPVC in consultation with their Faculty Management Team, it considered the current process to be quite vague, and believed there was an opportunity to further clarify this process to improve transparency.
- i. The paper from the T&F Group proposed the following:
  - i. A slight reduction in the overall membership of Senate of seven members (four APVCs and three Heads of Level 1). If approved, this would result in the membership reducing from 87 down to 80.
  - ii. Any change in membership should be progressed over the summer period (e.g. after the end of academic year 24/25 and before the beginning of the new academic year).
  - iii. The process for appointing Heads of Level 1 academic units should be documented, with a focus on improving transparency.
- j. The T&F Group had also been tasked with developing an implementation plan to respond to the recommendation for the Education and Research and Impact Committees to become sub-committees of the Senate, with a formal reporting line which was more closely aligned to their terms of reference. Whilst good progress has been made on developing an action plan, the Group would present a formal proposal to the June meeting of Senate.

#### **NOTED:**

- k. The T&F Group also discussed whether it should recommend additional reductions in Senate's composition for future years. Overall, it agreed that any future changes to the size of Senate would be considered as part of Senate's approach to continuous improvement, following the implementation of these proposals.
- l. Even if certain groups were removed from the Senate membership, it was likely that they would still be invited to attend meetings to present on key initiatives.
- m. A number of Senate members queried whether it would be preferable to simply appoint Heads of Level 1 academic units for a three-year period, versus annual appointment (with an option to renew for up to three years). It was also queried whether the process for appointing to such roles could include provision for Departmental rotation. It was explained that this process was not just focussed on Departments but was concerned with establishing a rotation of individuals and experience, noting that some Heads of Level 1 units were on fixed term appointments and each Faculty had a different number of Level 1 Heads.
- n. It would be important to not be rigid and formulaic when documenting an appointment process for Heads of Level 1 academic units, noting that the EPVCs would always consider a range of factors when making their nominations.

#### **AGREED:**

- o. Any change in Senate membership should be progressed over the summer period (e.g. after the end of academic year 24/25 and before the beginning of the new academic year).
- p. The process for appointing Heads of Level 1 academic units should be documented, with the wording of this process to be revisited at the next meeting of the T&F Group.

## **AGREED TO RECOMMEND FOR APPROVAL TO COUNCIL:**

- q. The proposal for a slight reduction in the overall membership of Senate of seven members (four APVCs and three Heads of Level 1), resulting in the membership reducing from 87 down to 80, should be approved.

## **BUSINESS FROM FACULTIES – NONE RECEIVED**

No business was received from the Faculties.

## **REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES**

### **7. Collaborative Provision Committee (CPC)**

#### **RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. A report on the meeting of CPC held on 5 February 2025. CPC had approved:
  - i. XJTLU Progression Requirements Proposal (via Chair's action). The updated progression requirements would be reviewed after 12 months of operation.
  - ii. XJTLU 2023/24 Annual Monitoring Visit Report.
  - iii. XJTLU response to the Chief Internal Moderator and Chief External Examiner reports for 2023/24.
  - iv. XJTLU School of Languages Review report, noting CPC's feedback would be communicated to XJTLU.
  - v. Liverpool Online (Kaplan Open Learning) Annual Monitoring Visit progress report.
  - vi. A Liverpool Online microcredentials pilot, centred on offering established introductory modules on a stand-alone basis, in one academic area (Computer Science). A final decision on approval had been delayed for one week to allow for feedback from all CPC members, including those not present at the meeting.
  - vii. The Degree Apprenticeship Teach Out Report for the recently discontinued MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner Degree Apprenticeship.
- b. CPC also noted the decision which had been made to not renew the partnership with the London School of Architecture. A report from the closure meeting would be submitted to the meeting of CPC on 10 April.

### **8. Education Committee**

#### **RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. A report on the meeting of the Education Committee held on 6 March 2025, covering:
  - i. NSS Action Plans
  - ii. 100 Days Survey data
  - iii. Degree Apprenticeships
  - iv. The development of the University's Additional Considerations Policy
  - v. Approval of the revised Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership of the Student Success Board.
  - vi. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Reports (referred to under items 12.1 & 12.2 below).
- b. A query was raised on timescales for the Curriculum Project, specifically the Programme

Optimisation Project. It was anticipated that a progress update would be presented to the June 2025 meeting of Senate.

- c. A request was made, and agreed, for Senate members to be able to access minutes of the strategic sub committees via Convene.

## 9. Postgraduate Research (PGR) Committee

### RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A report on the meeting of the PGR Committee held on 7 March 2025, covering:
  - i. Ordinance 59(A): Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy): amended ordinance for (see Chairs Action Report above, agenda item 3)
  - ii. Approval of a minor amendment to section 8.13 of the PGR Admissions Policy, to note that ATAS requirements were project specific
  - iii. Approval of a minor amendment to page 2 of the PGR Progress Policy Postgraduate Research Code of Practice, (APPENDIX 3 of the Postgraduate Research Code of Practice)
  - iv. Ordinance 62 Higher Doctorates: approval of updates to enable electronic submission for Higher Doctorates
  - v. PGR Population Trends
  - vi. PGR Initiative updates
  - vii. XJTLU co-supervision updates
  - viii. UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) updates
  - ix. Iraqi Higher Commission Opportunity
  - x. Update from The Academy.

## 10. Research and Impact Committee (RIC)

### RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A report on the meeting of the RIC held on 5 March 2025, covering:
  - i. Policy for the Responsible Use of Metrics in Research Assessment – submitted to Senate for approval
  - ii. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Reports (referred to under items 12.1 & 12.2 below).
  - iii. Knowledge Exchange at Liverpool: Enterprise
  - iv. American Chemical Society (ACS) Negotiations Update.
- b. A number of changes had been made to the Responsible Use of Metrics in Research Assessment Policy, including:
  - i. Minor updates to the introduction section, reflecting the University's ambition to achieve a position in the top-100 ranked universities worldwide, and an update to the name of the relevant Code of Practice, which was now '*the Code of Practice for the Evaluation and Selection of Research Outputs for REF 2029*'.
  - ii. Minor updates to language and addressing grammatical consistencies, plus minor updates to individual staff responsibilities to include reference to specific training modules with responsible metrics principles embedded for staff involved in recruitment and promotion activities.
- c. RIC had recommended the Policy for approval, subject to a further addition as follows:
  - In the 'Individual Staff Responsibilities' section, the Policy referenced '*using metrics in a responsible way, having undertaken all relevant training*'. This should include reference to the specific training required, including training offered by the Library, but also where

metrics training has been embedded into mandatory LearnWell training modules for research related staff.

- d. At Senate, a query was raised on the consultation section of the Policy cover, which stated that *'All research active staff and academics had the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft policy.'* It was explained that this sentence was referring to the extensive consultation process that had been undertaken when the Policy was last approved in 2021. It was therefore agreed that the consultation section on the policy template should be clarified before the updated Policy was published.

**AGREED:**

- e. The Policy for the Responsible Use of Metrics in Research Assessment should be approved, subject to amending the consultation section of the policy template.

## OTHER ITEMS

### 11. Proposal for a Restructure within the Faculty of Science and Engineering

**RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. A paper which sought approval for the restructuring of the School of Electrical Engineering & Electronics, and Computer Science (EEECS), and the School of Engineering (SoE) as follows:
  - i. The Department of EEE to move into the School of Engineering, and
  - ii. The Department of CS to become a School of Computer Science and Informatics.
- b. It was proposed that the changes take effect from 1 August 2025, noting that year 2025/26 would be a transition year.
- c. The purpose of the restructuring was to achieve on the one hand a configuration of subject areas in Engineering that would lead to stronger interactions and cooperation between engineering disciplines and align more strongly with stakeholders' expectations, including prospective students, and on the other hand to establish a School of Computer Science (CS) and Informatics which recognised and built upon the growth of computer science as a research area and as a subject of choice for students, in particular oversees PGT students.
- d. A consultation process had established that a clear majority of academic staff in both the School of Engineering and the School of EEECS supported this change. Consultation with Professional Services (PS) staff was ongoing, with each member of PS staff retaining their role and grade and transitioning to support activities in at least one of the Schools.

**AGREED:**

- e. The proposal as detailed above should be approved.



## 12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Updates

### 12.1 Diversity & Equality (Public Sector Equality Duty) Report 2023/24

#### **RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. The annual Diversity & Equality (Public Sector Equality Duty) 2023/24. This report was a statutory requirement and outlined the significant progress made in advancing Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) across the University during academic year 2023/24, with a particular focus on; Gender, Race, Disability and LGBTQIA+ equality, as well as, activity relating to; bullying and harassment, Pay Gaps, recruitment, promotion and development, including the implementation of Positive Action measures.

### 12.2 Equality Objectives Progress Report (2023/24)

#### **RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. The Equality Objectives Progress Report (2023/24). The purpose of the annual Equality Objectives Progress Report was to provide an in-depth overview of activity taken during the previous academic year (2023/24), in response to core Equality Objectives and related KPIs, as outlined in the University's Equality Objectives Action Plan (2022 – 2028). The report also included planned activity for academic year 2024/25.

## 13. Liverpool Guild of Students (Guild) Articles of Association and Code of Practice

#### **RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. Copies of the Guild's Articles of Association and Code of Practice, with all proposed updates highlighted with track changes.
- b. The University's Ordinances stated that the Articles of Association and Code of Practice relating to the Guild of Students are to be reviewed every five years by the Trustees of the Guild and approved by Council on the recommendation of the Senate. The main changes proposed to the documents were as follows:
  - i. Articles of Association – In 2016 the Guild had adopted changes (whilst maintaining bespoke elements to the clauses) from an updated set of National Union of Students (NUS) Model Articles. The NUS had recently developed a new set of Model Articles for Students Unions in conjunction with solicitors, which at the time of the Guild's review (February 2025) were currently awaiting Charity Commission approval on regulated elements. After further discussion, it had been decided that the Guild's Articles of Association were fit for purpose and the Guild would adopt some non-regulated recommendations from the new NUS Model Articles along with wording changes to reflect current practice.
  - ii. Code of Practice – There had been minor wording changes including the dates, job titles, departments and titles of documents. There was also one comment on the document which suggested that the form to opt-out of Guild membership could be an online form.

#### **AGREED TO RECOMMEND FOR APPROVAL TO COUNCIL:**

- c. The proposed changes to both the Guild's Articles of Association and Code of Practice should be approved.

## 14. Draft Senate Forward Plan

### **RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. The Senate forward plan of business for the 2024/25 academic year.

## 15. Any Other Business

### 15.1 Hybrid Working

#### **NOTED:**

- a. Concerns were raised by a number of Senate members on the University's 'Refresh of Hybrid Working paper' for Professional Services (PS) Staff, particularly around wording related to the definition of a 'workspace'. Assurance was provided that the University had sufficient staff workspaces on campus to accommodate the expected increase in staff presence. A request was made that the business case for the shift to 60% on-campus requirement for PS staff be shared with Senate. It was explained that there is no business case, rather the proposal was made on the basis of best practice in the sector.
- b. Assurance was provided that flexible working arrangements would continue to be considered and it was recognised that some colleagues would have personal circumstances, such as caring responsibilities or disabilities, which may make it challenging for them to move to the proposed new approach within the suggested timeframes, or in some cases at all. PS colleagues who were concerned, or who had specific circumstances which may warrant flexibility, should speak with their line manager at the earliest opportunity, so that such circumstances could be fully understood and taken account of.
- c. A request was made for Senate to consider the University's approach to Hybrid Working for PS staff in more detail. It was explained that this was not a Senate Policy, and the University would continue to communicate guidance to staff as appropriate.

### 15.2 University Travel & Expenses Policy

#### **NOTED:**

- a. Concerns were raised by a number of Senate members on the University's recently revised Travel & Expenses Policy. Feedback at Senate highlighted that while the Policy's commitment to sustainability was widely welcomed, its recent implementation had caused unintended challenges which were posing significant practical difficulties for staff.
- b. Concerns were also raised around whether EDI impact had been fully considered as part of the Policy review, including a request for the Equality Impact Assessment to be revisited.

#### **AGREED:**

- c. All feedback should be directed to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, who would collate and send to the policy owners for consideration.
- d. Given the concerns raised an update would be provided to a future meeting of Senate. However, given both the Policy and the Equality Impact Assessment were not within the remit of Senate, neither would be presented to Senate for formal approval.

## **16. Date of Next Meeting**

- a. The next meeting was scheduled for 2pm on Wednesday 25 June 2025.