

Senate

MEETING HELD: Wednesday 19 November 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, Professor S Ashenden, Professor J Balogun, Dr C Belfrage, Dr M Berenbrink, Professor G Brown, Professor P Buse, Dr V Chauvet, Professor R Chiverrell, Professor D Colquitt, Professor L Colton, Dr L Corner, Professor J Curran, Professor S Das, Professor L Dawson, Professor M D'Onofrio, Professor P Drake, Professor G Endfield, Professor C Eyers, Professor P Eyers, Professor A Fell, Professor C Florakis, Dr A Fox, Professor S Fuggle, Professor B Gibson, Professor L Harkness, Dr N Helassa, Professor A Hollander, Professor D Jeater, Professor B Konev, Professor D Lane, Professor P Lunn, Dr J Major, Professor C Mallanaphy, Professor J McInerney, Professor V Mitsilegas, Dr L O'Brien, Dr Y Oezcelik, Dr S Parameswaran, Professor E Patterson, Professor A Payne, Dr B Porritt, Dr K Ross, Professor G Sedghi, Professor M Senior, Professor J Slupsky, Professor R Stokes, Professor F Vis, Professor F Watkins, Professor M White, and Dr J Woolf.
Student Representatives: O Crosby, M Gad, and C Sloan.

Apologies:

Professor R Black, Professor J Bridgeman, P Brown, Professor K Coleman, Professor C Constaninescu, Professor L Crolley, L Everest, Professor M Gairing, Professor P Hunter-Jones, O Ibrahim, J Inturi, W Jones, Professor L Kenny, Professor S Sheard, H Thompson, Professor H Wallace, Dr R Rylance-Graham, and Dr S Zhu.

In attendance:

K Ryan (University Secretary and General Counsel), M Edge (Committee Secretary), J Boileau, J King and A Wells.

Welcome and Apologies

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed new members to their first meeting of Senate.

1. Committee and Membership Matters**1.1. Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership 2025/26****RECEIVED and NOTED:**

- a. Senate's Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for 2025/26, with updates highlighted with track changes. The proposed updates were required to reflect changes already agreed as part of the implementation of the Advance HE Senate effectiveness review (reduction in membership and changes to the sub-committee reporting structure).

AGREED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

- b. The updates to Senate's Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership should be approved.

1.2. Senate Standing Orders 2025

RECEIVED and AGREED:

- a. The Senate Standing Orders for academic year 2025/26.

NOTED:

- b. A query was raised on items marked as confidential on today's agenda and whether this was aligned to the Senate standing orders, which stated that Senate operates on the principle of transparency, unless there is good reason to impose confidentiality.
- c. The University Secretary would review the highlighted documents. However it was reiterated that when items were marked as confidential this applied to the whole paper. It was also reiterated that if an item was marked as confidential it should not be shared beyond Senate.

1.3. Roles and Responsibilities in Relation to Diversity and Equality 2025/26

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A hyperlink to access a guidance document for report authors on how to demonstrate consideration of EDI matters when populating report templates.

1.4. Sustainability Guidance for Committee Report Templates

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A hyperlink to access a guidance document for report authors on how to demonstrate consideration of environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and social equity in committee report templates.

1.5. University Policy on Disclosure of Interest

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A hyperlink to access the University's Policy and supporting Procedure for Disclosing and Managing Conflicts of Interest, circulated annually to committees and boards.

1.6. University Scheme of Delegation

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A hyperlink to access the University's Scheme of Delegation.

1.7. Disclosures of Interest

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 25 June 2025

RECEIVED and AGREED:

- a. The minutes of the previous meeting should be approved as an accurate record.

2.2. Matters Arising on the Minutes

2.2.1 Curriculum Project Update (minute 7 refers)

REPORTED:

- a. It was anticipated that Senate would receive an update on the Curriculum Project at its June 2026 meeting.
- b. A University working group was currently developing principles around the ethical integration of AI in education. One of these strands would focus on developing tools, resources and policies for staff and students.

The Curriculum Project is picked up in further detail under agenda 8 below.

2.2.2 Senate Effectiveness Review (minute 9 refers)

REPORTED:

- a. Due to running out of time at the last meeting, the proposals around establishing Education Committee and Research and Impact Committee as sub-committees of Senate had been supported by Senate via email in July 2025, and in turn approved by Council.

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 minor revisions to the University Fee Payment Policy.
 - ii. To approve revisions to the Code of Practice on Assessment, Appendix L.
 - iii. To appoint Professor Andy McKeown, Dean of Medicine, to the Fitness to Practise Panel Chairs (in place of Professor Hazel Scott).
 - iv. To recommend approval to Council a number of minor updates to various policies to align with the new Office for Students (OfS) Freedom of Speech requirements (Conduct and Discipline; Student Complaints; Fitness to Practise Procedures; and Freedom of Speech).
 - v. To recommend approval, on behalf of the Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees and the University Senate, to award Professor Youmin Xi (XJTLU) with an Honorary Fellowship.

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:
University Updates: League Table Rankings; National Student Survey; Knowledge Exchange Framework; New College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Sanctuary Status; Vice-Chancellor appointment as new Chair of N8 Research Partnership; British Science Festival; Literary Festival; European Capital of Innovation 2026; Additional Considerations Policy.
Sector & Political Updates: UK Government Trade Mission to India; Political Party Conferences; Liverpool City Region Local Growth Plan; MP visit to Campus.
- b. In September 2025 it was announced that there would be a short pause in the criteria setting and publication of final guidance for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029.
- c. It was believed that REF would announce any changes to the exercise by December 2025. Although the overall REF timetable would not be delayed, the pause would affect certain milestones, including a delay to the publication of guidance modules and the REF 2029 Code of Practice approval process.
- d. In the meantime, the University was continuing with its preparations for REF, which included holding meetings with each Unit of Assessment. A strong performance in REF was key to supporting the University's strategic ambitions.

5. Senate Briefing on Government's Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A briefing paper prepared for Senate summarising key points arising from the recent White Paper. Key highlights included:
 - i. The Government would increase undergraduate tuition fee caps in line with forecast inflation for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years.
 - ii. Maintenance grants would be reintroduced for students on priority courses, funded through the new International Student Levy.
 - iii. There was a strong focus on ensuring quality of provision with several measures proposed that reflected the diversity of the sector.
 - iv. Research focus would include a greater specialisation and stronger alignment with government priorities, for example the Industrial Strategy.
- b. Whilst the University was now in a better financial position than last year, through the effective implementation of a range of cost efficiency measures, it would be important to continue to respond appropriately to the significant financial challenges and uncertainties it still faced, especially around international student recruitment and the proposed introduction of the levy on international student fees. The University would continue to communicate regularly to both staff and students on the financial challenges being faced by the sector. A key priority for the University would be to continue to find ways to diversify its income streams, for example through opportunities in transnational education (TNE).

STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

6. Institutional Survey Results 2025: National Student Survey (NSS) Overview

RECEIVED:

- a. A presentation providing an overview of the University's performance in the 2025 NSS.

REPORTED:

- b. The University had experienced strong improvements across all areas of the 2025 NSS, outperforming both the Russell Group and the wider higher education sector across the survey as a whole.
- c. The University was ranked 2nd in Russell Group based on average score across core questions (ranked 3rd in 2024). The results showed significant improvements across a broad range of areas. Assessment and feedback continued to be an area of challenge for the University, and many of its peers.
- d. NSS action plans were in place for all areas and would continue to be monitored.

NOTED:

- e. Overall, Senate recognised that this was a good set of results which reflected the hard work of staff from across the University. Strong performance in the NSS was also a key influencer in University league table performance.

7. Annual Quality Report 2024-25

RECEIVED:

- a. A copy of the Annual Quality Report, which provided an overview of compliance in relation to OfS 'quality' conditions B1-B6.

REPORTED:

- b. The primary purpose of this report was to provide the necessary assurance to Council that the University was compliant with the requirements of the OfS as they relate to the Quality of Education. The report was presented in the following sections:
 - Key measures of the Quality of Education;
 - A summary of key quality actions undertaken;
 - A summary of key education actions being taken forward;
 - Reportable events to OfS;
 - Collaborative partnerships.
- c. The report format had been significantly revised, resulting in a shorter document that aligned with the quality conditions and included reportable events. Education Committee had recently endorsed the revised format but requested that, since the narrative descriptions had been removed, links to the detailed processes be added for reference.

NOTED:

d. At Senate, a request was made for members to receive the new processes around programme approvals, which had been overseen by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee. It was agreed that, whilst Senate's role should continue to be focussed on setting the high-level principles and framework (rather than detailed operational process), it would be helpful to circulate the academic approvals process principles to Senate via email, for information.

AGREED:

e. The Annual Quality Report should be endorsed.

BUSINESS FROM FACULTIES

No business was received from the Faculties.

REPORTS FROM STRATEGIC COMMITTEES

8. Education Committee

RECEIVED and NOTED:

a. A report on the meeting of the Education Committee held on 5 November 2025, covering:

- i. Revised Terms of Reference (ToR) for 2025/26
- ii. Amendments to Ordinances/Codes of Practice
- iii. Annual Quality Report
- iv. Education Priorities for 2025/26
- v. Curriculum 2027 (C2027) Project
- vi. Liverpool 2031 Education KPIs
- vii. National Student Survey (NSS)
- viii. Graduate Outcomes (GO) Survey
- ix. Liverpool Launchpad
- x. Welcome Week
- xi. Consumer Protection Law Compliance Working Group (CPLCWG) Annual Report
- xii. Student Success Board (SSB) Report
- xiii. New sub-committee reporting – Following a recommendation from the Advance HE Senate Effectiveness Review, a range of academic quality related committees now reported direct to Education Committee. At its November meeting, Education Committee received reports from:
 - Postgraduate Research (PGR) Committee
 - Collaborative Provision Committee
 - Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

b. As part of Senate's discussion on the Curriculum Project, the following was noted:

- i. An update was sought on the progress in developing the Liverpool Advantage modules and how these would fit into timetabling. It was hoped that a list of current modules would be ready to share shortly. Depending on the programme, it was possible that some Advantage Modules may be embedded into the curriculum, whilst others could be taken as extra curricula activity.
- ii. A number of the new modules to be developed would include an AI focus.
- iii. A number of queries were also raised at Senate around the programme assessment and curriculum structures. In line with what was agreed at the June 2025 meeting of Senate, a

formal process would be established to enable academic teams to request exemptions from specific requirements where they could clearly demonstrate that implementation was not feasible in their context.

- iv. Programmes must be reviewed and approved in advance of undergraduate open days in June 2026, to ensure prospective students received accurate and up-to-date information about potential programmes of study.
- c. It was recognised that it was not the role of Senate to review each individual piece of guidance and resource related to the Curriculum Project, however Senate members were encouraged to feedback to the Curriculum 2027 project team if they believed that there were issues with any guidance material. Senate would receive an update on progress on the Curriculum Project at its June 2026 meeting.

AGREED:

- d. Education Committee's revised ToR, Constitution and Membership, which had been amended to reflect the updated committee structure and relevant reporting lines, should be approved.

9. Research & Impact Committee (RIC)

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A report on the meeting of RIC held on 6 November 2025, covering:
 - i. RIC's revised Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for 2025/26
 - ii. Updated Research Publications and Copyright Policy
 - iii. Frontier Updates
 - iv. The 'Big Five' Publisher Negotiations update
 - v. Research Performance Q4
 - vi. Knowledge Exchange Framework
 - vii. Annual Reports from Research Integrity and Governance Committee and the Committee on Research Ethics.
- b. Following discussions with the Royal Society during an audit, it was recommended that the University's Research Publications and Copyright Policy should be updated to include a statement on the proper acknowledgement of research funders in research publications be added to the existing Research Publications and Copyright Policy.
- c. Following a recommendation from the Advance HE Senate Effectiveness Review, both the Research Integrity and Governance Committee (RIGC), and the Committee on Research Ethics now reported direct to the Research & Impact Committee. RIC received annual reports from both Committees.
 - i. The Research Integrity and Governance Committee Annual Report 2024/25 described the work of the Research Integrity and Governance Committee in upholding and developing the robustness of the University's research integrity framework during the 2024 – 2025 academic year
 - ii. The Committee on Research Ethics Annual Report described the work of the Committee on Research Ethics in implementing the University's research ethics framework during the 2024 – 2025 academic year.

AGREED:

- d. Research & Impact Committee's revised ToR, Constitution and Membership, which had been

amended to reflect the updated committee structure and relevant reporting lines, should be approved.

e. The updated Research Publications and Copyright Policy should be approved.

10. Outcome of the Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees Meeting 2025

RECEIVED and NOTED:

a. A paper summarising the recommendations made by the Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees of individuals to be invited to accept honorary degrees to be conferred at degree ceremonies in 2026.

OTHER ITEMS

11. Senate Effectiveness Review: Update on Action Plan

RECEIVED and NOTED:

a. A paper providing a brief update on progress in implementing the recommendations that arose from the Advance HE Senate Effectiveness Review.

b. Most of the actions had already been progressed as part of the work of the Senate Task and Finish Group earlier in the year.

12. OfS Annual Compliance Report

RECEIVED and NOTED:

a. The self-assessment annual report, providing assurance on how the University was continuing to comply with the ongoing conditions of the OfS Regulatory Framework and highlighting areas of potential risk or where further work was progressing.

b. The report summarised key highlights and issues with regard to complying with each of the ongoing conditions of registration. Condition E3 of the OfS Regulatory Framework placed accountability for ensuring the University's compliance with all conditions of registration, and with the OfS accounts direction, directly on its governing body, which for the University was Council.

c. This year's assessment now included 26 OfS ongoing conditions of registration, plus an assessment of Freedom of Speech, taking it to 27 assessments overall. Overall, the majority (22/27) of conditions have been assessed as green, with those conditions highlighted as amber (4/27) having plans in place to make further enhancements as necessary (with 1/27 n/a). An assessment of 'red' would suggest a serious gap in policy/process with no clear plan to address this. No conditions had been assessed as red.

d. At Senate, the importance of ensuring that the University clearly communicated with both applicants and students around the Curriculum Project, and potential risks of AI in marking and assessment were discussed.

e. In answer to a question about consumer law and what students on programmes have been told about the Curriculum Project 2027, it was confirmed that C2027 was expected to be implemented in a phased way, and students currently in place in years 1 and 2 would continue to study on the basis of their existing programmes.

13. Admissions Appeals and Complaints for Entry 2025

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. The Annual Admissions and Complaints report which summarised the formal appeals and complaints that have been received.
- b. As at the date of the report there had been a total of 12 formal appeals and 4 formal complaints from 12 individuals for 2025 entry. The appeals and complaints covered undergraduate, postgraduate taught, online postgraduate and postgraduate research programmes. This was similar to what was seen in 2024 entry, where there were 13 appeals and 2 complaints.

14. Annual Complaints Monitoring Report 2024-25

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. The annual Complaints Monitoring Report for 2024/25.
- b. Total complaints received at the formal stage were sixty-four, representing a decrease of 1.5% compared to the previous year. Twenty-one complaints were escalated to the review stage representing a decrease of 19%. There were thirty-one referrals to the OIA with one settled, one justified, fifteen not justified, six not eligible and eight ongoing.
- c. The University's postgraduate community was overrepresented this year with a 75% increase in formal complaints and accounting for just over half of all formal complaints received. They were also overrepresented at the review stage with for 66% of all requests for reviews coming from postgraduates. A full review would be conducted of the reasons for complaints.
- d. The Student Conduct, Complaints and Compliance would also look to introduce a quarterly update for School and Faculties to share learning from complaints received either via the internal complaint's procedure or OIA findings. This would enable the University to respond in real time to emerging issues and themes.

15. Annual Compliance Monitoring Report 2024-25

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A report which provided an annual anonymised summary of Assessment Appeals and cases brought before the Research Degree Appeals Board, the Board of Discipline, the Board of Appeal, University Disciplinary Panel, the Fitness to Practise Panel and the Senate Committee on the Progress of Students.
- b. Due to the changes in the assessment Appeals Procedure in March 2025, it was not possible to do a direct comparison year on year as the processes were completely different. From the three hundred and seventy-one assessment appeals received, two hundred and eighteen were eligible for consideration and of this number, one hundred and forty-eight (68%) were not upheld. This provided a level of reassurance that the University was making reasonable decisions and following procedure correctly the majority of the time.
- c. The report noted that there was a growing complexity to the exam misconduct cases, particularly with the increasing prevalence of Generative Artificial Intelligence tools and the growing range of electronic devices such as those worn by students. A request for detailed figures relating to the impact of generative AI in other kinds of assessment, too, was made, and it was agreed that this would be helpful information for Senate to have.

16. Updated University Spinout Guidelines

RECEIVED:

- a. A copy of the University's Spinout Guidelines, which had been updated following the issue of revised TenU recommendations around software spinout companies.

REPORTED:

- b. As a signatory to the USIT guidelines, the University was committed to ensuring its operations and strategic initiatives would reflect the standards and expectations set by USIT.
- c. The updated University guidelines suggested several adjustments and enhancements that would bring the University in line with sector leaders in areas of founding shareholding, licensing terms and approval processes to university spinout companies. The USIT guidelines proposed that universities take a lower founding equity stake, 20% and less for Deeptech, IP rich spinouts and 5-10% for IP light/software spinouts. The intention was to streamline the spinout process and remove any unnecessary delays, in line with the Irene Tracey Review.

AGREED:

- d. Senate agreed to recommend approval of the updated Spinout Guidelines, subject to reviewing a query raised within the section of Directorships, specifically the wording, *"The University takes no responsibility for the consequences of its staff becoming directors of a spin-out company"*, and whether this could potentially cause a reputational risk.
- e. Whilst it was explained that this was not a new addition to the document, it was agreed that advice would be sought from the University's Legal Department on this point. If a further update was required, this could be progressed via Chair's action.

17. Draft Senate Forward Plan

RECEIVED and NOTED:

- a. A copy of the Committee's draft forward plan for academic year 2025/26.

18. Any Other Business

NOTED:

- a. A request from a number of Senate members to receive an update on the Professional Services Review project, given the potential impacts on both teaching and research activity.
- b. An update would be provided at the next meeting of Senate.

19. Meetings Schedule 2025/26

NOTED:

a. The meetings schedule for the remainder of the academic year was as follows:

- Wednesday 28 January 2026
- Wednesday 29 April 2026 (change of date)
- Wednesday 24 June 2026.

University Committee Structure

RECEIVED and NOTED:

A hyperlink to access the University's updated committee structure diagram.