

COUNCIL
**Loughborough
University**

Minutes of the meeting of 13 October 2022

COUN22-M3

Attendance

Christine Hodgson

Kerri Akiwowo
Penny Briscoe
Marcus Collins
Malcolm Cook
Graham Corfield
Andrea Davis

Lisanne Gibson (ab)
Harry Hughes
Nick Jennings
Chris Linton
Jennifer Maxwell-Harris (ab)
Emma Nadin
Peter Saraga (ab)

Surinder Sharma
John Sinnott
Danny Smith
Luke Stott
Paul Taylor (ab)
Mike Wedderburn

In attendance: Alex Owen; Richard Taylor; Rachel Thomson; Charlotte Croffie; Dan Parsons
Luke Vulpiani

Apologies received from: Lisanne Gibson, Jennifer Maxwell-Harris, Peter Saraga, Paul Taylor

22/53 Minutes & Matters Arising

53.1 Minutes

COUN22-M2

Council **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2022.

53.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

SECTION A – Items for Discussion

22/54 Chair's Introduction - Duties and Responsibilities of Members and Good Governance Declarations

54.1 Duties and Responsibilities of Members of Council and Statement of Responsibilities of Council

COUN22-P78

Council **NOTED** the duties and responsibilities of Council members and the Statement of Responsibilities of Council.

54.2 Good Governance Declarations

The Chair **CONFIRMED** arrangements for good governance declarations. Council members are required to sign two good governance declarations (Register of Interests and the Fit and Proper Persons Declaration). These should be completed and returned to the University as soon as possible, and no later than 31 October 2022.

22/55 Chair's Report

Council **RECEIVED** a verbal report from the Chair.

The Chair noted that university rankings are very important, Loughborough has worked hard to establish a top 10 ranking historically and should seek to guard it. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience would speak in more detail about rankings under the National Student Survey item later on the agenda.

22/56 Student Recruitment

COUN22-P79

Council **NOTED** the position regarding undergraduate and postgraduate recruitment to the University for October 2022 entry.

Overall, there is a positive picture for undergraduate recruitment for 2022/23 after two previous years of challenges associated with the grading of A-level results owing to the pandemic. Undergraduate home and international student recruitment are both slightly above target. The grade tariff of new undergraduate students is strong.

Postgraduate taught recruitment has remained challenging and below the original target, although much stronger than the level feared in the Spring. Additional marketing in late spring/early summer 2022 resulted in a recovery, especially on the East Midlands campus, which is now close to pre-pandemic levels. The Higher Education sector is down as a whole; likely a consequence of post-pandemic fatigue among undergraduates not wanting to do a postgraduate qualification and the job market being quite buoyant. There has been a significant change in the composition of international postgraduate taught students with a big decline in Chinese students: prior to the pandemic 60% of postgraduate taught students were Chinese, in 2021/22 40% were from India and only 30% from China. London is offering a January start in 2023.

It was noted that a balance of international students helps mitigate risk and the success of the Indian market is partly reliant on government policy.

The financial result of the recruitment cycle is likely to be a £5 million upside against targets.

22/57 National Student Survey

COUN22-P80

Council **RECEIVED** the outcomes of the 2022 National Student Survey.

In the 2022 survey, Loughborough was 4th highest University in England, and 7th in the UK for overall student satisfaction.

In specific aspects of the student experience, particularly assessment & feedback and teaching quality there is room for improvement and actions are being implemented particularly focussed on improving the timeliness and quality of feedback.

COVID and industrial action may have affected Loughborough's results in comparison to other institutions which did not experience industrial action and/or have less of a campus focussed experience. The loss of community spirit arising from the COVID pandemic is being addressed by the student engagement plan, which has lots of actions to tackle this. The return to in-person exams may also have been a factor, with some final year students having to do in-person exams for the first time and finding this an additional pressure. Some other universities remained on-line exam only. The Students' Union National Student Survey questions also dropped as well.

As the next NSS is in February 2023, actions are already being implemented to address the challenges. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience is working with each School's leadership team and the Students' Union with a particular focus assessment and feedback.

The Office for Students has consulted on significant changes to the National Student Survey and Loughborough responded to the proposed changes, urging them not to change the current questions.

22/58 Governance & Nominations Committee

COUN22-P81

On the recommendation of Governance and Nominations Committee Council **APPROVED** the appointment of Naomi Hudson and Professor David Price as lay members of Council with immediate effect.

22/59 Audit & Risk Committee

COUN22-P82

Council **RECEIVED** a report from the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee from the meeting held on 22 September.

The Audit & Risk Chair was pleased that the outstanding audit items reported at June Council has been reduced from 14 down to 1, and the final item is due to be completed by the end of the year.

Audit & Risk Committee received an update on Project Compliance, which embodies a shift in approach to securing compliance as an important enabler for the new University strategy. The Committee also received the first annual Mandatory Training Report, which arose out of a recommendation from a 2021 Internal Audit report. Council were asked to note that levels of mandatory training completion in some areas are exposing Loughborough to unnecessary risks, particularly in Information Security, and this is an area that needs clear management focus and attention to improve compliance.

The Chief Operating Officer and Provost have written to all Deans and Directors of Professional Services with actions to be implemented to improve the levels of mandatory training.

22/60 Health, Safety and Environment Report

Council **RECEIVED** a verbal report from the meeting of the Health, Safety and Environment Committee held on 05 October 2022.

There is currently a focus on fire safety as a response to new legislation following the fires at Grenfell Tower and Bolton University and fire risk assessment reviews for the university estate continued throughout August and September.

Staff and student wellbeing remains the biggest area of focus for Health, Safety and Environment.

22/61 Matters for Report by the Vice-Chancellor

Council **RECEIVED** a verbal report from the Vice-Chancellor.

A one-off cost of living payment for staff has been agreed and will be paid in November. The payment is tiered from £1200 - £500 for full-time staff with the lowest grades receiving the most and the highest not receiving anything. A student cost of living assistance plan is being developed.

The next stages of the Sport Review are in place along with an implementation plan. Mike Wedderburn was thanked for his time and assistance working on the report.

The process to recruit a new Dean for the School of Architecture, Building and Civil Engineering has started. Thanks were given to Penny Briscoe for agreeing to be on the final panel. Malcolm Cook is the interim Dean.

Steve Rothberg who recently completed his term as Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research has been appointed as Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Manchester Metropolitan University and is due to start in January. We wish him all the best.

SECTION C – Starred Items for Information

22/62 *Matters for Report

62.1 *Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation)

COUN22-P83

62.2 *Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education & Student Experience)

COUN22-P84

62.3 *Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)

COUN22-P85

22/63 *Membership of Council Committees**COUN22-P86**

Council **RECEIVED** the updated membership of Council Committees.

22/64 *Overview of Year's Forthcoming Council Business**COUN22-P87**

Council **NOTED** an overview of the Year's Forthcoming Council Business.

22/65 *University Executive Board and Leadership Group**COUN22-P88**

Council **NOTED** the establishment of the University Executive Board and Leadership Group.

22/66 *Common Seal**COUN22-P89**

Council **RECEIVED** a list of documents to which the University Seal has been attached.

22/67 *Reports from Committees

Council **RECEIVED** reports from the following Committees:

COUN22-P90	Senate – 15 June 2022
COUN22-P91	Audit & Risk Committee – 10 June, 22 September 2022
COUN22-P92	Operations Committee – 7 June, 11 July, 5 September 2022
COUN22-P93	Finance Committee – 17 June 2022
COUN22-P94	Research and Innovation Committee – 13 September 2022

22/68 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 23 November 2022, 9:00am, Online.

2022/23 Meetings

Thursday 30 March 2023, Allison Committee Room, London, 9:30am – 14:00

Thursday 29 June 2023, Loughborough campus, 13:30-17:00

Thursday 12 October 2023 - 9:00 AM All-day