Senate

Loughborough University

Minutes

SEN23-M3

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2023.

Attendance

Nick Jennings

Siân Adiseshiah
Kerri Akiwowo
JD Bhadra
Harry Bowie (ab)
Anthony Brown (ab)
Steve Christie
Marcus Collins (ab)
Paul Conway (ab)
Malcolm Cook
Jennifer Cooke
Georgina Cosma
Charlotte Croffie
Abigail Davis
Cees de Bont
Claudia Eberlein (ab)
Tony Edwards (ab)
Matthew Frost

Lisanne Gibson (ab)
Jan Godsell
Mey Goh
Suzana Grubnic
Tarek Hassan (ab)
Richard Hodgkins (ab)
Eef Hogervorst (ab)
Michael Hoyler
Harry Hughes-Slattery
Mia Jackson
Allyson King
Mark Lewis
Baihua Li
Chris Linton (ab)
Niels Lohse
Mariateresa Lombardo (ab)
Carolynne Mason

Sarabjit Mastana
Andrew Morris
Dan Parsons
Valerie Pinfield
Tanja Radu
Shahin Rahimifard
Catherine Rees
Chris Rielly
Duncan Robertson (ab)
Alice Robinson
Merve Sancak
Robby Soetanto
Rachel Thomson (ab)
Duncan Walker (ab)
Emma Walton
Eve Zhang (ab)
Diwei Zhou

In attendance:
Chris Dunbobbin, Charlie Dunkin, Jennifer Nutkins, Alex Owen, Richard Taylor.

Apologies received from:
Harry Bowie, Anthony Brown, Marcus Collins, Paul Conway, Claudia Eberlein, Tony Edwards, Lisanne Gibson, Tarek Hassan, Richard Hodgkins, Eef Hogervorst, Chris Linton, Mariateresa Lombardo, Duncan Robertson, Rachel Thomson, Duncan Walker, Eve Zhang.

23/37   Minutes

Senate confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023 (**SEN23-M2**).

23/38   University Strategy and KPIs

SEN23-P39

38.1   Update on the Higher Education External Environment
Senate considered an update on the Higher Education external environment. Particular attention was drawn to:

i)   Challenges in relation to staff recruitment and increasing competition within the sector for staff across all roles. (Loughborough had invested in an enhanced recruitment function within the HR department to address this);

ii) The political debate around the funding of HE. (In view of the mounting financial pressures on individuals and institutions, a substantial long-term review felt overdue);

iii) The passing of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill, which gave the OfS an expanded role in upholding free speech across the sector; and

iv) The recent explosion of interest in Artificial Intelligence, driven by the development of powerful chatbots like ChatGPT. (The Vice-Chancellor had written a blog on this topic, and it was emphasised that the University needed to consider carefully how such tools could enhance its work and prepare students for a global workforce in which the use of AI would be routine).

The following additional points were noted in discussion:

v) In the context of the staff recruitment challenges outlined in the paper, the importance of research culture and the development pipeline for early career researchers was acknowledged. An update was provided on arrangements for the generic and discipline-specific training and development of Doctoral Researchers. A relatively small proportion of PhD students progressed to a career in academia, and it was therefore important that this support extended to the full range of potential next destinations.

vi) There was some discussion of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the OfS. It was hoped that there would be a thorough consideration of the OfS's effectiveness, but any substantial changes prior to the next General Election were felt to be unlikely.

SEN23-P40

38.2 <u>University Strategy Update</u>
Senate considered an update on the University Strategy, Core Plans and Enabling Projects, including: the University's partnership with a Private Pathway Provider (PPP); the appointment of a Director of Global Engagement and an associated significant budget allocation to activities to increase international student recruitment and support the student experience; a significant investment in new posts in the Research and Innovation Office (RIO) to help realise the University's ambitions to grow research income; further investment in support of the University's research student programmes; the recruitment of six Associate Pro Vice-Chancellors to support the strategic themes in the new University Strategy; and a Carbon Action Planning initiative, running across all Schools and Professional Services to help move the University towards its Net Zero targets.

The following points were noted in discussion:

i) A number of recent international delegations had been led by the Vice-Chancellor and PVC(R&I). It was noted in this context that ethical considerations around such activities were governed by the University's Ethics Committee and Ethical Policy Framework.

ii) The PPP programme would be closely monitored and managed to ensure an appropriate distribution of students progressing to destination programmes across all Schools.

iii) Significant investment was being allocated to enhancing the international student experience in the context of the University's ambitions to increase international student numbers. This would include a focus on "onboarding" and curricular issues, recognising that international students entering through different routes would have differing educational and non-educational support needs;

iv) In relation to Project Enable, work would be undertaken to provide a more granular level of information on achievements to date (e.g. a breakdown of the 2400 days of work removed at School and job family/grade level). It was noted in this context that there would be a focus on Enabling Projects at the Senate Strategic Away Day in September 2023.

SEN23-P41

38.3 <u>Partnership Core Plan</u>
Senate considered the Partnership Core Plan, which was based on extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders since Autumn 2022. Key features included: an agreed definition of strategic partnerships; a conceptualisation of three partnership tiers (strategic, significant and specific), a pyramid principle of partnership distribution linked to the key themes in the University Strategy; the establishment of a Partnership Board to oversee the initial set-up and

ongoing measurement of partnership objectives; and a linking of KPIs to the other Core Plans, in view of the cross-cutting nature of partnerships.

The following points were noted in discussion:

i) Clarification was provided that partnerships might move from tier to tier over time, managed by the Partnership Board, and given the variable objectives of different partnerships, measures of success would be tailored to the relevant context.

ii) It was agreed that the CFO would discuss the Core Plan with the LSU Executive.

iii) It was agreed that further work would be undertaken to provide more detail on the purpose of the Partnership Board, and on the definitions of the proposed partnership tiers.

Senate agreed to recommend the Partnership Core Plan to Council for approval, subject to the further work identified above.

SEN23-P42

38.4 <u>Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Framework</u>
Senate considered an update on the development of the new KPI Framework, and on the existing framework which was a mix of Core-Plan-approved and transitioned KPIs. It was highlighted that: the Partnership Core Plan KPIs would mirror the partnership-linked KPIs of the other 5 Core Plans; the KPIs for the E&SE Core Plan (approved in March 2023) had been added, removing the transition measures; the target for Carbon Emission Reduction had been edited; there were no data updates for the June 2023 Senate meeting as no new data points were available, but there would be a major update in November 2023, with November becoming the annual reporting date.

The following points were noted in discussion:

i) Work would be undertaken to identify a KPI capturing data on staff retention at an appropriately granular level.

ii) Consideration would be given to the potential for a KPI linked to the University's contribution to addressing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, noting that issues around shaping society would form part of the developing R&I Core Plan.

22/39 Effectiveness Review of Senate

SEN23-P43

Senate considered a report from the Effectiveness Review of Senate Working Group, which had met four times between December 2022 - June 2023. The Working Group issued three related but separate questionnaires to members of Council; current and recently retired Senate members; and the wider academic community, and conducted one-to-one and one-to-group discussions with existing Senate members. The key findings included a wish on the part of Council members for more information about Senate and its relationship with Council; largely positive feedback from current and recently retired Senate members, with a few expressions of dissatisfaction around paperwork, origin of papers and format of meetings; and a very limited response from the wider academic community. Nine recommendations were made relating to processes outside of, during, and after meetings. Some of these were around clarifying decision-making structures and relationships between Senate, Council, Sub-Committees, and ULG and UEB. Others sought to address issues around induction and support for Senate members, and creating a meeting environment which maximised participation and in which all members felt able to contribute.

The following comments were noted in discussion:

i) There was some support for the suggestion that the formal nature of Senate meetings could make contributing to discussions feel daunting. One aspect of this issue was a perceived "knowledge gap" – the sense that some members, such as Deans of School, had seen papers and discussed items, sometimes on multiple occasions, at other meetings. It was suggested that this could lead to a reluctance on the part of some members to ask questions which may have been raised by others elsewhere. It was emphasised that members should not be deterred from asking questions or commenting for this reason, and that discussion of a

paper at Senate provided an important and valued mechanism for the input of views from the wider academic community.

ii)   The limited response to the questionnaire on the part of members of the wider academic community was a concern, perhaps reflecting a degree of disengagement with Senate.

iii)   Regarding the volume of Senate paperwork, it was suggested that a policy requiring shorter papers should be initiated and enforced, with the secretariat empowered to push back papers which were too long. It was noted further that Senate members could be provided with a clearer steer around which elements of individual papers and the full meeting pack were core reading and which were supplementary.

iv)   There was support for the suggestion that Senate members be provided with more training on the relationships between Senate, Council, ULG and UEB in the context of institutional decision-making. It was agreed in this context that the reporting of ULG and UEB minutes to Senate would be explored.

v)   It was suggested that prospective Senate members be provided with the opportunity to attend a Senate meeting as an observer.

vi)   Clarification was provided in relation to the proposed "skills audit" for Senate members – it was recommended that part of the induction process could be a Professional Development session around contributing effectively within large, formal meetings.

vii)   There was support for exploring the pre-submission of comments and questions electronically, albeit that this should not deter from the ultimate aim of creating an in-person meeting environment in which all members felt comfortable to contribute fully.

viii) There was a desire for more opportunities for Senate members to be involved in Working Groups, and scope for more transparency around the selection of Senate members for such roles.

ix)   It was agreed that the issue of support for Senate members within Schools, including the potential for pre-Senate meetings and arrangements for disseminating Senate business would be discussed at the next Dean's Forum so that best practice could be shared. It was noted in this context that pre-Senate meetings, at which members within Schools could discuss agenda items prior to the Senate meeting, were challenging to arrange in view of the short time between the agenda and papers being circulated and the Senate meeting being held. It was reiterated that the main factor preventing an earlier circulation was the late submission of papers.

Senate agreed to endorse the recommendations in the report, and thanks were offered to members of the Working Group.

22/40   Health, Safety and Environment Committee

SEN23-P44
40.1   Senate received minutes of the meeting of Health, Safety and Environment Committee on 17 May 2023.

SEN23-P45
40.2   Senate received Health and Safety Bulletins for March - May 2023.

22/41   Matters for Report by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience)

SEN23-P46
Senate considered a report from the PVC(E&SE), including updates on 2023 entry student recruitment; the University's new Private Pathway Provider; maintenance of academic standards in the award of marks and degrees (there was confidence that the University would be compliant with the most recent QAA and other guidance and in a position to assess student work and award degrees in the Summer, notwithstanding the UCU assessment boycott); Student Success Academy; and TEF. The following points were noted in discussion:

i)   As part of the new University Strategy to 2030, "size and shape" work anticipating future challenges was being undertaken, and looking ahead further, beyond 2030, would form part of future strategic thinking.

ii)   It was agreed that some specific issues affecting students at the London campus, around finance/living costs and accommodation (particularly for January starters), would be raised

with the PVC(E&SE). There was some discussion of accommodation and other issues affecting postgraduate students more broadly as the population became more diverse, and it was noted that these were being considered in several fora including the Student Accommodation PMB.

iii) Confirmation was provided that guidance from Learning and Teaching Committee on the use of AI in education for staff and students would be issued prior to the next academic year. The following further points were noted:

   a. The University's Learning and Teaching Conference on 11 July 2023 would include a focus on issues around AI.

   b. A significant, broader piece of work on Academic Integrity, overseen by Learning and Teaching Committee, was ongoing.

   c. There was agreement that ChatGPT and other AI chatbots should be embraced and utilised as educational tools. It was important in this context to support academic colleagues to optimise the design of their programmes and assessment methods in order to work with AI, and eliminate any opportunities for the technology to be used by students to obtain an unfair advantage.

22/42   Matters for Report by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)

SEN23-P47

Senate considered a report from the PVC(EDI) including updates on the following:

i) The development of the EDI Core Plan, including a review of EDI best practice across the sector. (Loughborough was doing well against these high-level indicators/comparators, but there were some structural and cultural elements requiring attention). A draft Core Plan would be brought to the next meeting of Senate for consideration.

ii) Steps towards the University becoming an anti-discriminatory organisation.

iii) Gender and Equal Pay Reporting. A sensitivity analysis would be conducted to determine where strategic decisions, for example around the insourcing of some services, may be having a detrimental impact due to the formulaic approach of the data reporting. The results and identified actions would be captured within the EDI Core Plan, and progress monitored.

iv) Athena Swan Institutional Award. A range of activities were being progressed prior to the final submission on 31 July 2023.

v) Research and EDI. Work in this area was being undertaken in close collaboration with the PVC(R&I).

vi) Higher Education Freedom of Speech Act 2023. The Act had become law and placed a positive duty on Universities to pro-actively promote free speech as well as including provisions relating Student Unions. It was emphasised that the Act had to be balanced with the Equality Act 2010 such that any activity under the new Act was required to be legal, but there was potential for some challenges to arise). The preparatory work being undertaken by the University, in close collaboration with LSU, included consideration of how the new legislation would be interpreted in different academic disciplinary contexts and the provision of development opportunities to all members of the University community.

22/43   Matters for Report by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

SEN23-P48

Senate considered a report. Attention was drawn to a number of recent developments including:

i) Research and Innovation Core Plan. A draft version would shortly be circulated for comment;

ii) The realisation of a large strategic investment in staff in RIO including the recruitment of a new Director;

iii) R&I Income. Overall income targets for the financial year were on track and slightly ahead of projections but work was needed to enhance the pipeline of large strategic proposals to reverse projected longer-term low gradient reduction trends in R&I income – the Core Plan would be central to this;

iv) The launch of Midlands Mindforge, which had aspirations to grow to a £250M equity investment vehicle, and would provide a significant source of investment in the University's innovation ecosystem. It was noted in this context that a new set of policies and systems in place of existing internal EPG funding mechanisms would launch in 6 weeks with a

communications plan. This would help achieve greater alignment of the University's Commercialization and IP processes with Midland Mindforge and improve the incentives for staff and students to be more entrepreneurial in approach.

v) Outcomes from the PVC(R&I)'s recent visit to India with the University's two India Envoys, including a proposal for an Indo-UK CDT with institutions in India.

vi) Maintenance of the University's HR Excellence in Research Award. A 3-year action plan had been endorsed with a suite of activities to improve research culture and environment. This would be owned by R&I Committee and a new Research Culture Working Group would monitor progress and performance across this space.

vii) Improved projection of R&I activities. Work was underway with a new marketing team focused on strategic research projection as part of the Core Plan development. It was noted in this context that the University would have its biggest ever presence at the Cheltenham Science Festival and at the prestigious Royal Society Summer Showcase.

viii) A review and new delivery plan for inaugural lectures was complete ahead of launch in a few weeks.

ix) There were vacancies on the University's Ethics Committee for three members of academic staff appointed by Senate on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor. A notice seeking expressions of interest would be posted on the staff noticeboard.

x) In discussion it was agreed to explore the concept of an R&I Open Day across campus to showcase R&I activity for external organisations.

22/44 Matters for Report by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor

SEN23-P49
Senate considered a report, including the appointment of APVCs and Special Envoys.

22/45 Honorary Degrees and University Medals

SEN23-P50 (to be tabled)
Pursuant Statute XVIII and with the advice of the University Honours Committee, Senate made a recommendation to Council regarding persons to be invited to receive Honorary Degrees and University Medals at future Degree Congregations.

22/46 Matters for Report by the Vice-Chancellor

Senate received a report on the following matters:

i) A PVC(Sport) and a new Director of the Research and Innovation Office had been appointed and announcements would be made shortly.

ii) The Vice-Chancellor had recently returned from a productive trip to the Middle East, and a number of exciting opportunities were being worked on.

iii) The University had submitted for the first time under the THE Impact Rankings which measured performance against the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. It had been ranked first in the UK for Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy and was in the top 10 in the UK for Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.

iv) Thanks were offered to retiring student and staff members.

22/47 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

SEN23-P51
47.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee on 5 May 2023.

SEN23-P52
47.2 Senate approved governance arrangements for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

22/48 Ethics Committee

SEN23-P53
48.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Ethics Committee on 23 May 2023.

SEN23-P54

48.2   On the recommendation of Ethics Committee Senate approved the Ethical Policy Framework for 2023-

22/49   Finance Committee

SEN23-P55

49.1   Senate received minutes of the meeting of Finance Committee on 17 March 2023.

SEN23-P56

49.2   On the recommendation of Finance Committee Senate approved revisions to the lay composition of Finance Committee.

22/50   Learning and Teaching Committee

SEN23-P57

50.1   Senate received minutes of the meetings of Learning and Teaching Committee on 2 March and 19 April 2023.

SEN23-P58

50.2   Senate noted the Annual Report on Major Teaching Partnerships.

SEN23-P59

50.3   Senate noted the OfS consultation and expected new condition of Registration relating to sexual harassment and misconduct.

SEN23-P60

50.4   Senate approved revisions to Regulation VII (Conduct of Examinations and Other Assessments) relating to changes to the policy on the late submission of coursework (to move from a mark of zero to a reduced mark).

SEN23-P61

50.5   Senate approved revisions to Regulation XVIII (Academic Misconduct) to provide for the establishment of Academic Integrity Awareness Courses.

SEN23-P62

50.6   Senate approved revisions to Regulation XI (Diplomas in Industrial Studies, Professional Studies, International Studies and Professional Development) to streamline and standardise the assessment of Part I placements.

50.7   Senate noted that amendments would be made to update all outdated references to the titles of Associate Dean roles within University Regulations, with effect from 1 August 2023.

50.8   CORRECTION NOTED: At its meeting on 15 June 2022 Senate approved the establishment of the award of Professional Graduate Diploma in Architectural Studies (minute 22/46.5 referred). The correct name of this award, as stated in the corresponding paper (SEN22-P63) was Professional Graduate Diploma in Architecture.

22/51   Research and Innovation Committee

SEN23-P63

51.1   Senate received minutes of the meetings of Research and Innovation Committee on 25 April 2023.

SEN23-P64

51.2   Responsible Research Assessment
         i) Senate noted Loughborough's signatory status of the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and the Coalition on Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA).

ii) Senate approved revisions to Loughborough's responsible research & innovation policy that bring us into line with these commitments.

iii) Senate approved a related proposal to introduce evidence-informed output narratives to support fairer cross-disciplinary output assessment.

SEN23-P65

51.3 <u>Amendments to Regulation XXVI (Research Degree Programmes)</u>
On the recommendation of Research and Innovation Committee Senate approved revisions to Regulation XXVI (Research Degree Programmes).

SEN23-P66

51.4 <u>Amendments to Regulation XXVII (Regulations for Higher Doctorates)</u>
On the recommendation of Research and Innovation Committee Senate approved revisions to Regulation XXVII (Regulations for Higher Doctorates).

22/52	**Research and Innovation Committee**

SEN23-P67

52.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Student Discipline Committee on 16 May 2023.

SEN23-P68

52.2 Senate recommended to Council for approval amendments to Ordinance XVII (Conduct and Discipline of Students).

22/53	**Amendments to Ordinance VIII (The Council)**

SEN23-P69

Senate recommended to Council for approval amendments to Ordinance VIII (The Council) relating to the composition of University Council and the election of academic members of staff to Council.

22/54	**Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Roles**

SEN23-P70

54.1 Senate approved a consolidated statement of processes around Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor roles based on arrangements approved at the last Senate meeting.

54.2 Senate noted the appointment, for three years from 1 September 2023, of two Associate Pro Vice-Chancellors for each of the three institutional themes in the Strategic Plan:

Sport, Health and Wellbeing: Professor David Fletcher, Dr Diwei Zhou.
Climate Change and Net Zero: Professor John Downey, Dr Kathryn North.
Vibrant and Inclusive Communities: Professor Rebecca Cain, Professor Emily Keightley.

22/55	**Loughborough University Students' Union Code of Practice**

SEN23-P71

Senate recommended to Council for approval an update to the Loughborough Student's Union Code of Practice.

22/56	**Honorary Titles**

SEN23-P72

Senate approved the award of Honorary Titles.

22/57	**Aegrotat Degree**

SEN23-P73

On the recommendation of the External Programme Assessor and the School of Science, Senate approved the award of a posthumous aegrotat degree.

22/58	Programme Proposals

Senate noted the action of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience), on behalf of Senate, in approving the following:

(i)   <u>New programmes</u>
        MSc Criminology (from October 2024)
        MA Leadership in Sport (from October 2023)

(ii)   <u>Major changes </u>(current students in 2023/24)
        BA Design
        BA Industrial Design

(iii)   <u>Title changes</u> (from October 2024)
        BEng/MEng Electronic and Computer Systems Engineering
        (title changed to BEng/MEng Computer and Electronic Engineering)
        MA Media and Creative Industries
        (title changed to MA Digital Media and Creative Industries)

(iv)   <u>Suspension of programmes</u>
        MSc Data Driven Design (No previous intakes: proposed first intake: Oct 2024)
        MSc Telecommunications Engineering (Last intake: Oct 2022; Proposed next intake: Oct 2024)

(v)   <u>Termination of programmes</u>
        MSc Biomedical Engineering (part-time version only) (No previous intakes)
        MSc Biotechnology (part-time version only) (No previous intakes)

(vi)   <u>LU London programmes with a January 2024 intake</u>
        MA/MSc Design Innovation
        MSc Digital Finance
        MSc Digital Marketing
        MSc Diplomacy and International Relations
        MSc Diplomacy, International Business and Trade
        MSc Diplomacy, International Politics and Trade
        MSc Security, Peace-building and Diplomacy
        MSc Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management
        MSc Entrepreneurship, Finance and Innovation
        MSc Digital Entrepreneurship
        MSc International Human Resource Management
        MSc International Management
        MSc International Management and Emerging Economies
        MSc Risk, Governance and International Management
        MSc Sustainable Management
        MA Global Communication and Social Change
        MA International Development
        MSc International Sustainable Development
        MA Media and Creative Industries
        MSc Sport Marketing
        MSc Sustainable Sport Business

22/59	Appointment of Associate Deans

Senate noted the following appointments/reappointments:
      i)   David Sibley as Associate Dean (E&SE) for the School of Science from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024.

ii) Matt Frost as Associate Dean (E&SE) for the School of Architecture, Building and Civil Engineering from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2026.

iii) James Flint as Associate Dean (E&SE) for the Wolfson School of Mechanical, Electrical and Manufacturing Engineering from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2026.

22/60 Student Complaints Annual Report

SEN22-P74

Senate received the Student Complaints Annual Report for 2021-22.

22/61 International Strategy Management Group

SEN23-P75

Senate received minutes of the meeting of the International Strategy Management Group on 31 March and 26 April 2023.

22/62 Membership of Senate 2023-24 (thus far determined)

SEN23-P76
Senate noted the membership of Senate for the 2023-24 academic year, thus far determined.

22/63 Reports from Committees

Senate received reports from the following Committees:
63.1 **SEN23-P77** Arts Committee on 16 May 2023.
63.2 **SEN23-P78** Infrastructure Committee of 23 February and 20 April 2023.
63.3 **SEN23-P79** Operations Committee on 6 March, 3 April and 2 May 2023.

22/64 Appointments to the Academic Staff

SEN23-P80
Senate noted appointments to the Academic Staff.

22/65 Waiver of Regulations

Senate noted that the Academic Registrar has approved waivers to Regulations in relation to individual students. (Further details are available from the Secretary).

22/66 Dates of Meetings in 2023-24

Thursday 21 September 2023, 12.30-5pm, Senate Away Afternoon, Burleigh Court
Wednesday 8 November 2023, 10am
Wednesday 24 January 2024, 10am *(if required)*
Wednesday 13 March 2024, timings to be confirmed, *LU London*
Wednesday 12 June 2024, 10am