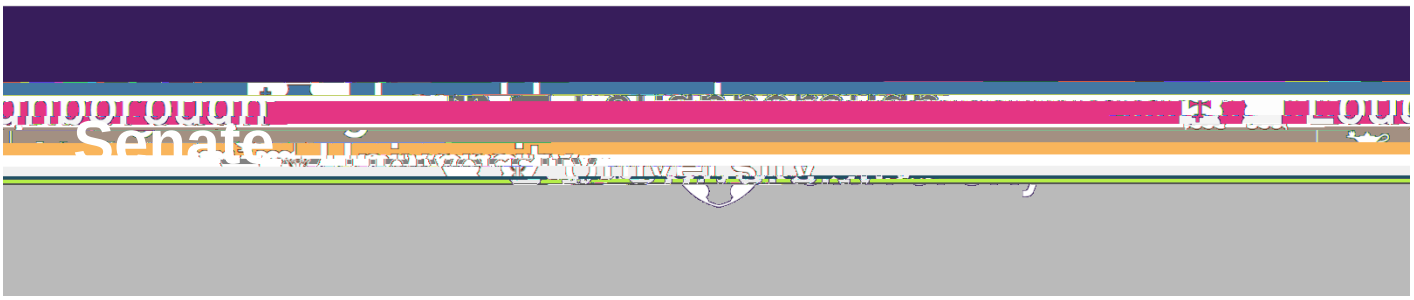

# Minutes

# SEN21-M3

Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 16 June 2021.

## Attendance

| | |
|---|---|
| | Robert Allison |
| Hemaka Bandulasena | Ashleigh Filtness |
| Ana-Maria Bilciu | Mey Goh |
| Ksenia Chmutina | Richard Hodgkins |
| Marcus Collins | Eef Hogervorst |
| James Colwill | Caroline Kennedy-Pipe |
| Paul Conway (ab) | Mark King |
| Malcolm Cook | Mark Lewis |
| Jennifer Cooke | Chris Linton |
| Andrew Dainty | Niels Lohse |
| Abigail Davis | Mariateresa Lombardo |
| Cees de Bont | Callie Merrick |
| Varuna de Silva | Andrew Morris |
| Phil Eames | Kelly Morrison |
| Claudia Eberlein | Fehmidah Munir |
| Tony Edwards | Maria Nieswand |
| Fiona Ellis-Chadwick | Joao Oliveira |
| Carolina Escobar-Tello (ab) | Elizabeth Peel (ab) |

## 21/33 Minutes

Senate confirmed the Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 10 March 2021 (**SEN21-M1**).

## 21/34 University Strategy

**SEN21-P37**

34.1 Update on Higher Education Environment

Senate received an update on the external HE environment. A number of issues were highlighted, including:

i) Considerable financial uncertainty, which made future planning very difficult. Decisions on the recommendations of the Augar review of post-18 education funding were expected in Autumn 2021 and could have a very significant impact.
ii) The substantial effect of the pandemic on the international student market. There were particular concerns around when and if the Chinese market would recover to pre-covid levels.
iii) The focus in the recent government White Paper on FE, technical skills and more flexible study. If funding followed these priorities, there could be an increased risk to UG student revenue.
iv) The REF landscape and increasing pressure on research funding.
v) New obligations and ways of working across the sector as the Office for Students continued to assert its regulatory role.

Notwithstanding the above, Loughborough was well-placed to respond positively to the challenges that lay ahead.

The following points were noted in discussion:

vi) Reassurance was provided that the University was very supportive of its foundation programmes, and confidence was expressed that any challenges arising from decisions on the Augar review in this area would be met.
vii) It was emphasised that Loughborough was committed to maintaining a plural academic environment, and to delivering high quality programmes of study across a wide range of disciplines to a diverse student body.

**SEN21-P38**

34.2 Developing the University Strategy

Senate noted an update on progress. Since the last meeting of Senate a range of further activities had been undertaken including the creation of a dedicated internal webpage; three internal and two external online briefing sessions; a meeting between the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the LSU Executive; further work on the proposed strategic themes led by Professors Phil Eames and Lorraine Cale; and the identification of strategic leads. Thanks were offered to all who had contributed.

Following conversations with the incoming Vice-Chancellor, it had been decided to extend the previously agreed timescales to allow him to input appropriately into the new strategy. Formal approval fded tr
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iv) Learning and Teaching: The plan for 2021-22 was broadly similar to that delivered in the autumn term 2020, building on and enhancing the flexible module delivery introduced in response to the pandemic, while keeping in-person on campus delivery at the heart of the University's offer. Current planning was to timetable in-person practical sessions with social distancing in place, with flexibility to revert to pre-covid arrangements if government guidance allowed.

v) LSU: Planning for graduation balls to take place on an in-person basis were ongoing, with appropriate contingencies should restrictions remain in place after 19 July 2021.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked all members of the University community for their hard work and constructive response to the pandemic, noting that there were many colleagues who had contributed positively and significantly to activity at national level.

## 21/36 RTE Academic Promotion

**SEN21-P41**

Senate discussed proposals relating to the principles underpinning arrangements for RTE academic promotion, prior to a more detailed review being undertaken. It was some time since the criteria and processes had last been reviewed, and it was important that they were appropriate in the context of the University's new strategy and did not result in bias against staff with protected characteristics. It was emphasised that this would be a carefully considered piece of work, with the outcomes not expected to be submitted to Council for approval until Summer 2022. Senate was specifically asked to consider: whether, and to what extent, excellent performance in internal leadership roles should play a greater part in promotions than in the past; and whether there should be an expectation on all RTE7 staff that they work towards promotion to RTE8 (noting that there would be no equivalent expectation that RTE8 staff should seek promotion to RTE9, albeit that it was hoped that most staff would wish to do so).

A number of members spoke in support of a greater recognition of internal leadership roles in explicit promotion criteria, noting that clear information about the link between excellent performance in such roles and career advancement would be likely to increase interest in/engagement with them, and result in improved institutional performance. Some concerns were expressed, however, in relation to the openness of selection processes; the relatively limited number and availability of such roles; and whether such an approach was consistent with the outward-facing nature of the new University strategy.

The following additional points were noted:

i) If excellent performance in internal leadership roles was to play a greater part in promotions, roles must be allocated fairly, for example through PDR processes and/or transparent selection processes.

ii) It was not suggested that all colleagues should seek promotion by demonstrating excellent internal leadership, or that all colleagues should be required to demonstrate excellence in this area in order to qualify for promotion, but rather that there should be a mechanism to recognise that some colleagues did undertake significant internal leadership roles, and to value this contribution in career progression.

iii) Promotion criteria should recognise the significant diversity that existed in career pathways, with women in particular more likely to have followed non-traditional routes and have caring responsibilities. Mechanisms should be developed to ensure that women and other groups with protected characteristics who might be affected by such issues were not disadvantaged in relation to career progression, and these processes should be developed with input from representatives of those affected groups.

iv) Care should be taken to ensure that evidential requirements relating to promotion on the basis of excellent performance in internal leadership roles should not be more onerous than those for other career progression routes.

## 21/37 Climate & Environment Task Group

**SEN21-P42**

Senate received an update from the Climate and Environment Task group and endorsed the broad direction of travel. Senate agreed that arrangements should be made for Professor Nick Clifford, as

Chair of the group, to meet with the new Vice-Chancellor in the autumn, to discuss the detailed recommendations in the context of the new University Strategy.

The following points were noted in discussion:

i) It would be important, in the context of dynamic working, to consider the displacement of emissions (related, for example to the heating of the houses of those working remotely rather than in the office).
ii) Many prospective students had a keen interest the University's environmental profile, and there was scope for more focus on this in outreach and recruitment activities.
iii) The wellbeing and productivity of staff should be a key consideration in the development of environmental initiatives.

Thanks were offered to Professor Clifford, Jo Shields and all other members of the working group.

## 21/38 Race Equality Charter Submission and Strategic Affirmations

**SEN21-P43**
Senate received an update on ongoing work to prepare the University's Race Equality Charter submission, and accepted the strategic affirmations underpinning it. Members were invited to send any comments on the draft submission to Emma Dresser. Thanks were offered to Dr James Esson and to all other colleagues and doctoral researchers who were contributing to this important initiative.

## 21/39 Health, Safety and Environment Committee

**SEN21-P44**
39.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Health, Safety and Environment Committee on 26 May 2021.

**SEN21-P45**
39.2 Senate considered the Health and Safety Bulletins for February – May 2021. The following issues were highlighted:

i) Extensive engineering work undertaken to improve the water distribution system within Towers was complete and the system had been given a clean bill of health.
ii) Significant fire safety work had been undertaken, including a large number of Fire Risk Assessments, and work to ensure the inspection and maintenance of fire doors and extinguishers.

## 21/40 Matters for Report by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)

**SEN21-P46**
Senate considered a report, including:

i) Items considered at Research Committee meetings in April and May 2021 noting in particular work underway on a simplified successor to the CALIBRE strategy, open research issues and the exploitation of the sector by major publishers; the establishment of a REF Review Group and that the University was involved with 4 submissions to the OfS funding call for projects to encourage BAME students to take up doctoral research.
ii) Research Grant and Contract performance at the 3/4 year point of 2020/21 which was on target.
iii) A breakdown of the University's REF submission. Thanks were offered to the PVC(R) and to all other colleagues who had been involved in the REF submission.

**21/41**

ii) Operations Committee:
   a. A budget for 2021/22 had been recommended to Finance Committee. Based on prudent assumptions about international student recruitment, a small deficit was forecast, with small surpluses in the following few years.
   b. The vacancy freeze which had been in place throughout the pandemic would be lifted from 1 August 2021. There would be some phasing of staff recruitment to ensure the maintenance of appropriate HR capacity to manage the volume of recruitment activity.
   c. A submission to the government's new Turing Scheme, which would replace the ERASMUS+ programme, had been endorsed.

## 21/44 Matters for Report by the Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor reported on the following matters:

i) The Vice-Chancellor congratulated Professor Nick Jennings who had been appointed by Council as his successor. The Vice-Chancellor had met Professor Jennings on a number of occasions to ensure a smooth and effective transition. Council would be asked to confirm that the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor would exercise and perform all the academic functions of the Vice-Chancellor and Accountable Officer, in accordance with Statute VI(2), in the interregnum between Professor Allison's last day on 31 July 2021, and Professor Jennings' first day on 4 October 2021.

ii) The Vice-Chancellor offered Senate's best wishes to Loughborough athletes heading to the Olympics and Paralympics, and to Nick Diaper, the University's Head of Parasport, who would be the Deputy Chef de Mission for Paralympics GB in Tokyo.

iii) Congratulations were offered John Steele, Executive Director of Sport at Loughborough, who had been appointed OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to sport.

iv) Congratulations were offered to Professor Eran Edirisinghe from the School of Science, who had been appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) at Keele University, and Professor Andy Dainty who had been appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) at Manchester Metropolitan University.

v) Thanks were offered to all retiring members of Senate, and in particular to Ana-Maria Bilciu and Matt Youngs for their dedication and hard work over a particularly challenging 12 months for LSU.

vi) The Vice-Chancellor thanked all members of Senate, past and present, for their commitment

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45.2 Senate approved the establishment of the naming of subject areas within the School as “Divisions”.

## 21/46 Arts Committee

**SEN21-P51**

46.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Arts Committee on 18 May 2021.

**SEN21-P52**

46.2 on the recommendation of Arts Committee, Senate approved revisions to the composition of Arts Committee.

## 21/47 Learning and Teaching Committee

**SEN21-P53**

47.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Learning and Teaching Committee on 4 March and 22 April 2021.

**SEN21-Pd**

**April 2021**

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49.2 On the recommendation of Student Discipline Committee, Senate recommended to Council for approval amendments to Ordinance XVII (Conduct and Discipline of Students).

## 21/50 Ethics Committee

**SEN21-P64**

50.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Ethics Committee on 25 May 2021.

**SEN21-P65**

50.2 On the recommendation of Ethics Committee, Senate recommended to Council for approval the Ethical Policy Framework 2021.

## 21/51 Programme Proposals

Senate noted the action of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching), on behalf of Senate, in approving the following:

(i) New programmes (from Oct 2021):
MSc Applied Sport Performance Analysis
MSc Biomedical Engineering
MSc Biotechnology
MSc Water Engineering for Development programme (1 Yr, DL version)

(ii) Additional Intake in January 2022:
**School of Architecture, Building and Civil Engineering**
Low Energy Building Services Engineering

**School of Social Sciences and Humanities**
Digital Media and Society
Global Media and Cultural Industries
Strategic Communication
Environmental Monitoring, Research & Management
International Financial and Political Relations
Climate Change Politics and Policy

Advanced Manufacturing Engineering and Management (part-time only)
Engineering Design (part-

55.6 Professor Sara Lombardo as Associate Dean (Teaching) for the School of Science from 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2024.

55.7 Professor Jo Tacchi as Associate Dean (Teaching) for LU London from 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2024.

## 21/56 Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for the Doctoral College

Senate noted an extension of the appointment of Professor Liz Peel as Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for the Doctoral College until 31 March 2022.

## 21/57 Sustainability Annual Report 2019-20

**SEN21-P68**

Senate received a report.

## 21/58 Reports from Committees

Senate received reports from the following Committees:

58.1 **SEN21-P69** Enterprise Committee on 24 March and 11 May 2021.

58.2 **SEN21-P70** Estates Management Committee of 12 February 2021.

58.3 **SEN21-P71** Finance Committee of 19 March 2021.

58.4 **SEN21-P72** Human Resources Committee on 26 May 2021.

58.5 **SEN21-P73** IT and Governance Committee on 28 January 2021.

58.6 **SEN21-P74** Sport Committee of 11 February 2021.

## 21/59 Dates of Meetings in 2021-22

Wednesday 29 September 2021 – from 12.30pm, Senate Strategic Away Afternoon

Wednesday 10 November 2021, 10am
Wednesday 19 January 2022, 10am (if required)
Wednesday 16 March 2022, 10am
Wednesday 15 June 2022, 10am

Author – Chris Dunbobbin
Date – June 2021
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