

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Minutes of a meeting of the Council
held on 1 February 2013

PRESENT: Pro-Chancellor (in the chair); Vice-Chancellor; Councillor P. Aitchison; Mr J. R. Carr; Mr F. Fitzherbert-Brockholes; Mrs G. Gardner; Professor J. Garside; Mr J. Hadfield; Professor G. Johnes; Mr L. King; Mr G. Parker; Mr J. Pullan; Professor E. Rose; Mr S. Smith; Dr J. Taylor; Professor H. Thomason; Mr J. Thornberry; Ms L. Willis.

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss F. M. Aiken; Professor A. Atherton; Professor S. Bradley; Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Mr A. Clarke; Dr H. Hardie; Professor T. J. McMillan; Mr R. O'Brien; Mrs N. Owen; Mrs S. Randall-Paley; Mr M. Swindlehurst; Ms V. Tyrrell.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Mr A. Baker; Dr R. Boumphrey; Professor C. Ram-Prasad.

CO.13/1 Declaration of interest

Ref: CA.1

Councillor P. Aitchison declared an interest in item CA.8 (*Membership of Council*).

CO.13/2 Presentation: Chief Administrative Officer and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Colleges and the Student Experience)

Ref: CA.2; document: SEC/2013/2/0091

The Council received a presentation by the Chief Administrative Officer, Nicola Owen, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Colleges and the Student Experience), Professor Mandy Chetwynd, on accountability in a market driven environment in relation to the student experience.

It was noted that Key Information Sets and associated league tables were expected to become more significant in the future, and that they would be useful for benchmarking Lancaster against comparator institutions.

Professor Chetwynd highlighted some initiatives such as the Lancaster Experience Award which had been introduced in response to student surveys, and assured the Council that Lancaster was ahead of the sector average in several aspects of key information provision.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the presentation and thanked the Chief Administrative Officer and the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Colleges and the Student Experience).

CO.13/3 Minutes

Ref: CA.3; document: SEC/2013/2/0069

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2012. It was noted that the Estates Committee would discuss the matter of the maintenance budget, raised in minute CO.12/90(B).

CO.13/4 Current Schedule of Future Council Business

Ref: CA.4; document: SEC/2013/2/0071

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the schedule of future business.

CO.13/5 Vice-Chancellor: Report

Ref: CA.5; document: SEC/2013/2/0054

The Vice-Chancellor presented his written report as set out, and drew attention to the following key points.

- (i) He wished to congratulate Professor Linda Woodhead on her award of an MBE, and the Management School on the award of 2012 Business School of the Year, and maintaining a consistent rating in the annual global MBA rankings.
- (ii) The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences had taken the strategic decision to separate the Department of Applied Social Science into two sections, with Criminology being relocated to the Law School. The Faculty had also agreed to discontinue Music as a degree programme, with the teaching of current students remaining the highest priority during the on-going consideration of implications.

- (iii) A major UK response to the introduction of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) by US institutions had been to form a consortium of universities to consider the options, and Lancaster had been invited to join the consortium. It was noted that the Vice-Chancellor would report back to the Council on future developments in this area.
- (iv) The University's bid for funding from HEFCE's Catalyst Fund had been submitted, and the Vice-Chancellor's bid to the Wolfson Foundation for ca £2.5M, on behalf of the University, had been shortlisted.
- (v) Several significant research grants had been awarded to Lancaster including the consortium grant for Graphene research, which demonstrated the quality and reputation of the Physics research at Lancaster.
- (vi) The Vice-Chancellor formally paid tribute to Professor Bob McKinlay, the former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, for his considerable service and contribution to the University, and his ongoing input and involvement regarding international developments.

In response to questions, the Vice-Chancellor noted the following.

- (a) The 1994 Group had issued a robust response to the Government's reliance on the Russell Group in consultations on issues such as the future of A-levels, and the Vice-Chancellor believed that Lancaster could still play an important part in the discussions.
- (b) The University's academic staff should be involved in policy making decisions at every level, including the European Union, and this would become more significant in the future.
- (c) The outcome of the discussions regarding MOOCs could not yet be predicted, although the Vice-Chancellor had established an internally-focussed group led by the Dean for Undergraduate Studies, Dr Gavin Brown, to consider the issues from Lancaster's perspective.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report of the Vice-Chancellor.

CO.13/6 LUSU President: Report

Ref: CA.6; document: SEC/2013/2/0072

The LUSU President introduced his written report and added the following verbal updates.

- (i) The attendance of the Chancellor and members of the University senior management team at the LUSU Gala Dinner and Annual Awards Evening had been greatly appreciated and demonstrated the close partnership between the institution and the students' union.
- (ii) The Trustee Board had agreed to contribute to the budget for the new LUSU space project, and the President wished to thank the Director of Facilities for his cooperation.
- (iii) Following discussions at Finance and General Purposes Committee in 2012, LUSU had conducted market research into rent inflation for student accommodation, and would send a report to the Vice-Chancellor in due course.
- (iv) LUSU would continue to work with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) on the integration of all international students, both at Bailrigg and at partner institutions' campuses, into the Lancaster experience.
- (v) The amended role descriptions and titles of the Full Time Officers had been approved by the University and Students' Union Joint Committee, and were a result of a long process of consultation with stakeholders.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report of the LUSU President.

CO.13/7

Strategy

Ref: CA.7

(A) **2012 ADMISSIONS REPORT**

Documents: SEC/2013/2/0080; PSU/2013/0011

The Council received a report on the University's student registrations for 2012 entry, and a verbal update on the projected figures for 2013 entry. The Vice-Chancellor reported that applications to Lancaster had fallen by 7% compared with the previous year, against a sector average rise of 3.5%, although the overall application to places available ratio remained relatively high, at around 6:1.

In response to a member's question regarding the future of postgraduate taught (PGT) courses, the Vice-Chancellor noted that the University was awaiting HEFCE's response to the issue of PGT funding, and that some academic departments were demonstrating innovation in making part of their PGT courses more widely available for distance learning students in the meantime.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

(B) **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

Documents: SEC/2013/2/0093; SEC/2013/2/0070

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) introduced an update on current activities with the University's International Teaching Partnerships, and developments regarding International Research Partnerships.

The Council discussed the developing Guangwai-Lancaster partnership, and noted that the University Secretary proposed to establish an Authorised Signatories Group in order to expedite the project if necessary.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (a) note the international partnerships update;
- (b) agree to establish an Authorised Signatories Group in relation to the Guangwai-Lancaster University Project.

CO.13/8 Governance: University Secretary: Report

Ref: CA.8; document: SEC/2013/2/0085

The University Secretary reported that Senate had concurred with the proposed amendments to Statute 9, and asked the Council to vote on the approval of these changes.

The resulting votes were as follows:

In favour:	15
Against:	3
Abstained:	1

The Council also received a report from the Nominations Committee.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (a) note this report;
- (b) approve the proposed amendments to Statute 9 for submission to the Privy Council;
- (c) approve the appointment of Mr David Barron as an independent member of Council for three years from 22 March 2013;
- (d) approve the reappointment of Mr Francis Fitzherbert-Brockholes as an independent member of Council for a second term of three years from 10 February 2013;
- (e) re-elect Mr John Hadfield as Deputy Pro-Chancellor for three years from 10 February 2013.

CO.13/9 Chief Administrative Officer: Report

Ref: CA.9; document: SEC/2013/2/0097

The Chief Administrative Officer introduced a report on current activities within Professional Services, and explained the rationale for the change in nomenclature. Mrs Owen drew particular attention to the following points.

- (i) The carbon management initiatives were on course, and the Facilities management continued to investigate ways of obtaining the most impact from the available options.
- (ii) The implications of the pensions auto-enrolment requirement for the University had been modelled, and were not expected to have a significant impact on the budget. Senior management would continue to monitor the situation closely and would report back to the Council on any future developments.
- (iii) From 2012 onwards, the Destination of Leavers survey (DLHE) would include responses from non-EU international graduates.
- (iv) The number of referrals to the Office for the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) was increasing across the entire HE sector, as a result of an increase in students' awareness of the appropriate route for student complaints.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

CO.13/10 Finance

Ref: CA.10

(A) **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE: REPORT**

Document: FIN/13/05

The Committee received a report from the Director of Finance and noted that the fee income was projected to increase to circa. £100M in 2013/14, and that Standard and Poor's would visit at the end of February to conduct the annual credit rating assessment.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

(B) **MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTING PACK**

Documents: FIN/12/94 (previously circulated); FIN/12/101 (previously circulated)

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the Monthly Financial Reporting Pack as at October 2012 and November 2012.

CO.13/11 Estates: Retained Residences: Refurbishment of Bowland South, East and Tower

Ref: CA.11; document: SEC/2013/2/0075

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the contents of the paper and approve the Refurbishment Project as a cost of £4,363,000.

CO.13/12 Human Resources

Ref: CA.12

(A) **REMUNERATION COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORT 2012 AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Document: SEC/2013/2/0073

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report and approve the revised terms of reference for the Remuneration Committee.

(B) **REPORT ON POTENTIAL REDUNDANCIES**

Document: SEC/2013/2/0100

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to confirm a continuing need for redundancies and remit the detailed consideration of potential cases involving academic staff to the Redundancy Committee.

CO.13/13 Risk Register

Ref: CA.13; document: FIN/13/04

The Council received and discussed the quarterly update of the Risk Register. Members noted that it was difficult to ascertain the level of financial impact certain risks might carry, and asked if that could be shown as a separate column. The Director of Finance agreed to consider the presentation of the various types of potential impact in the Risk Register.

Action: SR-P

The Vice-Chancellor assured the Council that the full Risk Register was actively monitored by UMAG, and that although only dynamic risks were included in the report, static risks were also regularly scrutinised.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the updated Risk Register.

CO.13/14 Key Performance Indicators: Thematic Report on Teaching

Ref: CA.14; document: PSU/2013/0007

The Vice-Chancellor introduced the thematic report on teaching and noted that the table of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) was a useful management tool which clearly indicated the areas of performance which would most require focussed effort during the following year.

The Council discussed the report and suggested that the response rate for the National Student Survey might be included as a footnote to the table.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive and note the updated KPIs and thematic report.

CO.13/15 University Appointments

Ref: CA.15; document: SEC/2013/2/0082

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the Emeritus Professor appointments as set out.

CO.13/16 Review of Current Meeting

Ref: CA.16

Council members expressed themselves satisfied with the arrangements.

CO.13/17 Chair's Action

Ref: CA.17; document: SEC/2013/2/0084

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the decision taken by the Chair since the last meeting.

CO.13/18 Standing Committees and Reports

Ref: CA.18

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive the following reports.

- (i) Colleges and Student Experience Committee, meeting of 7 November 2012 (*SEC/2013/2/0106*)
- (ii) Equality and Diversity Committee, meeting of 17 October 2012 (*SEC/2013/2/0089*)
- (iii) Finance Committee, meeting of 12 December 2012 (*SEC/2013/2/0083*)
- (iv) Knowledge Exchange and Commercial Affairs Committee, meeting of 23 November 2012 (*SEC/2013/2/0088*)
- (v) University and Students' Union Joint Committee, meeting of 6 November 2012 (*SEC/2013/2/0090*)