

**LANCASTER UNIVERSITY**

Minutes of a meeting of the Council  
held on 20 March 2015

**PRESENT:** Pro-Chancellor (in the Chair); Vice-Chancellor; Professor A. M. Atherton; Mr D. Barron; Dr R. Boumphrey; Dr G. M. Brown; Mr J. R. Carr; Ms L. Clayson; Mr F. Fitzherbert-Brockholes; Mr J. C. Hadfield; Mr L. King; Mr C. Mang; Baroness Neville-Jones; Professor J. F. O'Hanlon; Professor E. Ritchie; Dr B. Szerszynski; Dr J. Taylor; Mrs V. Young.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr P. Boustead; Professor S. Bradley; Ms C. Brereton (*for CO.15/16*); Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Professor S. P. Decent; Mr S. Franklin; Dr H. Hardie; Professor S. R. A. Huttly; Professor G. Johnes (*for CO.15/16*); Ms N. C. Owen; Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley; Mr R. Rowlands-Roberts; Mr M. Swindlehurst; Ms V. Tyrrell.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Professor J. Garside; Mr R. Newman-Thompson; Mr G. Parker

CO.15/12 Declaration of interest

*Ref: CA.1*

Mr D. Barron declared an interest in item CA.5 as a member of The Work Foundation Board of Directors.

CO.15/13 Minutes

*Ref: CA.2; documents: SEC/2015/2/0312; SEC/2015/2/0165*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2014.

*Ref: CA.3*

The Vice-Chancellor gave an oral update on several matters which had been reported in the recent monthly reports from the Executive. He drew particular attention to the following points.

- (i) The University's credit rating from Standard and Poor's had been confirmed at AA- stable, which was the same as the previous year's rating.
- (ii) Following a search led by the Provost for Student Experience, Colleges and the Library, a new Director of Library Services, Peter Maggs, had been appointed, and would take up the post on 15 June.
- (iii) The Chancellor's Installation had been an extremely positive event, which had reflected well on the University. The Vice-Chancellor thanked members of Council for their attendance.
- (iv) This year's funding letter from BIS to HEFCE had contained no reference to the indicative budget for the next two years, which was unusual and reflected the large degree of uncertainty in the funding of the sector. It was likely that overall HEFCE funding for 2015-16 would be relatively stable for the various income streams; however HEFCE had confirmed that there would be a change to the ratio of weighting of QR for 4\* research activity from 3:1 to 4:1. It was anticipated that this would be beneficial to Lancaster, whilst some other research intensive institutions might suffer significant losses in QR income as a result. A report would be made to Council in due course on the comparative position of QR funding.

**Action: PVC Research**

- (v) ***Restricted minute***
- (vi) The QAA had recently written to the Academic Registrar, via their Causes for Concern process, asking for details of the circumstances and seeking assurances regarding the impact on students and accreditation by the engineering councils in the UK and Pakistan. A response would be sent to the QAA by Friday 27 March.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the update from the Vice-Chancellor.

CO.15/15 President of the Students' Union: Report

*Ref: CA.4; document: SEC/2015/2/0313*

The President of the Students' Union, Ms Clayson, presented her written report, and gave an oral update on the outcome of the Full-Time Executive Officer elections. Ms Clayson expressed thanks to the University for the support that had been provided regarding the Student Experience 2025 project, which was agreed to be an important and interesting report.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report, and thanked Ms Clayson.

CO.15/16 Strategy: The Work Foundation (TWF)

*Ref: CA.5; Document: SEC/2015/2/0338 (Restricted)*

**[RESTRICTED MINUTE]**

CO.15/17 Human Resources

*Ref: CA.6*

**(A) STAFF SURVEY OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS REPORT**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/0316*

The Director of Human Resources introduced a report on the outcomes of the Staff Survey 2014/15, and detailed the proposed actions to address the findings. It was noted that a working group had been established in order to co-ordinate future projects and actions in response to the survey. The Vice-Chancellor had also conducted a University-wide staff meeting regarding the survey outcomes, and was in the process of meeting with academic departments on an individual basis to discuss the University-level results, among other topics. The Deans of Faculties and the Chief Administrative Officer were taking forward discussions on any individual responses and actions required by their respective academic departments and administrative divisions.

The Council discussed the report and noted that immediate actions were being taken forward to embed better awareness of health and safety reporting at all levels of the University and that the review of the Health and Safety Committee was considering how to ensure that a more strategic approach was taken in the future.

In response to a query regarding the number of staff choosing not to declare their sexual orientation, Mr Boustead agreed to discuss the matter with Dr Boumphrey following the meeting.

**Action: Director of HR**

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to note the report.

**(B) UNIVERSITIES SUPERANNUATION SCHEME (USS) REFORMS: PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE WORKING GROUP**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/0319 (Restricted)*

**[RESTRICTED MINUTE]**

**(C) 2015/16 PAY NEGOTIATIONS**

*Document: SEC/2015/0332*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to approve the recommendation to participate in national pay bargaining in 2015.

CO.15/18 Governance

*Ref: CA.7*

**(A) REPORT OF COURT MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2015**

*Documents: SEC/2015/2/0303; SEC/2015/2/0050 (Appendix 1); PAS/2015/012 (Appendix 2) (Restricted and Commercial in Confidence); PAS/2015/013 (Appendix 3) (Restricted and Commercial in Confidence); SEC/2015/2/0051 (Appendix 4); SEC/2015/2/0284 (Appendix 5)*

**[RESTRICTED MINUTE]**

**(B) ACTION PLAN FOLLOWING FROM THE COLLEGE REVIEW**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/0330*

The Council discussed the action plan from the College Review, and noted that the majority of the recommendations had been agreed by all stakeholders and Council considered the comments arising from consultation where different views had been expressed. It was agreed that further consideration needed to be given on the operational aspects of the College Principal search committee to work through the implications if consensus was not reached.

**Action: Provost for Student Experiences,  
Colleges and the Library**

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to:

- (i) approve recommendation 19 in relation to the appointment of College Principals;
- (ii) note the consultation that had taken place in relation to the review;
- (iii) endorse the action plan arising from the review and to note that, the Provost, in consultation with the Colleges and Student Experience Committee where appropriate, will oversee implementation, returning to Council with an implementation report in Spring 2016.

**(C) GOVERNANCE UPDATE**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/0323*

The Council noted that a full Council Effectiveness Review would take place in 2016, and that a preliminary survey would be performed in late 2015, to gather opinions on the new meeting arrangements such as the monthly reports from the Executive and the Council dinners. It was agreed that this survey should include the views of members who have recently stepped down from the Council, where possible.

The Chief Administrative Officer introduced the updated Risk Appetite document, and thanked Council members for their engagement with the process. It was noted that this would be reviewed and agreed annually by the Council.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED:

- (i) to agree to postpone its effectiveness review until 2016;
- (ii) to agree the risk appetite as set out.

**(D) CURRENT SCHEDULE OF FUTURE COUNCIL BUSINESS**

*Document: SEC/2015/2/0337*

The Council noted the schedule of future business.

CO.15/19 Finance: Investment Policy

*Ref: CA.8; documents: SEC/2015/2/0349; SEC/2015/2/0348; SEC/2015/2/0345; FIN/15/06; SEC/2015/2/0347*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to endorse the Finance and General Purposes Committee's request for further work to be undertaken in order to develop an ethical investment policy for the University.

CO.15/20 Improving our UK League Table Position

*Ref: CA.9; document: SEC/2015/2/0329*

The Director of Marketing introduced a report on the recent progress of the League Table Strategy Group. The Council noted the report and agreed that Lancaster's institutional and departmental league table standing was vital for its future growth and strategic aims.

It was further noted that a separate plan was being developed regarding the University's engagement with political decision making bodies and individuals.

CO.15/21 Update to Measures of Success: Entry Standards

*Ref: CA.10; document: PSU/2015/0022*

The Council received and discussed a report on the University's key Measures of Success and entry standards for applicants. It was agreed that the University should continue to prioritise the quality of intake over the growth of student numbers through lower entry tariffs.

CO.15/22 Chair's Actions

*Ref: CA.11; document: SEC/2015/2/0340*

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

CO.15/23 Standing Committees and Reports

*Ref: CA.12*

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to receive and note the reports, and confirm the actions taken on its behalf.

- (i) Audit Committee, meeting of 20 February 2015  
(*SEC/2015/2/0301*)
- (ii) Colleges and Student Experience Committee, meeting of  
12 November 2014 (*SEC/2015/2/0234*)
- (iii) Estates Committee, meeting of 30 January 2015  
(*SEC/2015/2/0343*)
- (iv) University and Students' Union Joint Committee, meetings of  
23 September 2014 (*SEC/2015/2/0341*) and 25 November 2014  
(*SEC/2015/2/0342*)