

SEC/2016/2/1194

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Minutes of a meeting of the Council
held on 30 September 2016

PRESENT: Pro-Chancellor (in the Chair); Vice-Chancellor; Professor A. M. Atherton (*from item CO.16/52*); Mr D. Barron; Dr R. Boumphrey; Mr M. J. Dormer; Ms J. Dybell (*from item CO/16/52*); Professor J. Garside; Professor S. Guy; Mr I. Johnson; Professor N. Johnson; Mr R. Johnson; Ms R. Jones (*from item CO.16/52*); Mr E. McLaughlin; Baroness Neville-Jones; Professor J. F. O'Hanlon; Mr S. Reynolds; Professor E. Ritchie; Dr J. Taylor; Professor Mr A. Warriner; Mrs V. Young.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms H. Hunter; Ms N. C. Owen. The following were all present from item CO/16/52: Mr P. Boustead; Professor S. Bradley; Professor A. G. Chetwynd; Professor S. P. Decent; Mr S. Franklin; Ms R. Hughes; Professor S. R. A. Huttly; Mr S. J. Jennings; Mrs S. J. Randall-Paley; Mr M. Swindlehurst; Ms V. Tyrrell.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Mrs R. Georghiou; Professor K. C. Jones.

CO.16/51 Reappointment of Senior Officer
(Reserved)

CO.16/52 Welcome

Mr Robin Johnson and Mr Simon Reynolds were welcomed to their first formal meeting of Council.

CO.16/53 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CO.16/54 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 8 July 2016

Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2016 (SEC/2016/2/0927).

CO.16/55 Matters Arising

Council noted that matters arising were being addressed.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

CO.16/56 Vice-Chancellor's Update and Questions to the Executive

The Vice-Chancellor provided an oral update on activities of interest to Council, including:

- (i) the University's performance had slipped in the recent *QS World Rankings* from 121st to 129th position and in the *Times Higher Education World University Rankings* from 130th to 137th. There would be analysis of the reasons for this performance although it was noted that it was relative to the general decrease in UK universities' performance in these rankings;
- (ii) an update on policy developments including: progress of the HE Bill; the creation of the Office for Students (OfS) and implications for Royal Chartered institutions; the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and associated tuition fees increases from 2017-18; and, key outcomes of the Stern review of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and potential implications for the University;
- (iii) the University had achieved 91% on the overall satisfaction score in the 2016 National Student Survey, providing an 8th place ranking. There had been a strong performance from many departments and the Library investment had contributed to significantly improved scores for learning resources. The results reflected further work was needed to improve satisfaction with assessment and feedback;
- (iv) the recent recruitment round had been strong, including for Home/EU undergraduate students, although recruitment for undergraduate international numbers was challenging and below target. Postgraduate forecast numbers appeared to be increasing, but final numbers would only be known following registration;
- (v) the University was placed 7th in the Mental Health Rankings published by *The Tab*;
- (vi) the University had recently achieved 9th position in *The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2017*, which now placed the University in the top ten of all the UK's major university league tables.

Council agreed that papers should be provided to a future meeting on arrangements for the next REF once the Government's position on the Stern review was clear and on University activity to improve student satisfaction with assessment and feedback.

CO.16/57 President of the Students' Union: Report

The President of the Students' Union introduced the written report (SEC/2016/2/1120). Council noted the report.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/APPROVAL

CO.16/58 Strategy

- (A) **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY: APPROVAL AND NEXT STEPS**
(Restricted and Commercial in Confidence)

(B) **IMPLICATIONS OF THE TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK AND THE NEW HEFCE QUALITY ASSESSMENT MODEL**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) introduced the paper and the HEFCE Circular (*SEC/2016/2/1121*; *SEC/2016/2/1133*) summarising the requirements of the new HEFCE Model for Quality Assessment and the introduction of TEF, in addition to an overview of University activity to respond to these changes.

The HEFCE Model for Quality Assessment included the requirement for governing bodies to provide annual assurance to HEFCE on teaching quality. It was proposed that two Council members work with the University in order to support activity to enable Council to provide the assurance at the November meeting. It was reported that Audit Committee had discussed this new requirement at its earlier meeting and had expressed some concern over the motivation from HEFCE for the statement and about the terminology and appropriateness of the statement with regards to the expectation of competency and judgement expected from Governing Bodies about academic standards. Council concurred with this view.

Council noted the paper and the new HEFCE assurance requirements.

(C) **EDUCATION STRATEGY: DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) introduced the report (*SEC/2016/2/1122*) providing background to the development of the draft strategy which was intended to identify priorities to support the delivery of the *University's Strategy 2020*, including the development process to date, which had identified three strategic areas, and the next phase of activities before the strategy was finalised. Council noted the paper.

Discussion included:

- (i) the importance of maintaining the sense of collegiality as the University grew;
- (ii) that it would be useful to draw out the current and future distinctiveness of the University.

Council agreed that a paper should be provided to a future meeting on employability activity at the University.

(D) **INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTIVITY UPDATE**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) introduced the report (*SEC/2016/2/1108*) providing a summary of the key components of the international strategy and activity including: international teaching and research partnerships; student recruitment and the student experience. These activities supported the delivery of the *University Strategy 2020*. Council noted the paper.

Key points from the discussion included:

- (i) that the development of collaborative research depended on the complementary interests of the partner and was not limited to disciplinary areas;
- (ii) whether the overseas campuses provided a potential source of postgraduate taught students for Bailrigg;
- (iii) seed corn funding was provided to support the development of some research activities;
- (iv) whether the University should consider further elements of the international strategy including a strategy for India, and seeking to strengthen EU partnerships, including the potential for establishing an EU base following the UK withdrawal from the EU.

(E) **UPDATE REPORT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LANCASTER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AT BEIJING JIAOTONG UNIVERSITY**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) introduced the report (*SEC/2016/2/1125*) which set out progress in establishing the new partnership, including recruitment of the first cohort of students in August and future plans. Council noted the report.

CO.16/59

Governance

(A) **COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW: PROPOSED METHODOLOGY**

The Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary introduced the report (*SEC/2016/2/1162*) setting out the proposed methodology and approach for the forthcoming Council effectiveness review. Council approved the proposal.

(B) **RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCIL AND AUDIT COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Director of Strategic Planning and Governance introduced the report (*SEC/2016/2/1129*), which set out the responsibilities of Council and Audit Committee with respect to risk management after Council had requested this information at its away day in May. It was suggested that Council should have regular access to the executive risk register via the web and is annually asked to provide confirmation it is content with the approach. Council noted the report.

(C) **RISK APPETITE: UPDATE**

The Director of Strategic Planning and Governance introduced the report (*SEC/2016/2/1126*) and requested that members complete the exercise in order to inform work to establish the institutional risk appetite. Council noted the report.

(D) **GOVERNORS' LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Council noted the report confirming the indemnity cover in place for Governors (*SEC/2016/2/1021*). Council agreed that there should be investigation to establish the sector average for this type of insurance coverage.

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

Council noted the paper (*SEC/2016/2/1127*).

ITEMS TO RECEIVE

CO.16/60 Chair's Actions

The paper was noted (*SEC/2016/2/1132*).

Council also agreed to appoint Ruth Boumphrey to Nominations Committee as a Council appointed member co-terminus with her appointment to Council.

CO.16/61 Standing Committees and Reports

Council noted the reports.

- (i) Audit Committee, meeting of 8 July 2016 (*SEC/2016/2/1128*)
- (ii) Estates Committee, meeting of 7 July 2016 (*SEC/2016/2/1110*)
- (iii) Finance and General Purposes Committee, meeting of 7 July 2016 (*SEC/2016/2/1124*)
- (iv) Strategic Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee, meeting of 30 June 2016 (*SEC/2016/2/1130*)
- (v) University and Students' Union Joint Committee, meeting of 22 June 2016 (*SEC/2016/2/1131*)

CO.16/62 Date of Next Meeting

The Council noted that the next meeting will take place on **Friday 25 November 2016** at **9.00 a.m.** in the **Private Dining Room, County College**, with a dinner the evening before on **Thursday 24 November 2016**, at which there will be a presentation from the Dean of LUMS on the development of the Faculty's strategy and its recent progress.