

The University of Leeds

THE COUNCIL

21 July 2022

MINUTES

Present:

The Pro-Chancellor (Chair), the Vice-Chancellor, Mr E Anderson, Ms B Corner, Mr A Da Costa, Mr S Elsworth, Ms H Grantham, Dr K Guantai, Ms L Huxley, Professor Jimack¹, Sir R Marsh, Mr I Moffatt, Dr Y Oade, Professor O'Grady, Ms L Okhai¹, Ms M Papageorgiou, Dr C Rogerson, Mrs J Sheriff, Mr T Smith and Mr S Thompson.

In attendance: Professors Grabill¹ and Yu (Deputy Vice-Chancellors), the Secretary, the Chief Financial Officer, the interim Chief Operating Officer, the Director of Communications and Ms C Cho; and Ms M Calvert (for the business recorded in CLMM 21/446-451), Ms L Banahene (for the business recorded in CLMM 21/452-458) and Mr P Veevers¹ (for the business recorded in CLMM 21/474-477).

Apologies: Mrs L Barber, Mr T Clark, and Professors Kelsall and Plant.

Minutes

- 21/426 The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2022 and the notes of the away day held on 30 May 2022 were confirmed.

Vice-Chancellor's report (CL/21/71)

- 21/427 The Council received a written report from the Vice-Chancellor (CL/21/71), which updated members on matters of higher education policy and reported on issues of interest to the life and work of the University, and which was supplemented by an oral update.

Ukraine

- 21/428 The Vice-Chancellor reiterated deep concern about Russia's invasion of Ukraine and summarised the steps being taken nationally, locally and by the University to support those affected by the crisis.

National Student Survey

- 21/429 The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the results of the National Student Survey (NSS) that had just been published. While the results were still being analysed, she reported that the University's headline performance was disappointing. A detailed report would be brought to the Council in the autumn.
- 21/430 The Council recognised that a significant amount of work was being undertaken to improve the student experience over the next three years. The University was also seeking to work with schools in a more collaborative way to identify issues and arrest the falling NSS scores.

¹ Via MS Teams.

Freedom of speech

- 21/431 Members' attention was drawn to the ongoing debate around freedom of speech on university campuses. It was reported that the Universities Minister had written to UK Vice-Chancellors in June to express concern on the matter, and had questioned universities' participation in external assurance and benchmarking diversity schemes (such as Advance HE's Race Equality Charter) based on the Government's view that there might be a tension between such schemes and freedom of speech. A robust response had been issued by Universities UK. For its part, the Vice-Chancellor reiterated the University's commitment to pursuing appropriate charter marks to advance the equalities agenda. In the meantime, consideration was being given as to how the University might wish to respond to the Minister's letter.
- 21/432 Attention was also drawn to the Government's plans to support freedom of speech and academic freedom in higher education as set out in the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill. The Vice-Chancellor noted the complexity of this issue and reaffirmed the University's commitment to freedom of speech and freedom of expression within the law, as enshrined in its Freedom of Expression protocol.

University news

- 21/433 Members were advised that the local branch of the University and College Union (UCU) had ended its marking and assessment boycott on 10 June after an agreement was reached with the University. However, despite much effort, University management was not able to reach an agreement with Unison to avert their strike action between 20 and 24 June 2022. (Unison's strike related to the 2021-22 pay round; the nationally-agreed pay award for 2022-23 was still being finalised.) The Vice-Chancellor went on to described the positive steps being taken on improving working conditions for colleagues, including a one-off payment of £650 in July to all staff in roles up to and including grade 6 in recognition of the impact of increases in the cost of living.
- 21/434 The Council commended the considerable efforts of colleagues to mitigate the impact of the UCU's marking and assessment boycott and to ensure that the number of students affected by the action was kept to a minimum. The forbearance of students who had faced more disruption to their studies was also acknowledged.
- 21/435 The Vice-Chancellor was pleased to report a number of other matters including the official opening of the Sir William Henry Bragg building the previous month; the appointments of Professor Mark Kearney and Rachel Brealey as Executive Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health and Chief Operating Officer respectively; and the successful renewal of the School of Dentistry's Athena SWAN Silver award.

Key Performance Indicators (CL/21/72)

- 21/436 The Council considered a paper (CL/21/72) which set out the twenty component measures (including baselines, benchmarks and targets), which underpinned the nine institutional Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), that had been assessed as mature and ready to be used from the start of the 2022-23 academic session. It also provided an update on the development of the ten remaining component measures, and the indicative timeline for their implementation during 2022-23. It was reported that the measures had been endorsed by the University Executive Group and incorporated comments from the Strategy and Investment Committee (SIC).
- 21/437 In terms of next steps, the Council was advised that work was underway to select a strategy management tool and supplier by early autumn 2022. Tool-enabled reports would then be presented to the SIC twice a year in January and July, and to the Council annually in July. The reports would be aligned with the University's approach to risk

management reporting. As this was a new and evolving approach to outcome-based KPIs, a mid-term review would be undertaken in late 2023. Time would also be taken to reflect on the shape of the progress reports to ensure that they were sufficient and fit for purpose.

- 21/438 During a detailed discussion, members observed that the set measures were ambitious but realistic; commented on the description used for one of the baselines relating to the student education KPI, suggesting that the wording could be tightened; and explored the rationale behind the staff-related baseline adopted for the institutional sustainability KPI. Other comments made included the need to guard against measurement exercises being undertaken too frequently and becoming labour-intensive; the lessons that could be drawn from other sectors to develop and enhance the KPIs; and the ability to change elements being measured to ensure the KPIs remained effective in tracking the delivery of the institution's strategic objectives.
- 21/439 In response to a question, members were advised that the ambitiousness of the KPI targets had undergone a rigorous challenge process, which was evidence-based, and had been adjusted where necessary.
- 21/440 Members also discussed the way in which the student experience was measured and the inclusion of the NSS outcomes within the KPIs as part of that measurement. The point was made that as the NSS only covered final year students it had not been deemed a sufficiently strong measure to be included at the institutional KPIs level. However, it had been incorporated within the more granular component measures for student education. Members went on to comment on the value of the NSS and on its visibility within the KPIs given that it was one of the few tangible measures available; the timing of the NSS survey and the impact that had on students' responses; and whether it provided a sufficient representation of students' university experience. Observations were also made about the way in which the implementation of the Curriculum Redefined programme would influence students' opinions and experience.
- 21/441 Against the above background, the Council approved the final mature component measures as presented in Table 1 to the paper, which would be implemented from the start of the 2022-23 academic session. It thanked all those involved for their significant effort in the development of the KPIs.

University brand project (CL/21/73)

- 21/442 The Council received a briefing (CL/21/73) on the project to review and update the University's brand. An external agency had been appointed to bring the University's brand to life, both visually and in how University members described and talked about the University, its ambition, and what it stood for. Work commenced in March 2022 and the project was due to be completed in summer 2023.
- 21/443 During discussion, observations were made about the need for a flexible approach to communications within an agreed framework to ensure consistency; the importance of the language and tone of voice used in University communications; the need to be able to articulate clearly the purpose and benefit of the work being done in this area and what the University was trying to achieve; the scale of the challenge involved, particularly around describing what the University was known for and doing so in an authentic way; and the alignment of the work with the University's Strategy and Values.
- 21/444 Recalling their experience at another organisation, a member observed that any work around an organisation's visual identity could be challenging and should be undertaken cautiously. It was also suggested that the project name be reviewed to avoid attracting any negative connotations.

21/445 The Council endorsed the direction of travel of the project and looked forward to a further update in due course.

Advancement annual report (CL/21/74)

21/446 The Council was joined by Michelle Calvert, Director of Advancement, to consider a paper (CL/21/74) which provided an overview of Advancement activities and outcomes over the previous year. Details were provided on philanthropic gifts to the University and on work to develop philanthropic priority projects arising from the University Strategy; on alumni and supporter engagement; and on Advancement operations. A summary of the impact of Advancement activities on a number of areas was also provided, including outreach, access and student opportunities; research and innovation; and global community and partnerships.

21/447 Members were advised that the Alumni and Development Team had changed its name to the Advancement Team to signal a new level of institutional ambition for philanthropy and engagement with University alumni and supporters, and a recognition of their role in advancing the University's mission and impact. The name change was also intended to mitigate the common assumption that all fundraising was focused on alumni, when in fact non-alumni individuals, charitable trusts and foundations, and (to a lesser extent) companies were major contributors to the University's philanthropic income.

21/448 Members welcomed the positive developments, the impact and the direction of travel of Advancement activities described in the report. In discussion, observations were made about the University's fundraising performance in comparison with its peers and the planned step change in activities to deliver a more ambitious return on fundraising and impact as the University emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic. In this connection, members were apprised of the work being done to identify and engage key groups of potential donors including those who could give at a higher capacity. Comments were also made about the University's fundraising ambition, which could be aspirational; the link with the work on the University's brand and the importance of being able to articulate clearly what the University stood for to attract donors; and on the possible opportunities to establish relationships with charitable trusts and foundations.

21/449 With reference to outreach, access and student opportunities, members were advised that the Advancement Team was working closely with the Educational Engagement Team on fundraising for identified projects alongside the provision of scholarships. Consideration was also being given to enhancing the alumni volunteering journey to ensure that this was a positive and meaningful experience for all parties.

21/450 In response to a question about resources for the Advancement Team, Ms Calvert explained that although the team was currently working at capacity, plans were in place to recruit additional staff. It was, however, a challenging market to find suitably qualified fundraisers; this was a common theme across the sector.

21/451 The Council was content with the report on Advancement activities and thanked Ms Calvert and her team for all their efforts.

Undergraduate continuation rates 2021-22 (CL/21/75)

21/452 The Council received, as CL/21/75, a paper which summarised the undergraduate full-time continuation rates for students who began their studies in 2020-21, and gave an update on progress against University targets to reduce the gap in continuation for undergraduate mature students and for undergraduate POLAR Q1² students.

² Participation of Local Areas Quintile 1.

- 21/453 Introducing the paper, Ms Louise Banahene (the Director of Educational Engagement) explained that continuation rate were a strong indicator of student outcomes and success and that this was reflected in their inclusion in both the institutional KPIs and the University's Access and Student Success strategy. It was noted that the pandemic had influenced continuation rates, which had initially showed improvement between 2019-20 and 2020-21. However, for POLAR Q1 and Q5 students who commenced studies in 2020-21 the gap had increased to 4.2% which was below target. The gap between non-continuation for young and mature students for the same year was 3.6%, exceeding both the annual milestone and the 2025 target.
- 21/454 She went on to describe the work underway to evolve and refine systems around inclusive assessment, induction and tutorials, and to identify students who might be at risk of academic failure and in need of additional support. Students' sense of belonging was also key to this and a package of measures was in place linking into the important work being done through the Curriculum Redefined programme. These would continue to be monitored carefully by the Access and Student Support programme board.
- 21/455 Ms Banahene observed that although the pandemic had had an impact on progress in this area she was confident that colleagues were doing all they could to get matters back on track. While the work required should not be underestimated, there was a clear understanding of what needed to be done. The importance of Curriculum Redefined was restated as it would provide the space for colleagues to identify and address areas requiring improvement in a measured and agile way.
- 21/456 From a regulatory perspective, Ms Banahene advised the Council that there was no cause for concern as the OfS recognised that the challenges faced by the University were also being experienced sector-wide. In terms of the OfS expectations, the University's activities went beyond what was required and its approach could be comfortably described.
- 21/457 A member welcomed the work being done to support BTEC and mature student groups, and the positive improvements that had been reported. Members also discussed the work to develop school action plans to improve continuation rates, which were being co-created with students; and the importance of those plans being governed within schools to foster a culture of accountability and to ensure they were implemented.
- 21/458 The Council was content with the steps being taken and thanked Ms Banahene for her much-valued leadership in this area.

Access and Participation Plan (CL/21/76)

- 21/459 The Council noted a paper (CL/21/76) which gave details of variations to the University's Access and Participation Plan (APP). The OfS had requested all registered providers to vary their APPs to show where the institution's work on access and student success had changed since the APP was submitted in 2022. The paper also highlighted the actions being taken by the University to mitigate the risk of not meeting OfS performance guidance. The variations did not require any significant financial changes to be made. A new full APP submission was due in 2023.

Student recruitment update (CL/21/77)

- 21/460 The Council noted a paper (CL/21/77) which set out the current position regarding taught student recruitment for 2022 entry, and a summary of the University's planned approach to UK undergraduate confirmation in August, together with an overview of prospects for international recruitment during September and October.

Report from the Nominating and Governance Committee (CL/21/78)

- 21/461 The Council considered a report from the Nominating and Governance Committee (CL/21/78).
- 21/462 It was noted that Mr Ed Anderson and Sir Roger Marsh would complete their terms of office on the Council at the end of July, and that the terms of office of some Council members on various committees were due to expire on 31 July. The Council therefore approved the following recommendations put forward by the Committee (all appointments to take effect from 1 August 2022):
- ~ Audit and Risk Committee: the appointment of Rachel Tsang; the reappointment of Iain Moffatt, Leyla Okhai, Tim Smith and Tom Clark; and the appointment of Mr Moffatt as Chair.
 - ~ Strategy and Investment Committee: the appointment of Ken Sargison and Tim Smith; and the reappointment of Seb Elsworth.
 - ~ Nominating and Governance Committee: the appointment of Cordelia Rogerson; and the reappointment of Yvette Oade.
 - ~ Remuneration Committee: the appointment of Ken Sargison; and reappointment of Iain Moffatt.
 - ~ Commercialisation Group: the appointment of Cordelia Rogerson; and reappointment of Iain Moffatt.
 - ~ Gift Acceptance Committee: the reappointment of Helen Grantham and Seb Elsworth.
 - ~ Group on Pensions: the appointment of Iain Moffatt; and reappointment of Helen Grantham and Tim Smith.
 - ~ Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Committee: authorising the Secretary to appoint a senior academic to Chair the committee.
- 21/463 Upon the Committee's recommendation, the Council endorsed in principle the establishment of a committee which would provide an ethical and values-led framework for debate and decision-making on proposed institutional responses or activities that might have an impact on the University's reputation or integrity. The new committee's terms of reference and membership would be brought to the Council for approval in the new academic session.
- 21/464 The Council approved the Committee's recommendation to support the Mid-Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust's application to be recognised as a Teaching Trust. In doing so, it authorised the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health to provide on behalf of the University a letter of support for the Trust's application to the Department of Health and Social Care, and approved the nomination of Dr Alan Mighell, Head of the School of Dentistry, as the University's representative on the Trust's board.

Council vacation powers (CL/21/79)

- 21/465 The Council considered a proposal (CL/21/79) to confirm, on an annual basis, the manner in which any decisions that required its approval were taken during the summer vacation period, between the Council's meetings in July and September.
- 21/466 The Council authorised the Pro-Chancellor (and, in his absence, the Deputy Pro-Chancellor or the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee) to take action and decisions on behalf of Council between meetings on the understanding: that a report of any such action would be made to the next meeting of Council; and that action taken on that basis would include action relating to matters of principle or policy only in the event of urgency.

Report from the Strategy and Investment Committee (CL/21/80)

- 21/467 The Council considered a report (CL/21/80) of the meeting of the Strategy and Investment Committee held on 14 July 2022.
- 21/468 Matters considered by the Committee included an update on the readiness of the nine institutional outcome-based Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and their underpinning component measures for implementation in academic year 2022-23; a summary of the strategic alignment and the common risks and dependencies that had emerged through an early analysis of the Faculty and Professional Service Integrated Planning Exercise 2021-22; and details of the risk deep dive undertaken by the Audit and Risk Committee around the University's strategic change programmes.
- 21/469 CLM 21/469 is confidential to members of the Council.

Minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee (11 July 2022) (CL/21/81)

- 21/470 The Council received the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 11 July 2022 (CL/21/81).
- 21/471 The Committee had noted the internal auditors' progress against the 2021-22 annual plan, including an advisory report in relation to the Curriculum Redefined programme and a summary of one internal audit review finalised since its last meeting (from which there were no high risk issues). It had also received the internal auditors' HE sector risk profile for 2022, noting that the sector trends identified by the auditors were similar to those noted within the University's risk register.
- 21/472 As previously agreed, the Committee had undertaken a risk deep dive into the University's strategic change programmes, specifically, the Student Lifecycle Programme, Corporate Processes and Systems, and the three digital technology programmes (Digital Enablement, Be Safe and Digital Transformation). Following discussion with University management, it had been content that appropriate action was being taken to manage the risks in that area.
- 21/473 Noting that Mr Ed Anderson would be stepping down from membership of the Committee at the end the session after 15 years' service, 9 of which as its Chair, the Committee had recorded its heartfelt thanks for his extensive contributions to the work of the Committee and to the wider University. Members paid tribute to Mr Anderson's balanced approach to the Committee's work, and observed that his sage advice would be greatly missed.

Report from the Health and Safety Committee (CL/21/82)

- 21/474 The Council received the report of the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on 6 June 2022 (CL/21/82).
- 21/475 The Committee had received updates on various matters including the steps taken by the University following the publication of the Government's 'Living with Covid' guidance; the successful result of the ISO 45001:2018 accreditation audit, with all holders of the accreditation maintaining their certification; and the good outcome of the Health and Safety Executive's assessment of the University's compliance with the Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2010.
- 21/476 It had also noted the latest compliance rates for the mandatory online health and safety training (Britsafe) and the ongoing efforts to improve participation rates; had received reports on statistics relating to the impact of the health of the University staff on their work, and on developments within Health and Wellbeing; and had been content with the

actions taken to address identified issues arising from a near-miss incident on campus involving a chemical waste solution.

- 21/477 An observation was made about the importance of the Vice-Chancellor's chairing of the Committee and the message that sent on the commitment and leadership in this area. The Council also paid tribute to the outstanding work of the Director of Health and Safety Services and his team.

Senate (6 July 2022)

- 21/478 The Council received the Minutes of the meeting of the Senate on 6 July 2022.

The impact of the industrial action on marking and processing of assessments

- 21/479 The Senate had noted a summary of the impact of the recent industrial action on the marking and processing of examinations and assessments; and the remedial action that was underway to ensure the graduation or progression of students.

Amendment to Ordinances

- 21/480 Upon the recommendation of the Graduate Board, the Senate had approved the amendment to Ordinance XVI to make available both posthumous and Aegrotat awards for research degrees; and had approved amendments to Ordinance X to remove a number of research degrees no longer on offer by the University.

Taught Student Education Board

- 21/481 The Senate had noted that the Board had approved a new definition and explanation of academic integrity, to be implemented over the next 18 months; and the proposal for the implementation of an assessment of written English policy to replace the current policy on inclusive marking.
- 21/482 On the recommendation of the Board, the Senate had approved the Rules for Award for 2022-23, noting that a piece of work would be resourced better to understand a set of issues around student success, including awarding patterns and any associated impact on equity.

Tributes to retiring professors and conferment of Emeritus Professorships

- 21/483 The Council associated itself with the Senate's resolutions to mark the retirement of three professors and approved the conferment of the title of Emeritus Professor upon the following (date from when these would be effective indicated in brackets):
- Professor Roger Halson (30 September 2022);
 - Professor Peter Hillmen (20 May 2022);
 - Professor Paul Stewart (31 July 2021).

Vote of thanks

- 21/484 Noting that it would be the last meeting of the Senate in its current form, the Vice-Chancellor had thanked all members, and especially those who would not be returning in the next session, for their contributions to the work of the Senate during their periods of office.

Matters for report (CL/21/83)

- 21/485 The Council received a paper (CL/21/83) setting out a number of matters for report including those summarised below.

Obituaries

- 21/486 The Council recorded its condolences for the deaths which were reported in CL/21/83.1.

Distinctions; professorial and senior appointments

- 21/487 Warm congratulations were offered to the recipients of honours and distinctions reported in CL/21/83.2. Details of recent professorial and senior appointments were given in CL/21/83.3-4.
- 21/488 The Council congratulated those members of the University who had received a Queen's Birthday Honour, including Professor Paul Johnson (Executive Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences) awarded an OBE for services to equality, to diversity and to human rights; Mr Seb Elsworth (current member of the Council) awarded an MBE for services to social investment; and Professor John Barrett (School of Earth and Environment) awarded an OBE for services to climate change assessment. Congratulations were also extended to Professor Michael Arthur, who served as Vice-Chancellor of the University from 2004 to 2013, on receiving a knighthood for his services to Higher Education.

Chair Committees

- 21/489 The membership of recently established chair and equivalent committees were as set out in the Annex to CL/21/83 (available on request).

Valedictions

- 21/490 On behalf of the Council, the Pro-Chancellor expressed appreciation of the contributions made by Mr Ed Anderson and Sir Roger Marsh, whose periods office as lay members of the Council were coming to an end and whose contributions had included membership of ad hoc and standing committees of the Council. Their contributions would be acknowledged in more detail at the dinner following the meeting. In a similar vein, the Pro-Chancellor expressed appreciation of the contributions made by Professor Robert Kelsall as an elected member from among the faculties who was also stepping down at the end of July.
- 21/491 The Pro-Chancellor also thanked the University executive and other members of the Council for all their work in the face of difficulties and challenges over the course of the year; and welcomed the incoming Pro-Chancellor, Mr Alastair Da Costa, who would take over the role of Chair of Council from 1 August 2022.
- 21/492 In return, the Vice-Chancellor thanked the Pro-Chancellor and Council members for their continued trust in and invaluable support of the University executive.
- 21/493 Noting that this would be his last meeting, the Council expressed its sincere thanks and gratitude to the Pro-Chancellor for his wise counsel, extensive contributions and good humour in chairing the Council since 2013.