



Minutes

SEN24-M3

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2024.

Attendance

Nick Jennings

Siân Adiseshiah
Kerri Akiwowo
Karen Blay
Lot Burgstra
Ash Casey
Steve Christie
Paul Conway (ab)
Malcolm Cook
Jennifer Cooke (ab)
Georgina Cosma (ab)
Cees de Bont
Claudia Eberlein
Tony Edwards
Jan Godsell
Suzana Grubnic
Tarek Hassan

Simon Hogg
Michael Hoyler
Ella-Mae Hubbard
Kemafasu Ilfie
Will Johnson
Sophia Jowett
Nawaf Junaidi
Allyson King
Mark Lewis
Baihua Li
Chris Linton
Jo Maher
Miguel Martinez Garcia
Carolynne Mason
Andrew Morris
Thomas Otter
Molly Page (ab)
Sarah Parker (ab)

Dan Parsons
Liz Peel
Giulia Piccolino
Tanja Radu
Rahul Rahulamathavan
Catherine Rees (ab)
Chris Rielly
Duncan Robertson (ab)
Merve Sancak (ab)
Vadim Silberschmidt
Rachel Thomson
Cansu Unver-Erbas
Ashley van Bruygom
Emma Walton (ab)
Darren Watts
Eve Zhang
Diwei Zhou

In attendance:

Rachel Alvey, Chris Dunbobbin, Sandra Kwok, Jennifer Nutkins, Sam McGinty (for item 24/43), Veronica Moore (for item 24/42.5), Alex Owen, James Simpson, Helen Taller (for item 24/43), Richard Taylor.

Apologies received from:

Jennifer Cooke, Georgina Cosma, Molly Page, Sarah Parker, Catherine Rees, Duncan Robertson, Merve Sancak, Emma Walton.

24/41 Minutes

Senate confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2024 (**SEN24-M2**).

24/42 University Strategy

SEN24-P42

42.1 Update on the Higher Education External Environment

Senate considered an update on the Higher Education external environment, noting that for several years, UK universities had been subject to significant uncertainty and volatility and that this was likely to continue, with particular challenges around financial sustainability. Specific points highlighted included the following:

- i) The government had accepted a Migration Advisory Committee recommendation that the Graduate Route visa should remain intact. This was a very positive outcome for the sector, which had undertaken significant collective and individual lobbying to demonstrate the value of international students coming to and staying in the UK after their study.
- ii) In the context of the General Election on 4 July 2024, the University was contributing to a sector-wide effort to re-establish higher education in the national policy narrative as a key contributor and delivery partner for national policy agendas.
- iii) Challenges in the geopolitical context included the ongoing Israel-Gaza conflict, which crossed-over with the University's legal duty to promote free speech within the law under the new Higher Education Freedom of Speech Act.

The University was pursuing a range of responses to these challenges in the context of the *Creating Better Futures. Together* strategy, including finding ways to create investment headroom in a financially constrained environment; mitigating the risks around international student recruitment through the Private Pathway Provider partnership and other strategic investments aimed at achieving a step change in the University's ability to attract and support international students; identifying innovative opportunities to access new markets; engaging local and national politicians to access funding and influence policy decisions around Hydrogen; and leveraging external investment and investigating opportunities to generate revenue from activities other than research and teaching.

SEN24-P43

42.2 Strategic Themes

Senate considered an update on the Strategic Themes. The following points were highlighted:

- i) A key area of the strategy being developed by the APVCs for Sport, Health and Wellbeing was AI in sport. The APVCs had hosted a workshop, bringing together academics and industry partners to discuss how their expertise could further contribute to the use of AI in sport and how attendees could collaborate in future.
- ii) The APVCs for Climate Change and Net Zero were developing a university-wide sustainability strategy with five main pillars: Education; Research and Innovation; Sport; Building sustainable communities and partnerships; and Campuses and operations. The Hydrogen Works concept was being progressed in close collaboration with a range of colleagues, and had been presented to VIP visitors to the University including the Minister of State for Science and the Shadow Secretary to Treasury.
- iii) The Vibrant and Inclusive Communities APVCs were focusing on three key overlapping areas: Research and Innovation; Campus culture; and Social responsibility, each of which fed into the EDI Core Plan. Work was also being undertaken with Research and Innovation and academic colleagues from across the campuses to curate large cross-disciplinary funding bids.

It was noted in discussion that the experience of recent international delegations was that the Strategic Themes were resonating strongly and positively with prospective international partners. It was noted further in this context that The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings had placed Loughborough first in the UK and Europe and 7th globally for advancing Decent Work and Economic Growth, the UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8. The University had also been ranked 54th globally for SDG 10, Reduced Inequalities, and 57th globally for SDG 15, Life on Land. Performance against the UN's SDGs was becoming increasingly important internationally.

SEN24-P44

42.3 Opportunities for Loughborough University in Saudi Arabia

Senate considered and commented on an update on progress to date in relation to opportunities for the University in Saudi Arabia (KSA).

Key points from the paper were highlighted by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor:

- (i) An extraordinary meeting of General Assembly had been called by the Vice-Chancellor on 6 June 2024 to discuss potential opportunities in KSA. As part of this meeting, a UCU resolution which was not supportive of the potential strategic partnership with KSA had been passed (137 in favour of the motion, 15 against, with approximately 230 not voting), and this resolution was included as part of the paper to Senate.
- (ii) The strategic case for working with KSA as the fastest-growing sports economy in the world was outlined. The opportunity was of a scale that presented itself rarely, and arose due to a combination of Loughborough's world leading sport reputation and KSA's ambition to rapidly expand the sport sector of its economy. Many other UK (and global) universities were actively pursuing partnerships with KSA, but Loughborough was unique in providing an offer focused on sport. The development of a presence in KSA around sport education directly supported three of the University's Core Plans: International Engagement and Impact, Sporting Excellence and Opportunity, and Partnerships, and would represent a significant and strategic international partnership.
- (iii) Discussions with KSA to date had centred on an educational offer which would seek to produce graduates to work in the sports sector of the KSA economy.
- (iv) It was recognised that any project of the type and scale envisaged would carry significant risks. A number of operating principles which would help to assess, manage and mitigate those risks had been developed, and included: striking a balance between risk and return and enhancing Loughborough's brand and reputation; assuming a minimum number of funded students would be guaranteed by the KSA government; not making any significant capital investment; retaining control over academic content and standards; working to ensure academic freedom was protected (mindful of cultural norms and sensitivities in KSA); and creating a properly resourced team to deliver the project, should it be decided to proceed.

There was a discussion of the paper, and a range of views were expressed. There were a number of points made in favour including the positive progressive change some felt the project could deliver especially around women's sport, the opportunity for deeper research partnerships in the Kingdom, and that the Alumni Advisory Board had been supportive. There were a number of concerns expressed or points not in favour including the safety and rights of workers, the complexity and risks of the operational arrangements, and scepticism whether the progressive change aspired to was realistic.

It was noted that if Senate and Council agreed to progress to the development of a full business case for an in country presence, an FAQs website relating to the project would be created (with questions and comments relating to the content to be directed to the Academic Registrar); and as the specifics of the proposal became clearer, there would be further engagement with staff and students. The business case would include financial projections; a clearly defined exit strategy; and a statement around how the University would respond to less progressive KSA voices than those encountered thus far.

At the suggestion of two members, given the range of views expressed, a vote was held to accurately gauge the balance of support for the proposal – members were asked whether they endorsed the development of a full business and academic case for consideration in the autumn. The outcome of the vote was:

Yes: 29, No: 6, Did Not Vote: 6

Senate therefore endorsed the development of a full, detailed business case for an in-country educational offer to be scrutinised by appropriate formal University committees prior to consideration by Senate and Council in November 2024.

SEN24-P45

42.4 Sporting Excellence and Opportunity Core Plan

Senate recommended to Council for approval the Sporting Excellence and Opportunity Core Plan. The aim of the Core Plan was to support the University in achieving its institutional aims, by making a step-change in the pan-institutional coordination of sport to maximise the benefits to the whole University. In this context, Loughborough's expertise in sport would be used to advance its three institutional strategic themes through the plan's strategic priorities: nurturing the best higher education sporting ecosystem in the world; being a beacon for inclusivity in sport, with a sector-leading women's, para sport and disability sport offer; playing a lead role in reducing the carbon footprint of sport; and AI and digital developments related to sport.

A number of specific areas were mentioned in discussion, including issues around EDI, engagement with secondary schools, and research and other activity outside of the professional sport context in areas such as health and wellbeing. Reassurances were provided that these would be addressed in work associated with the Core Plan.

Thanks were offered to Jo Maher and all others involved in the development of the Core Plan.

SEN24-P46

42.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Core Plan

Senate recommended to Council for approval the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Core Plan.

The Core Plan presented a vision and guiding principles together with heightened EDI ambitions including a commitment to anti-discriminatory practice. It also established management and governance structures to ensure appropriate coordination and sequencing of activity. The Core Plan had four objectives: 1. Data (to improve and increase the range of data held to enable better analysis); 2. Equity (to decrease inequitable outcomes for identified groups); 3. Diversity (to improve levels of diversity); and 4. Inclusivity (to create a vibrant and inclusive community where all belong). Each objective had a set of measures describing how progress would be gauged, and associated KPIs providing numerical indications of the measures.

The following points were noted in discussion:

- i) Clarification was provided that the commitment to anti-discriminatory practice was a proactive response to existing discriminatory outcomes which required the University to go beyond legal compliance and identify and address the impact of inequity at all levels of the organisation - structural, cultural and personal. It was noted that training and awareness-raising across the organisation in relation to the meaning of anti-discrimination in this context would be beneficial.
- ii) The KPIs would be updated and developed as the range of available data improved and increased.
- iii) Reassurance was provided that an EIA would be conducted in relation to any forthcoming voluntary exit scheme.

Thanks were offered to Veronica Moore and all others involved in the development of the Core Plan. Any further comments or feedback should be directed to Veronica Moore.

SEN24-P47

42.6 Sport Committee – Composition and Terms of Reference

Senate recommended to Council for approval revised Composition and Terms of Reference for Sport Committee, including the repositioning of the Committee as a Joint Committee of Senate and Council. In addition to the revisions in the paper, it was agreed that the composition should be amended to include "University Academic Lead for Partnerships" (currently Mark Lewis) as "In Attendance".

24/43 Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act

SEN24-P48

43.1 Senate noted the University's planned response to the above legislation.

43.2 Senate recommended to Council immediate approval of the following:

- (i) A new Ordinance XLVI on Freedom of Expression (Annex 3)
- (ii) Amendments to other Ordinances, policies and Codes of Practice as set out in Annexes 1 and 2), except where these relate to HR matters.

43.3 Senate noted that the further proposed amendments to Ordinances, policies and Codes of Practice relating to HR matters were subject to consultation and negotiation with the campus trades unions and recommended approval to Council in principle, subject to these discussions (noting that should any substantive changes be made, the relevant details would be brought back to Senate).

It was emphasised in discussion that the University would develop its training and support for staff in the context of the implications of the Act and the University's EDI ambitions; and that existing protections relating to academic freedom were largely unaffected by the new legislation. It was noted that the paper referred to the risk that the Act would make it harder for the University to be an "anti-discriminatory organisation" and it was agreed that this should instead refer to the impact on the University's commitment to "anti-discriminatory *practice*".

Thanks were offered to Sam McGinty and others in Legal Services, Registry, LSU and elsewhere for their contribution to this work.

24/44 LSU Constitution Review

SEN24-P49

Senate recommended to Council for approval:

- (i) An immediate update to the Loughborough Students' Union Constitution and
- (ii) Proposed Composition, Membership and Terms of Reference for an LSU Constitution Working Group to be established to undertake a more thorough review during 2024-25.

24/45 Health, Safety and Environment Committee

SEN24-P50

45.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Health, Safety and Environment Committee on 15 May 2024.

45.2 Senate approved a minor amendment to the composition of Health, Safety and Environment Committee to add a second co-opted member.

SEN24-P51

45.3 Senate considered Health and Safety Bulletins for March - May 2024. The following points were highlighted:

- (i) Members were reminded that the use of E-scooters was prohibited on campus. It was agreed in discussion that clarification would be sought around the explicit inclusion of E-skateboards within this prohibition.
- (ii) Thanks were offered to SSEHS colleagues for the significant work undertaken to reach an excellent position in relation to HTA compliance.

24/46 Access and Participation Plan 2025-26

SEN24-P52

Senate considered and recommended to Council for approval the Access and Participation Plan 2025-26.

24/47 Matters for Report by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience)

SEN24-P53

Senate considered a report, including updates on student recruitment, student surveys, and DIGILabs.

As part of this item, Senate approved a proposal to change the academic year structure in a phased implementation over 2025-26 and 2026-27. Key changes included: Starting the academic year one week earlier; inserting a study week in week 7 of semester 1; slightly shortening the length of time that formal teaching was delivered to 10 weeks rather than 11 in Semesters 1 and 2; inserting an 'assessment support week' in week 12 of Semester 1; reducing the length of the Semester 1 and 2 examination periods; introducing an inter-semester week between Semesters 1 and 2; shortening the Easter break to 3 weeks; and adjusting the timeline of activities in the summer period (Semester 3).

Clarification was provided in discussion on: the selection of week 7 rather than week 6 as the study week in Semester 1 (on the basis of research around the time at which first year students became settled at University, and to accommodate 6 week teaching blocks); and the retention of a teaching week after the Christmas break (to allow students to re-engage with academic staff, and Professional Services staff to prepare, prior to the examination period). Further consideration would be given to the timing of the October start date for Doctoral Researchers.

24/48 Matters for Report by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

SEN24-P54

Senate considered a report, including updates on ongoing activities around the roll-out and implementation of the R&I Core Plan; the completion of the round of QICR meetings with Schools; and the "reimagination" change project in the R&I Office. It was noted also that the final inaugural lecture of the 2023-24 academic year was on 12 June 2024, with over 300 registered to attend, closing off a hugely successful series of events. Thanks were offered to all who had been involved.

24/49 Matters for Report by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Sport)

SEN24-P55

Senate received a report.

24/50 Matters for Report by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor

SEN24-P56

Senate received a report:

24/51 Honorary Degrees and University Medals

SEN24-P57

Pursuant Statute XVIII and with the advice of the University Honours Committee, Senate made a recommendation to Council regarding persons to be invited to receive Honorary Degrees and University Medals at future Degree Congregations.

24/52 Matters for report by the Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor thanked retiring members:

Chris Linton as Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Rachel Thomson – Attending her last meeting as Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience.

Deans: Cees de Bont, Tony Edwards, Mark Lewis, Chris Rielly.

Dean's nominees: Sophia Jowett. (Secretary's noted: since the meeting, the following Dean's nominees have also been confirmed as retiring: Tanja Radu, Eve Zhang, Andrew Morris, Georgina Cosma).

Elected staff members:

By the Schools: Kerri Akiwowo (It was noted that Kerri would stay on Senate for a further year until her term on Council as a member of Senate, elected by Senate, ended at the end of 2024-25); Catherine Rees; Carolynne Mason.

By the General Assembly: Jennifer Cooke.

Student members: Lot Burgstra, Molly Page, Tom Otter, Ashley van Bruygom, Nawaf Junaidi.

SECTION B – Starred Items for Approval

24/53 Strategic Portfolio and Resources Committee

SEN24-P58

Senate recommended to Council for approval Terms of Reference and Composition of Strategic Portfolio and Resources Committee.

24/54 Loughborough University London: Restructuring of the Institutes

SEN24-P59

Senate approved a restructuring of the Institutes in the Loughborough University London School.

24/55 Learning and Teaching Committee

SEN24-P60

55.1 Senate received minutes of the meetings of Learning and Committee on 25 January, 28 February, and 18 April 2024.

SEN24-P61

55.2 Amendments to Regulation XX (Undergraduate Awards)

This item was deferred to a future Senate meeting to allow for further discussions at Learning and Teaching Committee.

SEN24-P62

55.3 Minor Amendments to Regulation XVIII (Academic Misconduct)

This item was deferred to a future Senate meeting to allow for further discussions at Learning and Teaching Committee.

SEN24-P63

55.4 Validation of Business-related Higher Education Provision at Loughborough College

Senate approved the validation of two business-related degrees delivered by Loughborough College for a period of three years from the academic year 2024/25.

SEN24-P64

- 55.5 Minor Amendments to Regulation XI - Diplomas in Industrial Studies, Professional Studies, International Studies and Professional Development
Senate approved minor amendments to remove references to assessment methods for the 2023/24 academic year.

24/56 Human Resources Committee**SEN24-P65**

- 56.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Human Resources Committee on 22 May 2024.

SEN24-P66

- 56.2 On the recommendation of Human Resource Committee, Senate approved an amendment to Ordinance XLIII (Policy and Procedure on the Use of Fixed Term Contracts).

24/57 Research and Innovation Committee**SEN24-P67**

- 57.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Research and Innovation Committee on 23 April 2024.

SEN24-P68

- 57.2 On the recommendation of Research and Innovation Committee, Senate approved new PhD Programme Specifications for 2024:

Offshore Wind Energy Sustainability and Resilience PhD
Dual PhD award with Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Dual PhD award with Institut Teknologi Bandung

SEN24-P69

- 57.3 On the recommendation of Research and Innovation Committee, Senate approved new PhD Programme Specifications for 2024, following recent UKRI calls for Centres for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Training Programmes.

24/58 Student Discipline Committee**SEN24-P70**

- 58.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Student Discipline Committee on 24 May 2024.

SEN24-P71

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

24/59 Arts Committee**SEN24-P72**

- 59.1 Senate received minutes of the meeting of Arts Committee on 14 May 2024.

SEN24-P73

- 59.2 On the recommendation of Arts Committee Senate approved a minor amendment to the composition of Arts Committee.

SECTION C – Starred Items for Information**24/60 Appointment of Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor****SEN24-P74**

- Senate noted the appointment of Professor Rachel Thomson as Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor for a term of 5 years from 1 August 2024.

24/61 Appointment of Deans

- 61.1 Senate noted the appointment of Professor Rebecca Cain as Acting Dean of the School of Design and Creative Arts from 1 August 2024, until a full, external selection process was completed during the 2024-25 academic year.
- 61.2 Senate noted the appointment of Professor Lauren Sherar as Acting Dean of the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences from 1 August 2024, until a full, external selection process was completed during the 2024-25 academic year.

24/62 Appointment of Associate Deans

Senate noted the following appointments/reappointments:

- *62.1 Louise Holt as Associate Dean (E&SE) for the School of SSH for a further year from 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.
- 62.2 David Sibley as Associate Dean (E&SE) for the School of Science until 31 July 2025 (no longer on an acting basis).

24/63 Appointments to the Academic Staff

SEN24-P75

Senate noted appointments to the Academic Staff.

24/64 Student Complaints Annual Report 2022-23

SEN24-P76

Senate received the Student Complaints Annual Report for 2022-23.

24/65 Programme Proposals

Senate noted the action of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience), on behalf of Senate, in approving the following:

(i) New programmes

MSc Accounting and Finance (from October 2025)

MSc/PGDip/PGCert Engineering Hydrogen Net Zero - *Exit awards for Engineering Hydrogen Net Zero (EnerHy) PhD programme* (from Sept 2024)

(ii) Major changes

From September 2024

MSc Automotive Engineering (full-time only)

MSc Finance and Management

MSc International Business

MSc Management

MSc Marketing

From January 2025

All LU London programmes – Introduction of Grand Challenge Module

From October 2025

BSc Accounting and Financial Management (including title change to BSc Accounting and Finance)

BSc Business Analytics

BSc Business Economics and Finance (including title change to BSc Economics and Finance)

BSc Economics

MSc Economics and Finance (including title change to MSc Economics)

BSc Economics and Management

BEng/MEng Electronic and Electrical Engineering (title change to BEng/MEng Electrical and Electronic Engineering)
MSc Finance
MSc Finance and Global Trading
BSc Finance and Management (including title change to BSc Finance)
MSc Finance and Management
BSc International Business
MSc International Business
MSc International Management (title change to MSc International Business Management)
BSc Management
MSc Management
MSc Marketing
BSc Marketing and Management (including title change to BSc Marketing)

(iii) Minor changes

From September 2024

BA History
BA History and International Relations
BA History and Politics
BA International Relations
BA Liberal Arts
BA Politics
BA Politics and International Relations
BA Politics, Philosophy and Economics

(iv) Confirmation of LU London Programmes with a January 2025 Intake

MSc Design Innovation
Digital Finance
Digital Marketing
Diplomacy and International Relations
Diplomacy, International Business and Trade
Diplomacy, International Politics and Trade
Security, Peace-building and Diplomacy
Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management
Entrepreneurship, Finance and Innovation
Digital Entrepreneurship
International Human Resource Management
International Management
International Management and Emerging Economies
Risk, Governance and International Management
Sustainable Management
Global Communication and Social Change
International Development
International Sustainable Development
Media and Creative Industries
Sport Marketing
Sustainable Sport Business
Diplomacy and Sport

(v) Suspension of programmes

Executive MBA (BSPTM1) (Last intake to programmes: Oct 2023; Proposed next intake: Oct 2025)
Postgraduate Diploma Business Administration (BSPTM2) (Last intake to programmes: Oct 2023; Proposed next intake: Oct 2025)

24/66 Membership of Senate 2024-25 (thus far determined)

SEN24-P77

Senate noted the membership of Senate for the 2024-25 academic year, thus far determined

24/67 Action under Statute V (The Vice-Chancellor)

Senate noted that the Vice-Chancellor had taken action under section 4 of Statute V to refuse to admit a person as a student on the basis of documented unacceptable behaviour.

24/68 Reports from Committees

Senate received reports from the following Committees:

- 68.1 **SEN24-P78** EDI Committee on 28 February 2024.
- 68.2 **SEN24-P79** Finance Committee on 15 March 2024.
- 68.3 **SEN24-P80** Infrastructure Committee on 21 February and 17 April 2024.
- 68.4 **SEN24-P81** SPaRC Part B: Resources on 11 March, and 9 and 29 April 2024.
- 68.5 **SEN24-P82** Sport Committee on 2 May 2024.

24/69 Waiver of Regulations

Senate noted that the Academic Registrar had approved waivers to Regulations in relation to individual students. (Further details are available from the Secretary).

24/70 Dates of Meetings in 2024-25

Wednesday 25 September 2024, 12.30pm, Convention Room, Burleigh Court

(STRATEGIC AWAY DAY)

Wednesday 6 November 2024, 10am, Convention Room, Burleigh Court

Wednesday 22 January 2025, 10am, Convention Room, Burleigh Court **(*IF REQUIRED*)**

Wednesday 12 March 2025, 10.30am, LDN104 (London campus)

Wednesday 11 June 2025, 10am, Convention Room, Burleigh Court

Author – Chris Dunbobbin

Date – June 2024

Copyright © Loughborough University. All rights reserved.