

SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on 03 July 2024

Members:	Professor Shirley Congdon (Chair)	Nasreen Akhtar	Professor Prathivadi Anand
	Professor Udy Archibong	Sanskriti Baraili	Professor Engobo Emeseh (for Dean of FoMLSS)
	Professor Sherif El-Khamisy	Zak Hughes	Faiz Ilyas
	Mozalfa Ilyas	Professor Rob James	Dr Benjamin Jennings
	Craig Johnson	Jonathan Marsden	Dr William Martin
	Dr Anne Miller	Professor Iqbal Mujtaba	Professor Martin Priest
	Raizana Razeen	Dr Pete Twigg	Paul Watson
	Elaine Wilkinson	Professor Alastair Wood	
In attendance:	Martin Conway	University Secretary	
	Steve Gilley	Director of Infrastructure	
	David Harris	Director of People Culture and Wellbeing	
	Professor Sankar Sivarajah	Dean, School of Management	
	Professor Alastair Goldman	Director of Local Activity Partnerships (M129 only)	
	Claire Pryke	Associate Director, Outreach, Recruitment and Admissions (M131 to M132 only)	
	Katherine Wass	Committee Secretary	
Apologies:	Professor Marina Bloj	Dr Emma Brown	Professor Maryann Hardy
	Alison Hartley	Professor Zahir Irani	Samina Karim
	Andrew Lang	Dr Jing Li	Bryan Lightowler
	Arsheel Muhammad Ansari	Colin Pickles	Professor Amir Sharif

126.23-24 **Welcome and Apologies (Oral report)**

- 126.1 The Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting noting the apologies that had been received.
- 126.2 The Vice-Chancellor welcomed the new Sabbatical Officers to the meeting and congratulated Dr Ben Jennings and Professor Sherif El-Khamisy on their new appointments (ADLT Faculty of Life Sciences and PVC Research and Innovation respectively).
- 126.3 The Senate thanked Professor Sankar Sivarajah for their contribution to the University wishing them all the best in their new role at Kingston University in London.

127.23-24 **Vice-Chancellor update report (oral report)**

- 127.1 The Vice-Chancellor provided Senate with an update of recent activity. It was noted that the general election would take place the following day with what this may mean for the HE sector remaining unclear, however UUK had made a number of asks of the new government that included commitments to a target for investment in research relative to GDP, supporting managed growth in international students backed by a commitment to the graduate visa, and increased transparency in relation to temporary and permanent migration in relation to the UK migration figures.
- 127.2 The University Assembly held on the 26 June had been well attended and had a focus on MARS and the University financial situation. The recording was available on [SharePoint](#). Senate was advised that seventy MARS applications had been accepted, and feedback was being provided to those who had applied and been unsuccessful.
- 127.3 The Senate was provided with an update on the UBIC matter discussed at the last meeting, noting that Kings Counsel advice had been taken that would be used to inform discussions with OIEG regarding settlement of the complaint and associated issues. A new process had been opened on the 19 June for students not included in the initial complaint and this process was ongoing with the support of UBU.
- 127.4 The Senate was further advised that work with Social Work Apprenticeship students and their employers was ongoing, with the focus being on ensuring the students graduated from a full accredited programme. The Vice-Chancellor advised that a project management approach was being used to resolve the issues that had been raised with a view to ensuring accreditation of this programme for future intakes. A final report would be presented to Senate including lessons learned from the experience. The PVE LTSE advised that the experience would also be used to inform the next review of the student protection plan.
- 127.5 **ACTION: Social Work Apprenticeship accreditation report including lessons learned to Senate. PVC LTSE**
- 127.6 The Vice-Chancellor also thanked everyone who had committed their time to support clearing this year.
- 127.7 The Senate discussed the update and noted that the published manifestos for the election had little in them in relation to higher education however it was clear there were several conversations happening in relation to the financial position of the sector and students. Executive Board would continue to monitor the situation and would continue to speak up for students.

128.23-24 **Minutes of the meeting 1 May 2024 (Doc SEN096/23-24)**

- 128.1 The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting as an accurate record.

129.23-24 **Access and Participation Plan Submission (oral report)**

- 129.1 Professor Goldman, Director of Local Activity Partnerships, provided Senate with an overview of the current position in relation to the new Access and Participation Plan. It was noted there would be an extraordinary meeting of Senate on the 11 June to fully review and discuss the final version ahead of its submission to Council for approval on the 24 July.
- 129.2 The Senate was advised that all financial data had been completed and objectives with interventions and actions also being set.
- 129.3 The Senate discussed targets for access, success and progression agreeing that zero was the aspiration however they still needed to be realistic. The need to be able to benchmark progress was also considered to be of importance.
- 129.4 Thanks were expressed to everyone who had been involved in the development of the plan.

130.23-24 **KPI report (Doc SEN124/23-24)**

- 130.1 The Chief Finance Officer provided Senate with an overview of the report noting that energy saving was below tolerance and that BME staff engagement remained at amber while research spend had improved and had moved from blue to red.
- 130.2 The Senate discussed the report noting RaS contracts were within the agreed tolerance levels and the vacancy rate was now 10.4%.
- 130.3 The Senate was advised that from the 2024/25 academic year the KPIs reports would be in accordance with the charters and associated KPIs.

131.23-24 **Student Recruitment Update (Doc SEN125/23-24)**

- 131.1 The Associate Director, Outreach, Recruitment and Admissions provided an overview of the report providing members with an update on action taken since the report had been produced.
- 131.2 The Senate was advised that the main home UG cycle closed on the 30 June with clearing opening on the 5 July. At this time the call centre and on-line application tool would be available. There had been a small adjustment made to the minimum tariff for some programmes. It was also noted that main cycle firm acceptances were 5% higher than last year and the number of conditional firm offers were also at a higher level than last year.
- 131.3 Work had been undertaken with Health Studies in relation to level two maths pass rates resulting in a process being put in place to provide revision support for applicants at this level.

- 131.4 The Senate was advised that some programmes which had attracted a small number of applications (fewer than 5) were being suspended with the applicants being contacted with alternative places.
- 131.5 It was also noted that the recent UG open day had been well attended compared to the previous year with over 450 in attendance. Bookings for the PGT open day in July were increasing and further promotion was taking place.
- 131.6 International recruitment remained the biggest area of concern with a significant decline in applications. Since the last update to Sente there had been some uptick in the number of deposits received from international PGT students.
- 131.7 The Senate was advised that actions were being taken to support recruitment that included a future leavers webinar programme which had involved all faculties. This had attracted over 200 attendees with whom contact was being maintained.
- 131.8 The Senate was provided with an update on UBC recruitment noting that enrolment was still taking place and was higher than anticipated. There had been an improvement in the progression and retention of students via this route.
- 131.9 The Senate discussed the report noting that targets were set as part of the planning process with the full involvement of all faculties and there had been external factors that had impacted on the achievement of targets, particularly in relation to international recruitment.
- 131.10 The Vice-Chancellor advised that Finance Committee had signed off a 5-year plan that had revised numbers and a contingency built in. This would be reviewed once the recruitment cycle had completed. This would be discussed with Council and an update be provided to Senate at its next meeting in October.
- 131.11 **ACTION: Present an update on the 5-year plan to the Senate in October 2024. Chief Finance Officer**
- 131.12 The aim was not to have different targets but to ensure that faculties could see where they could take increased numbers ensuring this was adequately resourced.
- 131.13 The Senate thanked those involved for their work in recruitment.

132.23-24 **League Table updates (Doc SEN126/23-24-SEN128/23-24)**

Complete University Guide (Doc: SEN126-23/24)

- 132.1 The PVCE LTSE provided an overview of the report noting the drop of one place on the previous year. It was noted that spend was an important metric in the CUG and the reduction in spend had not been countered with an improvement in other areas.
- 132.2 The Senate was advised that graduate outcomes remained the strongest measure however there had been a decline in league table position. In the case of CUG there was a lag of two

years between the data and the rankings being issued so it was anticipated this position would not improve next year.

International Student Barometer (Doc SEN127/23-24)

- 132.3 The Associate Director, Outreach, Recruitment and Admissions advised Senate that this was not a league table in the same way as others that were reviewed however there had been a good level of response and the university had ranked eleventh out of the forty-five universities that had been included.
- 132.4 Strong areas included support services with finance and careers both being in the top five. For cost of living the university was at number nine.
- 132.5 The Senate discussed areas for improvement noting these were unchanged from previous years with the addition of internet access on campus being an issue this year.
- 132.6 The Senate was advised that the ISB did influence the international student market even though it was not a league table in the traditional sense.

QS World University Rankings (Doc SEN128/23-24)

- 132.7 The PVC LTSE provided an overview of the report noting the QS was an influencer in relation to league tables for international students.
- 132.8 The Senate noted the improvement of 100 places in this table and thanked those involved for their contribution to this improvement. The aim was to further improve next year and use the results to help share with others how the university performed in relation to other institutions.
- 132.9 The Vice-Chancellor noted the challenges presented by the different league tables and the importance on being aware of areas that need to be focused on.

133.23-24 **Corporate Risks - Quality, Research and Student Experience (SEN129/23-24)**

- 133.1 The University Secretary provided an overview of the report advising Senate that the Risk Oversight Group would be changing its approach to reporting to the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Research and Innovation Committee in future to ensure they had better oversight of these risks.
- 133.2 The Senate was advised there had been no substantial changes in risk since its last meeting.
- 133.3 The University Secretary advised Senate that a review of the oversight of academic integrity and its reporting would be undertaken to ensure Council had appropriate levels of assurance around this aspect of OfS compliance. This move was supported by the PVC LTSE and would link in to ensuring the overall governance framework reflected changes in the regulatory environment.

134.23-24 **Assessment and Award Supporting Frameworks and Regulations (Doc SEN130/23-24)**

- 134.1 The PVC LTSE presented the paper noting that the recommendations had been endorsed by the Learning and Teaching Committee at its recent meeting.
- 134.2 The Senate **approved** updates to the following for 2024/25:
- Ordinance 2 Degrees – updated schedule of awards
 - Regulation 2 Undergraduate Taught Regulations – reflecting changes in terminology and updated list of awards
 - Regulation 7 Assessment Regulations – updated to reflect other changes including the removal of the awards sub-committee and updated policy names.
- 134.3 A change to Regulation 9 Postgraduate Taught Regulations that was intended to bring award boundaries back within sector norms for new students was discussed. It was noted that a wider review of the assessment and regulation regime was planned that would include this regulation for further enhancement.
- 134.4 The change was **approved** subject to clarification of 70% achievement in dissertation and the correction of paragraphs 11.9 -11.10.
- 134.5 The Senate discussed the plan to review the university assessment regulations for the 2025/26 academic year. The plan had been developed to build upon progress that had been made pre-pandemic undertaking a rounded review of all the regulations that supported student learning and progression. The establishment of the Assessment and Award Framework Stakeholder Group to undertake this review was discussed. The Senate asked that the membership of the group be reviewed to ensure more balanced representation.
- 134.6 The Senate **endorsed** the approach to review and revise the academic regulations and the development and implementation of the Assessment and Feedback Framework for 2025/26.

135.23-24 **Academic Appeals Regulations (Doc SEN131/23-24)**

- 135.1 The Interim Academic Registrar presented the report noting it had previously been considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee.
- 135.2 The changes to Regulation 6 – Academic Appeals were outlined as providing greater clarity with updated terminology and the inclusion of PGR. The Senate was advised that a range of supporting documents were being developed and would be available in time for the new academic year.
- 135.3 The Senate discussed the changes highlighting the importance of consistency in the application of progression wording and that Fit to Sit was now part of the approach to Extenuating Circumstances under the new Consideration of Personal Circumstances Policy **(see M137. 4)**.
- 135.4 The Senate **approved** the updated Regulation 6 – Academic Appeals.

136.23-24 **Student Protection and Transfer Plans (SEN132/23-24)**

- 136.1 The University Secretary provided an overview of the Student Protection Plan and Student Transfer Plan as being a requirement of the OfS conditions of registration. The report provided an annual review for the approval of Senate.
- 136.2 The Senate was advised there had been a light touch review of both documents and that they would be further reviewed considering lessons learned from the Social Work England feedback once this had been completed. The plans would not need to be re-approved by the Office for Students unless there were significant changes made.
- 136.3 The Senate **approved** the updated Student Protection Plan and the Student Transfer Plan.

137.23-24 **Business from Committees (Doc SEN133/23-24 – SEN135/23-24)**

- 137.1 The Senate reviewed business from its Sub-Committees.

Learning and Teaching Committee (SEN133/23-24)

- 137.2 The PVC-LTSE provided an overview of the business discussed at the meeting of Learning and Teaching Committee, noting that Senate was being asked to approve the following:
- Programme titles for withdrawal
 - Consideration of Personal Circumstances Policy
 - Academic Integrity Policy
 - Learning and Teaching Committee Terms of Reference 2024/25
- 137.3 The Senate **approved** the Programme title withdrawals for:
- MSc Smart Grids and Energy Systems
 - MSc Smart Grids and Power Systems
 - MRes in Cancer Pharmacology
 - MRes in Drug Discovery and Safety Pharmacology
 - MRes in Pharmaceutical Technology
 - MRes in Molecular and Cell Biology
 - MRes in Chemical Biology
- 137.4 The Senate discussed the Consideration of Personal Circumstances Policy including:
- The lessons learned from the pilot undertaken in Pharmacy would be shared.
 - Time scaled for the provision of evidence; 7 days may not be sufficient.
 - Connection to the assessment regulation for 120 credit modules, exams, and progression.
 - Its connection to the fitness to sit assessment process and principles.
 - The need for a clear communications plan.
- 137.5 The focus of the discussion was on the awareness of the consequences of changes being made. This included ensuring appropriate administrative support and clarity of the process

for it to happen effectively and efficiently. The PVC LTSE advised that training would be rolled out and it was anticipated that the new approach would be simpler overall.

137.6 The wording of 3.12 needed to be changed to clarify 'should' rather than 'will' be granted.

137.7 The Senate **approved** the Consideration of Personal Circumstances Policy subject to clarification of 3.12 and whether seven days was sufficient time for the provision of evidence.

137.8 The PVC LTSE confirmed that the policy would be reviewed after cycle one.

137.9 The Academic Integrity Policy had been reviewed with a view to clarification and to ensure alignment with changes in the sector. It was noted that additional work would be needed as understanding of areas such as AI evolve. The review had included process mapping to clarify the process and develop the 'to be' approach.

137.10 The Senate discussed the policy noting:

- The need for effective communications for staff and students to support effective implementation.
- The need to ensure visibility of tracking what stage an appeal had reached.
- Communication during the appeal process.
- The communications and visibility would be supported by the implementation of the case management system.
- Ensuring clarity for international students in relation to any potential visa issues.
- The link between this process and the review of assessment regulations, particularly for resits.

137.11 The Senate **approved** the updated Academic Integrity Policy.

137.12 The Senate was asked to approve the Committee Terms of reference for 2024/25 noting that the University Secretary would be undertaking a review of the balance of Professional Services and Academic representation that would be discussed with the Chair of this and other Committees.

137.13 **ACTION: Review balance of professional services and academic representation on Committees. University Secretary**

137.14 The Senate **approved** the Learning and teaching Committee terms of reference and membership 2024/25.

Research and Innovation Committee (SEN134/23-24)

137.15 The incoming PVC Research Innovation and Engagement provided an overview of the report highlighting the international partnerships framework and contracts risk which had been addressed.

137.16 The Senate was asked to approve the Terms of Reference for 2024/25 noting the intention to include an early career researcher to the Committee from 2024/25.

137.17 The Senate **approved** the Research and Innovation Committee terms of reference and membership 2024/25.

Honorary Awards Committee (SEN135/23-24)

137.18 The Senate considered and **approved** the recommendations from the Honorary Awards Committee held on 4 June 2024 for nine honorary awards as noted in the report. These would be presented to Council for consideration and approval at its meeting on the 24 July 2024.

138.23-24 **Safeguarding and Prevent update (Doc SEN136/23-24)**

138.1 The PVC LTSE presented the report advising the Committee the existing Safeguarding Policy had been subjected to a routine update and refresh. This aimed to simplify what was considered to be a robust policy.

138.2 The Senate discussed the changes noting:

- The training matrix recognised the various levels of training needed for distinct roles
- Work was being undertaken to simplify the reporting process for welfare issues and create a better understanding of actions available.
- The need to ensure alignment with the DBS policy review being undertaken by the People Culture and Wellbeing Directorate.

138.3 The Senate noted the negative impacts on the EIA in relation to access to training for staff who were part time and had caring responsibilities. The PVC, LTSE confirmed that there would be universal online training and the training targeted at different roles would be adapted to take account of different circumstances.

138.4 The Senate **approved** the revised Safeguarding Policy.

139.23-24 **Applications for Honorary, Visiting and Emeritus Professors (Doc SEN108/23-24)**

139.1 The Senate considered and **approved** two Honorary Visiting Professor appointments for the Faculty of Health Studies.

- New Dr Natasha Taylor - with effect from the 1 July 2024 for a period of three years.
- Renewal Professor Rosie McEachan - to the 31 June 2027

140.23-24 **People Matters (Doc SEN138/23-24)**

140.1 The Senate received and noted the report.

141.23-24 **Faculty Board Summaries (Doc SEN139/23-24 – SEN142/23-24)**

141.1 The Senate received and noted the reports.

142.23-24 **Matters arising and action tracker (Doc SEN143/23-24)**

142.1 The Senate received and noted the report.

143.23-24 **Register of Interests (Doc SEN144/23-24)**

143.1 The Senate received and noted the report.

144.23-24 **Terms of reference and membership 2023-24 (Doc SEN145/23-24)**

144.1 The Senate received and noted the report.

145.23-24 **Draft Schedule of Business 2024-25 (Doc SEN146/23-24)**

145.1 The Senate received and noted the report.

146.23-24 **Draft agenda for the meeting on 23 October 2024 (Doc SEN147/23-24)**

146.1 The Senate received and noted the report.

147.23-24 **Any other business**

147.1 The Vice-Chancellor advised Senate that the extraordinary meeting scheduled for the 21 August would not go ahead as the Faculty of Engineering and Digital Technologies needed additional time to refine the co-design of the new vision for the faculty. A report would be presented to the next formal meeting of Senate in October 2024.

147.2 **ACTION: Faculty of Engineering and Digital Technologies revisioning report to Senate in October 2024. Vice-Chancellor/Dean of Faculty**

147.3 The PVC LTSE advised Senate that the Ofsted report for apprenticeship provision had been received and the University has been rated as 'Good' in all areas. The report was positive, and thanks were expressed to all concerned in achieving this outcome.

Secretary: Katherine Wass, Governance and Projects Officer

Date: July 2024