UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

	MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL SENATE **MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM ON 30 MARCH 2022**

Present:	The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dame Janet Beer (in the Chair), Pro-Vice-Chancellors Professors Birch, Brown and Hollander, Executive Pro-Vice-Chancellors Professors Beveridge, Kenny and van der Hoek, the Director of People and Services, Dr C Costello, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellors Professors Anderson, Endfield, Eyers, Harkness-Brennan, Sheffield and Yates, Dr Adeyemi, Dr Alsalloum, Dr Arnolds, Professors Atkinson, Balogun, Baylis, Clegg and Coleman, Dr Colquitt, Dr Cornell, Dr Corner, Professors Crolley, Fell and Gibson, Dr Gleave, Professors Guillaume, Hauskeller, Konev, Leek and Lyons, Dr Malathouni, Professors Marshall, McGowan, Murray and O'Halloran, Dr Ormandy, Dr Parameswaran, Professors Patterson, Pickard, Rocha, Saunders, Schewe, Scott, Sheard, Smith, Tackley, Watkins and Williams.
Apologies:	Received from 19 members of the Senate. This included the President, Deputy President and Vice-Presidents of the Liverpool Guild of Students and the Faculty student representatives who had indicated that they would be unable to attend following an all-student Preferendum held last semester in which their members had voted to support the UCU in their industrial action.
In Attendance:	K Ryan, University Secretary and Director of Legal and Governance/Clerk to Council; and E Leonard, Governance Manager (Secretary).

COMMITTEE AND MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

1. **Disclosures of Interest**

   Members were asked to disclose any interest that could give rise to conflict in relation to any item on the agenda. No such interests were disclosed.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

2.1 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 26 January 2022

   AGREED:

   i. The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2022 should be approved as an accurate record, noting that the request to amend minute 9xiii to reflect that the recommendations detailed in the Project RISE Green Paper should be approved '*subject to the concerns noted in item viii being addressed*' would not be accepted as the minute in its current form accurately reflected what was agreed and the need for work to be done to develop thinking was clearly included in 9v.

2.2   Vice-Chancellor Recruitment Process (minute 13 refers)

NOTED:

i.   A query regarding the membership of the focus groups to be formed as part of the Vice-Chancellor recruitment process would be dealt with offline.

3.   Report on Action Taken by the Chair

RECEIVED:

i.   A report setting out action taken by the Chair on behalf of the Senate.

REPORTED:

ii.   Since the last meeting, the Vice-Chancellor had taken action on behalf of the Senate in relation to the following:

Honorary Fellowship Nomination (approved 7 March 2022)
To endorse the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees that the University Librarian and Director of Libraries, Museums and Galleries, Phil Sykes, who would retire in May 2022, should be invited to receive an Honorary Fellowship of the University.

AGREED:

iii.   The action taken by the Chair on behalf of the Senate as outlined in 3ii above should be endorsed.

4.   Vice-Chancellor's Report

RECEIVED:

i.   An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor.

REPORTED:

ii.   Updates on sector developments regarding sanctions against Russia and support for universities in Ukraine would continue to be provided in the Vice-Chancellor's weekly updates to all staff. There were various initiatives which were in train, including possible twinning arrangements between individual universities in the UK and Ukrainian institutions. Work continued with Refugee Education UK and other groups to develop a co-ordinated approach to support students fleeing the conflict and make online resources available to staff and students in the Ukraine.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT/DISCUSSION/NOTE

5.   Liverpool Online Update

[The Strategic Director for Liverpool Online, Lynn Evans, attended for this item.]

RECEIVED:

i.   A presentation on the University's online education partnership with Kaplan Open Learning.

ii.   The University and Kaplan had a shared vision and fit of culture and values. Contractual benefits to the University included: academic authority; exclusivity; a commercially appropriate financial arrangement; and protection of the University's IPR. Key contributions from Kaplan included: capital investment; flexible capacity; digital leadership; digitally enriched student experience; and global marketing capability.

iii.   The partnership had to date enabled:

*   Effective collaboration across all areas of service design and delivery
*   A premium portfolio in areas of academic excellence
*   Alignment to University strategy and increased value capture
*   Strengthened governance and integration into University business
*   A suitable commercial arrangement and growth plan
*   Protection of existing students through the Laureate teach out and transfer of arrangements.

iv.   A range of programmes were currently offered across the following areas: Management, Computer Science, Health and Life Sciences, Education and Law. Owing to market conditions and competition, student number growth was slower than expected but the total student population as at March 2022 was 1392. There was good global diversity with Africa and Asia dominating but growth in the Middle East.

v.   The following phases of growth had been agreed:

Initiation Phase
2021/22
600 - 800 Enrolments Per Year
*   Establish Portfolio
*   Create Digital Assets
*   Establish Partnership Infrastructure
*   Transition Route for Laureate Students

Development Phase
2022/23
800 - 1,000 Enrolments Per Year
*   Refine the Value Proposition
*   Refine our Practice
*   Accelerate Recruitment
*   Pipeline Development
*   Develop Relationships

Maturity Phase
2023/24
1,200 - 1,500 Enrolments Per Year
- Encourage Innovation
- Pursue Wider Objectives
- Continuous Improvement.

NOTED:

vi.   The new partnership offered much improved opportunities for using existing material in different forums.

vii.   The main driver for the provision was not a financial one. Rather, it enabled the University to showcase its activity in hard to reach markets, to be innovative, and it was an important element of the University's widening participation efforts at postgraduate level.

6.   TEF Consultation Response

RECEIVED:

i.   Links to the OfS TEF consultation document and the Russell Group response to the consultation, together with a presentation by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education.

REPORTED:

ii.   The purpose of the TEF, as stated by the OfS, was that it should incentivise:

- Excellence in teaching, learning and student outcomes
- A provider to improve and to deliver excellence above the OfS's minimum baseline quality requirements, for its mix of students and courses.

TEF ratings would create this incentive by putting a spotlight on the quality of providers' courses, influencing providers' reputations and informing student choice.

iii.   The TEF would apply to UK-based undergraduate programmes, with a provider level rating proposed every four years.

iv.   Providers would be assessed on two equally weighted aspects, student experience, covering academic experience and assessment and resources, support and student engagement, and student outcomes, covering positive outcomes and educational gains. The evidence sources for the student experience aspect included the provider submission, the student submission and OfS indicators based on the NSS. The evidence sources for the student outcomes aspect included the provider submission, the student submission and OfS outcomes indicators. The indicators would contribute no more than half the evidence of excellence in each aspect. The overall judgement could be no more than one grade higher than the lowest of the two aspect ratings. Indicators would be compared to benchmarks, and performance that was at least 2.5% points above or below benchmark would be considered material.

v. The TEF would be at provider level but with scrutiny of split indicators including subjects. Ratings would remain as Gold/Silver/Bronze, with the suggested addition of an 'absence of excellence'/'requires improvement' rating. TEF ratings could be removed for breach of baseline requirements, but not revisited to improve ratings in the four year window. Current timescales were for submissions by November 2022 and outcomes by Spring 2023, although these might change given the responses made during the consultation, particularly with regard to the ability of new student officer teams and course representatives to produce a submission within their first few weeks of office.

vi. The exercise would use the last four years of data, benchmarked. The data for the University was already set. Student outcomes data were good but NSS data were variable, particularly in relation to assessment and feedback, academic support and student voice. There were already initiatives in all subjects to address NSS performance, but consideration needed to be given to whether they covered key areas of weakness, and how students had been and continued to be involved in the actions. A continuous process of evaluation and refinement was key. Case studies and evidence of impact etc. needed to be gathered at subject level.

NOTED:

vii. The University continued to adopt the principle that excellence in teaching, learning and student outcomes was not only required for TEF purposes but was the right thing to do.

viii. Suggestions on how learning gain should be defined and measured were welcome.

7. **Student Success Framework Action Plan**

[The Head of Sustainability, Policy, and Civic Engagement, James Coe, attended for this item.]

RECEIVED:

i. A copy of the draft action plan which set out the priorities of the three Student Success Boards (Academic, Personal and Future) over the next 12 months in implementing the Student Success Framework (SSF).

REPORTED:

ii. The Student Success Board Chairs, Governance Team, Business Intelligence Team, The Academy and Head of Sustainability, Policy, and Civic Engagement, had been working to align the SSF with all activity. So far, traction had been made in coalescing high-level initiatives like Welcome Week, awarding gaps, and a more active campus, into cross organisational plans. On an individual staff level, the SSF was increasingly being used in PDRs, workplan discussions and in the development of board papers and strategies.

iii. Currently, there was a gap between the top level initiatives and initiatives led by staff. The SSF had not quite yet become a central facet of planning processes. This was partly being addressed through inclusion of the framework in quarterly

reporting, partly through alignment between the planning round and framework, and it would partly be addressed through alignment between the framework and annual subject action plans.

iv.   One of the benefits of the SSF was that it was broad enough to ensure that every staff member could play a role in its implementation. However, it was this breadth which meant that the SSF could feel hard to pin down and this could make it difficult for staff to know precisely how they could support the framework. To address this, the Boards had developed a brief 12 month action plan with emphasis on clarity of information, measurable outcomes, and a few but highly impactful goals.

v.   The 12 month plan would deliver across all three strands and focus on student belonging, supporting the closure of awarding and employment gaps, and reviewing existing resources to ensure engagement with the framework as part of planning processes.

AGREED:

vi.   The 12 month SSF action plan should be endorsed.

8.   Securing Reasonable Prices from Publishers

[The University Librarian and Director of Libraries, Museums, and Galleries, Phil Sykes, attended for this item.]

RECEIVED:

i.   An oral update from the University Librarian and Director of Libraries, Museums, and Galleries on securing reasonable prices from publishers.

REPORTED:

ii.   An agreement had now been signed between the UK HE sector and Elsevier for a read and publish deal and a 15% reduction in price.

iii.   The deal followed many months of negotiation and a tremendous amount of work by library staff across the sector to model different scenarios (Plan B) and demonstrate that they could collectively function effectively if they were to leave the 'Big Deal'. The agreement combined a significant reduction in cost with greatly increasing the amount of material authors would be able to publish on an open access basis.

iv.   The deal set a new benchmark for negotiations with other large academic publishers. UK institutions were now negotiating with Springer Nature to secure an open access agreement for the Nature, Nature Research and Palgrave journals.

AGREED:

v.   This opportunity should be taken for Senate to record its thanks to Mr Sykes, as he embarks on his retirement, for his excellent contributions over the years to the

University and the sector, and to congratulate him on his invitation to become one of the very few recipients of a University of Liverpool Fellowship.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

9. **Education Committee**

    RECEIVED:

    i. A report on the meeting of the Education Committee held on 3 March 2022, covering:

        - Student Success Framework - Draft 12 Month Action Plan *(dealt with as a substantive item by Senate – see minute 7 above)*
        - Sector Developments
          UUK Framework for Programme Reviews
          Office for Students (OfS) Consultations (dealt with as a substantive item by Senate – see minute 6 above)
          Lifelong Loan Entitlement Government Consultation
        - Education Strategy: Strategic Projects Update
        - 100 Days Survey Outcomes.

10. **PGR Committee**

    RECEIVED:

    i. A report on the meeting of the PGR Committee held on 3 March 2022, covering:

        - School of Histories, Languages and Cultures PGR Internal Periodic Review Report and Action Plan
        - School of Engineering PGR Internal Periodic Review Report and Action Plan
        - Liverpool Doctoral College Functional Alignment
        - Actions Taken by the Chair.

    NOTED:

    ii. A summary paper on the Liverpool Doctoral College Functional Alignment would be shared with Senate members in due course.

    AGREED:

    iii. The School of Histories, Languages and Cultures PGR Internal Periodic Review Report and Action Plan and the School of Engineering PGR Internal Periodic Review Report and Action Plan should be endorsed.

11. **Research and Impact Committee**

    RECEIVED:

    i. A report on the meeting of the Research and Impact Committee held on 10 March 2022, covering:

- Project RISE: Annual Assessment of Contributions
- Consultation on the Design of the UK's Future Research Assessment System
- Negotiations with Elsevier in the context of 'Plan S'.

NOTED:

ii.   It would not be appropriate to share the draft Annual Assessment of Contributions paper as this had been drafted purely to prompt discussion by the Research and Impact Committee and was not intended for wider circulation.

12. Annual Report of the Committee on Research Ethics 2020/21

RECEIVED and **NOTED**:

i.   The annual report on the activity of the Committee on Research Ethics covering the 2020/21 academic year and describing the work of the Committee to uphold and develop the robustness of the University's research ethics framework.

OTHER ITEMS

13. Reading Programme

RECEIVED:

i.   A paper from one of Senate's elected members, Professor Murray, regarding the Reading Programme.

REPORTED:

ii.   At the Senate meeting held on 26 January 2022, there had been a discussion about the RISE Project Green Paper, which proposed to include a Reading Programme whose core purpose would be 'for evaluation and improvement of research output quality'.

iii.   Concerns about this had been raised by some members of Senate because, until now, it was the understanding of the academic body that the Reading Programme was used exclusively for REF preparation.

iv.   Although the RISE Project White Paper had not yet been presented at Senate and further discussion was clearly needed on this issue, academic staff had recently been instructed to submit their publications to a Reading Programme.

v.   Professor Murray had engaged with academic colleagues and had found that some were not happy with the launch of the Reading Programme.

vi.   The following was therefore proposed:

- That plans to introduce such a Reading Programme should be paused until the matter had been properly discussed at Senate
- That such a Reading Programme should not be implemented unless the majority of academics were in favour of it.

NOTED:

vii.   In response, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Impact confirmed that:

- The comments included in the paper were not new – the same points had been heard during Project RISE conversations but other perspectives had also been expressed. It was recognised that the Reading Programme required reform and this would be undertaken as part of work of the Reading Programme Working Group which would feed its proposals into the RISE White Paper
- There was a misapprehension that the existing Reading Programme was only to be used for REF purposes. The Code of Practice for the Annual Assessment of Individual Research Performance included section 2.2 on Individual Level Data which stated that 'Data relating to individuals would help inform Level 1 Heads and overseeing Level 2 unit decisions about annual review and associated training and development support. The data will also be an input, alongside other contributions, to help Level 2 Heads identify where a higher-level of contribution is required. In such instances this data may also be made available to the relevant EPVC and to HR to ensure discussions are handled in an appropriate manner'.
- The Reading Programme that had been in place for many years would remain in place until it was replaced and, therefore, this year's Reading Programme would be going ahead in the usual way.

viii.   The Reading Programme was important for providing confirmation regarding the quality of outputs, particularly for ECRs, and for supporting development.

ix.   It was vital to ensure that colleagues were well trained to overcome subjectivity and bias and that they were supportive and constructive in their feedback.

x.   It would not be possible to release the RISE qualitative data as, although there was a desire to be transparent, this needed to be balanced with the assurances given on confidentiality and safeguarding to participants. There was limited quantitative data. To support transparency, the minutes of the RISE Advisory Board meetings had been added to the RISE intranet.

xi.   The Reading Programme Working Group was looking at pre-publication evaluations.

xii.   There had been significant interest in serving on the RISE Working Groups. Care had been taken to ensure a broad and diverse membership of each Group but, in the interests of ensuring a manageable membership size of each Group, it had not been possible to select all those who had put themselves forward.

AGREED:

xiii.   Further consideration should be given to arranging a special meeting of the Senate to provide an opportunity for further discussion about this matter prior to the submission of the White Paper, noting the impact that such a meeting might have on proposed timescales.

14.   Date of Next Meeting

   NOTED:

   i.   The next meeting would be held at 2pm on Wednesday 29 June 2022.