

PRESENT:	Dr P Bonfield (Chair)	Professor M Kirkup
	Mr J Cappock (Deputy Chair)	Professor A Linn
	Professor A Hughes	Professor J Stockdale
	Dr S Jarvis	

APOLOGIES: Mrs J Lamarque (Secretary)

19.95.1 **Welcome:** The Chair welcomed all members and attendees to the meeting.

19.95.2 **Apologies:** There were no apologies received.

19.95.3 **Requests to discuss starred items and notification of AOB:** There were no requests to discuss starred items or raise matters not on the agenda.

19.95.4 **Chair's business:** There were no items of Chair's business reported.

19.96.1 Members received a summary of the decisions taken by the Coronavirus Response Team (CRT) during the period from early March 2020 in response to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) (Document UEB 200408A).

19.96.2 The Chair reported that the need for the CRT is reduced as the University moves from emergency incident response to a recovery phase; CRT meetings, which had been taking place daily, will take place less frequently or will be stopped.

19.96.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Education summarised the decisions taken in relation to teaching, learning and assessment and noted that some decisions relating to minor amendments to specific, usually specialist, programmes and postgraduate taught provision are still in progress.

19.96.4 Members considered that decisions taken by the Chair and the DVC (Education), in consultation with the CRT, have been timely and appropriate and (for example through the priority placed on student and colleague wellbeing throughout) clearly align with the University's core values.

19.96.5 Members recognised in particular the achievements of the DVC (Education) working with the support of the University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (USCOO) and in partnership with the Quality and Standards team.

19.96.6 Members discussed the process for providing colleagues with IT apparatus essential to continue remote working for a longer period and whilst marking and moderation are the primary tasks for academic colleagues. Members confirmed that apparatus should be requested and processed through the usual routes and, if necessary, will be despatched directly to locations outside of the University.

- 19.96.6.1 **ACTION USCOO** to clarify with the Director of Information Systems and Support how colleagues can access remotely text to speech and speech to text software, if required.
- 19.96.7 Members noted that the Director of Estates Planning and Services is planning for buildings re-opening in due course.
- 19.96.8 **RATIFIED** Members supported the decision taken by Chair's action, in consultation with the CRT, to waive a proportion of halls of residence fees for students who have departed from the halls of residence due to COVID-19. Members noted that the Finance and Property Committee approved the approach and the expected financial impact (reduction in income) by correspondence.

19.97 **PLANNING FOR THE 2020-21 ACADEMIC YEAR**

Operational scenarios relating to the 2020-21 academic year

- 19.97.1 Members discussed feedback from international agents and networks, noting that - if teaching cannot commence in September 2020 as planned - international students would prefer provision to be delayed to later in the Autumn (or to January 2021) than for programmes to be delivered online only.
- 19.97.2 Members noted that when considering physical vs online provision the University will need to consider how COVID-19 is progressing in different countries. Heads of College were encouraged to speak with the Global Recruitment and Admissions department about the different markets to support decisions about investment in alternative delivery methods.
- 19.97.3 Members will agree a set of principles for colleges to apply to their provision for the first term in 2020-21 and do not expect to offer a single approach for all students.
- 19.97.4 Members noted that they may need to consider a scenario where the University delivers online provision for students unable to travel to the University in parallel with delivery of a face-to-face/blended programme for students permanently resident in London, for example.
- 19.97.5 Members acknowledged that significant work will be required over the coming months to design and prepare programmes should we be required to commence programmes online from September 2020. A member suggested that the order in which modules are delivered may be altered so that those modules that require use of laboratories, studios etc are scheduled later in the academic year than they may be otherwise.
- 19.97.6 Members discussed the potential for phased return from 'lockdown' where some travel and return to workplaces is allowed yet elements of social distancing remain, e.g. large gatherings (e.g. lecturing to large groups) are prohibited.
- 19.97.7 Members discussed potential challenges in student recruitment for 2020-21, noting sector-wide concern about international student numbers.
- 19.97.8 Members discussed the potential to offer programmes according to a different schedule and whether this may impact on students' eligibility for student loans.
- 19.97.8.1 **ACTION USCOO** to check the student loan eligibility rules.
- 19.97.8.2 **ACTION Vice-Chancellor** to communicate with UUK on this matter if issues are identified that would restrict universities opportunities to meet the needs of students and maintain income from tuition fees.
- 19.97.9 Members discussed the potential impact of delayed starts on halls of residence occupancy in Semester 1.
- 19.97.10 Members noted that UEB will take decisions on the issues noted above and others relating to confirmation, Clearing, recruitment and enrolment over the next month.

Potential financial impact of COVID-19

- 19.97.11 The USCOO briefed members on the potential financial impact of COVID-19 on the 2019-20 budget. He reported that although the University is financially sustainable, and in a good financial position relative to the sector, expenditure and loss of income relating to COVID-19 are likely to result in a notable deficit at the end of this financial year.
- 19.97.12 Members discussed the University's approach to addressing the deficit and confirmed that the University will continue to deliver its activities; however, UEB will exercise prudence - for example, by stopping or postponing large capital projects and continuing to effectively manage costs to maintain an appropriate cash position.
- 19.97.13 Members noted that colleagues in the Finance department and Strategy, Planning and Performance continue to examine data and work on different scenarios and that the timeline for recovery to a surplus position will depend on Government policy decisions, for example any reintroduction of student number controls.
- 19.97.14 The USCOO briefed members on the current priorities for each Professional Services departments, both in response to COVID-19 and standard operations.
- 19.97.15 Members discussed communications with applicants and other potential students for 2020-21 and what feedback the recruitment team have received about these students' views on the current situation and commencing their studies in 2020-21.
- 19.97.16 The USCOO confirmed that the University will only furlough colleagues with no alternative employment and for all furloughed employees will cover the balance of salary costs (over and above the 80% from the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme) and including pension contributions. Members noted that the University is also liaising with contractors to do all we can to ensure they too are providing for their employees.

Risks and mitigations

- 19.97.17 Members noted that they identified several COVID-19 risks and mitigations during the discussions recorded above.

19.98 29 MARYLEBONE ROAD UPDATE

- 19.98.1 The DVC (Employability and Global Engagement) presented an addendum to a paper presented to the University Planning Committee in March 2020 about the development of inclusive enterprise and employer engagement activity at the University and proposed development of the University's property at 29 Marylebone Road to support such activity (Document UEB 200408B).
- 19.98.2 The DVC (Employability and Global Engagement) reported that whilst any development of a physical hub for this activity is delayed due to the impact of COVID-19, a phased approach is recommended that commences with the core components of a digital environment for enterprise, employability and employer/business/ industry engagement.
- 19.98.3 **APPROVED** Members supported the proposal to appoint to a new role of Director of Business Engagement and confirmed that the resource to support this role will be included in the relevant budget.
- 19.98.3.1 **ACTION USCOO** to discuss the new role with the Director of Student and Academic Services and the Director of Global Recruitment and Admissions.
- 19.98.3.2 **ACTION DVC (Employability and Global Engagement)** to contact the Human Resources department to commence recruitment.
- 19.98.4 Members postponed further discussion of other proposed roles and activities to late May/June 2020, noting that the proposals may be amended to reflect the impact of COVID-19 and/or discussions with members outside of formal UEB meetings.

- 19.98.5 Members confirmed that support for this post does not constitute agreement of the business case for development of 29 Marylebone Road, which remains subject to the appropriate approval processes as specified in the Financial Regulations.

19.99 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 19.99.1 Members supported a suggestion from the Chair to meet informally via Microsoft Teams on a weekly basis between April and July 2020 so that exploratory discussions that would usually take place on an ad-hoc basis continue whilst members are working remotely.