

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2021 IN ROOM M416 MARYLEBONE ROAD AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Dr Peter Bonfield (Chair) Abdelhafid Benamraoui Stephen Bunbury Zahra Butt, UWSU Matthew Gooderson Professor Alex Hughes (Deputy Chair) Savitha Jagannath Dr Sal Jarvis (Deputy Chair/Minute 21.14.1 to 21.14.4 and from 21.15.2) Professor Janet Jones Professor Malcolm Kirkup	Dr Nicholas Lambrou (to Minute 21.16) Professor Andrew Linn Caroline Lloyd Professor Luke Mason Professor Graham Meikle Dr Andy Pitchford (from Minute 21.19) Jane Stonestreet Dr Kalpana Surendranath Professor Harry Thapar Ian Wilmot Dr Leigh Wilson
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Nazia Bharde (Facilitator Minute 21.15) David Burt (Clerk) Professor Harry Charrington (Minute 21.19) Ian Dickens (Minute 21.19) Chris Hinge (Minute 21.19) Tiseana Hussain (Facilitator Minute 21.15) Shaneen Kainth (Facilitator Minute 21.15) Jane Lamarque Elaine McMillan (Secretary)	Professor Brendon Noble (Minute 21.19) Sally Olohan (Minute 21.15) Grace Plastiras-Phillips (Facilitator Minute 21.15) Jane Robson (Observer) Professor Fiona Ross (Observer) Emma Standen Jane Wright (Minutes 21.18 and 21.19)
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	John Cappock	Olivia Otts

**21.14 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 21.14.1 The Chair welcomed all members, attendees and observers.
- 21.14.2 The Chair welcomed new academic representatives – Matthew Gooderson, Professor Luke Mason, Dr Kalpana Surendranath – to their first meeting.
- 21.14.3 The Chair reminded all participants that all views count and open discussion is encouraged at Academic Council meetings.
- 21.14.4 Members noted apologies detailed above.
- 21.14.5 Members did not declare any conflict of interest for the business on the agenda.
- 21.14.6 The Chair confirmed that there were no requests to discussed starred items or to raise matters not on the agenda. The Chair informed members that as they had not responded in advance of this meeting, two starred items requiring a decision would be considered at the relevant point in the agenda (Minutes 21.21 and 21.22).
- 21.14.7 The Chair reminded members of the importance of reading papers and responding to requests at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.
- 21.14.8 Members did not submit any questions in advance of the meeting.

**Chair's report**

21.14.9 The Chair briefed members on internal and external factors affecting the University including:

- an update on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Court of Governors meeting 24 November 2021
- direction of Government policy
- student numbers
- strategic priorities
- the University's external reputation

**21.15 DRAFT STUDENT WELLBEING FRAMEWORK**

21.15.1 Sally Olohan - Head of Student Support and Residential Life – introduced the draft Student Wellbeing Framework (Document AC 211208E).

21.15.2 Members split into four breakout groups to discuss one of two questions:

- Are the 10 commitments that are summarised in the Framework document appropriate?
- Are the indicative “Moving Forward” priority actions for Commitment 2 (teaching and assessment) and Commitment 8 (student policies) desirable and achievable?

21.15.3 Members returned to the main meeting and individual members provided feedback, including:

- The need to consider how these issues relate to postgraduate research students
- A suggestion that all students are given a laptop on arrival
- Whether the framework could include a commitment to how we will respond when things are reported and brought to our attention? And how this links to the Ofsted and Office for Students expectations around safeguarding responsibilities
- Role of Personal Tutor roles and resources and engagement of students with Personal Tutors and other frontline colleagues

21.15.4 The Head of Student Support and Residential Life thanked members for their comments and informed members that the Framework will be submitted to the University Executive Board in January 2022 for approval.

21.15.5 The Chair thanked the Head of Student Support and Residential Life and the UWSU President for their work on the draft framework and thanked the facilitators for their support.

**21.16 CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

21.16.1 The Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) presented the updated Curriculum Framework (Document AC 211208B), which is recommended by the Teaching Committee.

21.16.2 The Deputy Registrar informed members that the Teaching Committee is awaiting feedback from the Timetabling Project on the core, options and electives section of the framework and that the Portfolio Planning Committee had recommended that policies which would be useful background reading could be usefully added to the framework.

21.16.3 **AGREED** Members confirmed that existing policies can be added to the Framework without requiring further approval from Academic Council. Any new policies will be submitted to Academic Council for approval prior to inclusion in the Framework.

21.16.4 A member suggested that the Framework could be clearer on how it is informed by the Education Strategy, distinctiveness of the portfolio and professional body requirements. The Deputy Registrar gave examples from the Framework that relate to the areas mentioned including a statement that professional body requirements take precedence.

- 21.16.4.1 ACTION Deputy Registrar** to consider whether information on professional bodies and their requirements requires further clarification.
- 21.16.5 In response to a member's query, the Deputy Registrar confirmed that the rationale for course structures, which was defined and communicated through the Learning Futures programme, will be included in the new section on core, option and elective modules when the Teaching Committee has considered feedback from the Timetabling Project.
- 21.16.6 A member queried whether the graduate attributes relate to the Framework. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Education explained that work on the Fit for the Future Westminster Graduate approach (agreed previously by Academic Council) needed to be mapped onto the graduate attributes and how that impacts on curriculum design.
- 21.16.7 A member proposed that the Framework should refer to Apprenticeships Standards and expectations of Ofsted for apprenticeship learners.
- 21.16.7.1 ACTION Deputy Registrar** to add the Apprenticeships Standards as an external reference point and consider how to incorporate the Ofsted requirements for learners.
- 21.16.8 A member suggested that interaction with the new University Industry Advisory Board is important.
- 21.16.8.1 ACTION Deputy Registrar** to refer to employer engagement and add the University Industry Advisory Board to the Framework document.
- 21.16.9 **APPROVED** Curriculum Framework to be implemented, subject to the points noted above.
- 21.16.10 **AGREED** The section in the Framework on core, option and elective modules will be updated in the 2022/23 academic year.
- 21.17 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS STRATEGY 2022-25 CONSULTATION**
- 21.17.1 The DVC (Education) and the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) gave an outline of the proposals under consultation (Document AC 211208C).
- 21.17.2 Members commented that the proposals lacked consultation with students and categorised matters as quality and standards that do not fit within that area.
- 21.17.3 The UWSU President confirmed that the proposals had been discussed at the UWSU Student Council and that the Students' Union expects many students to engage with the consultation.
- 21.17.4 A member encouraged UWSU to submit a response to the consultation separate to the University's response. Another member encouraged the UWSU to work with other London students' unions and the NUS on their responses.
- 21.17.5 Members noted that their comments are welcome and will inform the University's response.
- 21.17.5.1 ACTION Members** to email comments to the Deputy Registrar by midday on Friday 10 December 2021.
- 21.17.6 The Chair encouraged members to comment, noting that it is important to highlight where proposals may be prejudicial to the groups of students who come to our universities. He confirmed that he will engage with the London Higher and UUK responses to the consultation also.

## 21.18 DEGREE OUTCOME STATEMENT

- 21.18.1 The Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) presented the updated degree outcome statement (Document AC 211208D), which is recommended by the Teaching Committee.
- 21.18.2 The Deputy Registrar explained that updates reflect 2019/20 data and include a narrative about changes made to the degree algorithm because of the pandemic.
- 21.18.3 In response to members' queries, the Deputy Registrar confirmed that the statement only requires information about external scrutiny (not internal moderation activities) and undergraduate programmes.
- 21.18.4 **AGREED** Members recommend the statement to the Court of Governors for publication.
- 21.18.5 **AGREED** Members recommend to the Court of Governors that the statement is reviewed every two years.
- 21.18.5.1 **ACTION Academic Council Secretary/Clerk to the Court of Governors** to send a request to the Chair of the Court of Governors for a decision by Chair's action to publish the updated statement by the end of December 2021 and to confirm the review period.

## 21.19 FUTURE TEACHING DIGITAL AND SPACE REQUIREMENTS

- 21.19.1 The DVC (Education), Heads of College, the Head of School – Architecture and Cities (Professor Harry Charrington), the Head of School - Applied Management (Jane Wright) and the Head of School – Life Sciences (Professor Brendon Noble) presented their vision for future teaching digital and space requirements (Document AC 211208A). Presentations included examples of existing and planned digital and physical estate resources.
- 21.19.2 The Director of Estates, Planning and Services (Chris Hinge) reported to members that the Department is working in collaboration with colleagues in each School and College about their plans for our future physical estate and encourages innovative thinking about use of our estate.
- 21.19.3 The Head of IT Operations (Ian Dickens) reported to members that the Department of Information, Systems and Support welcomes the focus on the digital estate in support of teaching and is committed to use of hybrid and Cloud technologies and delivering more flexible services that meet the needs of colleagues and students. He commented also that this work includes development of the digital skills and capabilities of our students as well as digital resources.
- 21.19.4 Members raised concerns about the absence of postgraduate students – particularly postgraduate taught students – in the vision and asked that plans include dedicated space for these groups of students.
- 21.19.5 A member raised questions about how spaces and aspirations in Schools and Colleges to be open to and work with employers and other external bodies will work alongside the development of the Centre for Employability and Enterprise at 29 Marylebone Road.
- 21.19.6 The DVC (Education) encouraged members to contact her with any further comments on the presentation and discussion.
- 21.19.7 The Director of Student and Academic Services encouraged the presenters to engage with colleagues in the Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement team.

## 21.20 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

- 21.20.1 **AGREED** Minutes of the Academic Council meeting held on 20 October 2021 (Document AC 211208F) are an accurate record of the meeting.

## APPROVED

- 21.20.2 Members received and noted an update on actions from previous meetings (Document AC 211208G).
- 21.20.3 **Sub-committee terms of reference 2021/22 (Action 21.2.9.1):** Members received amended terms of reference for the Course Validation Standing Panel (Document AC 211208G Appendix 1).
- 21.20.4 **Quality and standards assurance report 2020/21 (Actions 21.3.5.1 and 21.3.9.1):** Members received the updated report, as submitted to the Court of Governors (Document AC 211208G Appendix 2).
- 21.20.5 **Student disciplinary panel membership 2021/22 (Action 21.9.1.1):** Members received the updated membership list (Document AC 211208G Appendix 3).
- 21.20.6 **APPROVED** Members confirmed corrected minutes from the meeting on 23 June 2021.

### 21.21 STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 21.21.1 **APPROVED** Updated terms of reference and membership for the Student Experience Committee (Document AC 211208H) to be implemented with immediate effect.

### 21.22 INCLUSIVE POLICY UPDATES

- 21.22.1 **APPROVED** Members delegate authority to policy authors to make any amendments necessary to apply the guidance on gender inclusive language and digital accessibility to policies within the remit of the Academic Council and its sub-committees (Document AC 211208I).

### 21.23 ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

- 21.23.1 Members noted the updated membership for 2021/22 (Document AC 211208J).

### 21.24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 21.24.1 Members did not raise any other matters for discussion.

### 21.25 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

All meetings start at 1.45pm and members have the option to participate onsite in Room M416 Marylebone Building or via Microsoft Teams.

Wednesday 23 February 2022  
Wednesday 6 April 2022  
Wednesday 22 June 2022