

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY 28 APRIL 2020 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT:	Dr P Bonfield (Chair) Mr J Cappock (Deputy Chair) Professor A Hughes Dr S Jarvis	Professor M Kirkup Professor A Linn Professor J Stockdale
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr M Brodeala (Minute 19.104) Mr N Catterall (Minute 19.102) Mrs J Lamarque (Secretary)	Mr J Scammell (Minute 19.104) Mr I Wilmot (Minute 19.103)
APOLOGIES:		

19.100 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 19.100.1 **Welcome:** The Chair welcomed all members and attendees to the meeting.
- 19.100.2 **Apologies:** There were no apologies received.
- 19.100.3 **Requests to discuss starred items and notification of AOB:** There were no requests to discuss starred items. The Chair agreed to a notification of AOB from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Education.
- 19.100.4 **Chair's business:**
- 19.100.5 The Chair updated members on online teaching and assessments, planning for the next phases, London Higher, employability of students and supporting the national effort.
- 19.100.6 The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research informed members that the consultation on the potential postponement of Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF) is open until 5 May 2020.
- 19.100.7 Members discussed the situation regarding Tier IV students. The Chair will raise the subject of Tier IV visas at the next Universities UK (UUK) meeting.
- 19.100.7.1 **ACTION Pro Vice-Chancellor for People and Culture** to liaise with the Director of Global, Recruitment and Admissions to formulate a key question on Tier IV visas for the Vice-Chancellor to raise at UUK.

19.101 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING

- 19.101.1 The minutes of the UEB meetings held on 17 March and 8 April 2020 (Document UEB 200428A) were agreed as an accurate record.
- 19.101.2 Members reviewed a summary of the actions from previous meetings (Document UEB 200428B) and confirmed those that were now complete.
- 19.101.3 **The University's response to COVID-19 (Action 19.96.6.1)** The University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (USCOO) informed members that the Director of Information

Systems and Support had not received any queries from colleagues regarding remote access to speech and speech to text software¹.

- 19.101.4 The soon to be published Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Risk Assessment form, and the current DSE webpage advise colleagues to select 'ease of access' in their Windows settings on university personal computers equipped with Windows 10 in order to access magnifier, dictation, narrator and other tools. There is also extensive information available on the Student Hub under Disability Learning Support.
- 19.101.5 **29 Marylebone Road update (Actions 19.98.3.1 and 19.98.3.2)** The USCOO confirmed that the Director of HR is progressing the recruitment of a Director of Business Engagement and arranging an interview panel.
- 19.101.6 **Actions and matters arising (Action 19.88.5.1)** The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that he had contacted Geoffrey Cole, Chair of the Quintin Hogg Trust, regarding the underspend on some QHT-funded projects and received a positive response.
- 19.101.7 **Professional Development Review (PDR) process (Actions 19.90.2.1, 19.75.6.1, 19.75.7.1 and 19.17.2.1)** Members discussed the PDR process, the progress so far and the way forward. A member commented that there is no reason why professional development reviews shouldn't go ahead to support individuals and set objectives. The Head of Westminster Business School (WBS) queried whether PDR roadshows that had been planned by Leigh Doster, Head of the School of Management and Marketing, would still go ahead.
- 19.101.7.1 **ACTION USCOO** to discuss with the Director of HR and report back to UEB with the right way of progressing the PDR process.
- 19.101.8 **Final process and Code of Conduct for academic and commercial events (Action 19.69.5.1)** The Head of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) informed members that the online form for booking of academic events was not accessible on the intranet. The Interim Head of Compliance and Apprenticeships attended the meeting for item 3.1. and confirmed that there had been an issue with users accessing the online form which was being dealt with.
- 19.102 PREVENT DUTY COMPLIANCE – EXTERNAL EVENTS GROUPS PERIODIC UPDATE REPORT**
- 19.102.1 Nicholas Catterall, the Interim Head of Compliance and Apprenticeships presented the Prevent Duty Compliance – External Events Group periodic update report (Document UEB 200428C).
- 19.102.2 Members heard that there have not been any events stopped as a result of escalation through the booking process. One event did not go ahead as the organiser refused to engage with the booking process. The number of bookings has remained consistent.
- 19.102.3 Members were informed that the Counter-Terrorism Local Profile (CLTP) briefing document for London FE/HE providers 2019/20 was added as Appendix B of the paper. Permission had been sought from the owner before sharing this information. The Prevent Lead is currently in the process of assessing need based on this document and will make recommendations accordingly.
- 19.102.4 A member commented that the low level of issues regarding events is testimony of a clear and robust process. The USCOO asked if the CLTP briefing document was up to date as it had little to say on right wing terrorism. The Interim Head of Compliance and

¹ **Post-meeting note:** After liaising with the DVC (Education) and the Head of Safety, Health and Wellbeing, the USCOO confirmed to the Secretary that any student who would use this software would generally have their own version installed on their devices and the Disabled Students Allowance funding covers this.

Apprenticeships will confirm whether with CLTP briefing document is up to date with the local coordinator.

19.102.4.1 **ACTION Interim Head of Compliance and Apprenticeships** to report to the USCOO once confirmation on CLTP briefing document is received.

19.102.5 A member asked about the launch of the Code of Conduct on Freedom of Speech which was approved at the Court of Governors on 18 March 2020. Members were informed that this had been put on hold temporarily and would be discussed with the Director of Student and Academic Services.

19.102.5.1 **ACTION Interim Head of Compliance and Apprenticeships** to liaise with the USCOO to make sure that the launch of the Code of Conduct on Freedom of Speech is carried out at the right time and in the right way.

19.102.6 A member asked if the Interim Head of Compliance and Apprenticeships was comfortable that the Students Union online activities were being suitably managed, and he confirmed that he was in contact with the Students Union, and regular checks and reviews on events are carried out.

19.103 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS PACK – MARCH 2020

19.103.1 Ian Wilmot, the Director of Finance, presented the Management Accounts for March 2020 (Document UEB 200428D).

19.103.2 The Director reported that the March accounts are favourable against the Quarter 2 forecast with £2m positive variants against forecast outturn. There has been a reduction of income across commercial activities with compensating adjustments in the cost base. Regarding the capital expenditure budget, the intention is to continue with the windows and Harrow Halls projects, with the IT forecast to spend £1.6 by the end of the year.

19.103.3 A member asked if there are any large expenditures in the pipeline for Information Systems and Support (ISS) capital spend or if there would be a saving and was informed there was likely to be a saving. Discussions on preparedness to deliver online learning are ongoing but not fully complete. A member commented that colleagues working in specialist areas might require extra kit that may need investment. As part of the way we work in the future we may need to think about investing in campus wide off-site licences, for example Adobe. Software, remote working infrastructure and tools are best focussed through the Digital Engagement team to report back to UEB at a later date.

19.103.4 Members discussed the final year surplus as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and were informed that student rents will be down, as will commercial income. Short courses will be affected although not significantly, and there will be a reduction in investment income. The move from Cavendish House to Wells Street is being finalised, with more outlay to come through over the next few months.

19.104 QUINTIN HOGG TRUST (QHT) BID OUTCOMES REPORT

19.104.1 Jordan Scammell, the Development Team Manager and Marius Brodeala, the Development Projects Officer presented the QHT bid outcomes report (Document UEB 200428E).

19.104.2 Members heard feedback from the QHT panel which included lack of clarity on the objectives of some bids which will be dealt with by improving the form for next year. The QHT panel funded 100% of the priority A bids and noted that there was more choice between the B and C priority bids which was well received.

19.104.3 Members were asked for their comments on any specific points or omissions. The Head of the College of Design, Creative and Digital Industries (DCDI) felt that this had been one of the weakest rounds for the college. The Hyphen project was a resubmission bid from last year, and he would like to know why it was unsuccessful this year. The Study Skills bid also fell to one side. The Head of DCDI and the Development Team Manager will discuss offline.

- 19.104.4 The Head of WBS was disappointed in the rejection of the PhD Flying Squad bid as potential partners were not named. Until funding was secure any potential partners could not be named. This is a key area for PhD employability.
- 19.104.5 The Head of WBS felt that there was a lack of two-way engagement in the bid process, and a lack of opportunity for bidders to present their case. However, due to the large number of bidders it was felt that it would not be possible for short presentations or engagement with teams to take place.
- 19.104.6 The Vice-Chancellor asked for a follow-up meeting to be arranged between UEB members and the Development Team Manager and the Development Projects Officer, to discuss the anticipated underspend of QHT funds. Members were informed that a majority of the project leads had requested roll over of the funds.

19.104.6.1 **ACTION Development Projects Officer** to set up an additional meeting with UEB members².

19.105 UNIVERSITY POST-COVID SCENARIOS

- 19.105.1 The DVC (Education) and the USCOO presented the University post-COVID scenarios (Document UEB 200428F).
- 19.105.2 The DVC (Education) presented the possible scenarios for 2020/21. A face to face start is unlikely, but a blended or online start is likely. A blended start is the most realistic option, with online being used as and when needed.
- 19.105.3 The USCOO commented that the approach is more complex in terms of academic planning and Professional Services (PS) will support and enable that. We must ensure that we don't lose sight of the lessons learnt in the past five weeks and the wellbeing messages received. The Wellbeing Sub-Group will expand their terms of reference and take forward. The Estates team are working to 3 August 2020 to open buildings. Clearing will take place online and there will be virtual open days and ongoing engagement with applicants.
- 19.105.4 Members were asked for their comments and feedback which included:
- A request to have an additional central resource of a new learning designer for each school provided by Blackboard, to work with individuals to upload information. Very few members of WBS are on Blackboard Ultra.
 - Helpful paper for overseas students. For the twin track to coexist conversations with PS colleagues need to take place urgently. An option of a January 2021 start for overseas PG students would be helpful.
 - Helpful to know what controlled access to specialist resources, e.g. architecture studios, might look like, and how to schedule and staff it. There is a lot of capacity in the buildings at Harrow and full capacity could be utilised to allow staggered access at any one time.
 - There will be a major onus on timetabling, and this should be brought into the process promptly.
 - No more large lectures from now and into the future.
 - Plan as far as possible to schedule the start of the academic year as normal, with a January start for some master's courses.

² **Post-meeting note:** Meeting confirmed for 12 May 2020 via Microsoft Teams

- Allow international students to start late if possible, with a catch-up group to start in January.
- Give international students a few weeks of latitude.

- 19.105.5 The USCOO confirmed that practical planning is currently underway such as how to access buildings, personal protective equipment (PPE), one-way systems and limiting people allowed in buildings. The buildings will be open from August with restrictions, laying out the roadmap for the coming year.
- 19.105.6 Members discussed the Wellbeing sub-group taking forward the issue of annual leave and encouraging colleagues to take their annual leave.
- 19.105.7 Members agreed in principle to follow as close as possible our original programme, with a physical and digital blended solution on offer, and privilege activities that can happen online. Large lectures will now be online.

19.106 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

UEB	12 May 2020
UPC	19 May 2020
UEB	26 May 2020
UEB	09 June 2020
UPC	16 June 2020
UEB	23 June 2020
UEB - away day location tbc	13 July 2020 - evening 14 July 2020 - all day
UEB	28 July 2020
UEB	11 August 2020
UPC	18 August 2020

19.107 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Library loan computers

- 19.107.1 The DVC (Education) informed members that all library loan computers will stop working in June with no work around and these will be needed by PG students over the summer. Due to time constraints this item will be discussed further at the UEB team meeting on 30 April 2020.