

Minutes

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| Present: | Dame Margaret Hodge (Chair) | Professor Paul Layzell |
| | Ms Ann Ewing (Vice Chair) | Mr Gerry O'Hagan |
| | Professor Sarah Ansari | Miss Kate Roberts |
| | Ms Alissa Chohan | Mr Peter Saraga |
| | Professor Michael Farthing | Mrs Chris Shoukry |
| | Professor Bob Fitzgerald | Mr Nick Perryman (Vice Chair) |
| | Mr John Gregory | Mr Balram Veliath |
| | Mrs Christine Goodyear | Mr David Walker |
| | Mrs Tina Harris | Mr David Williams |
| | Ms Denise Keable | Mr Ian Wilson |
| | Ms Sarah King | |
| Secretary: | Dr David Ashton | Deputy Principal (Operations) and Secretary to Council |
| In attendance: | Professor Ken Badcock | Senior Vice Principal (Academic Strategy, Partnerships and Research) |
| | Professor James Knowles | Deputy Principal (Academic) and Senior Vice Principal (Education) |
| | Mrs Mary White | Chief Financial Officer |
| | Mrs Hazel Jessop | Deputy Secretary to Council, Secondary Minutes |
| | Mrs Pauline Martin | Executive Officer for Council, Minutes |
| Observer: | Martin Albrecht | (UCU) |

1. APOLOGIES

All members were present. 21/01

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were none 21/02

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

APPROVED minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2020 (M20/405-M20/439). The actions were AGREED noting that the Students Education and Research Committee would report to Council on 1 July 2021. 21/03

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were none. 21/04

5. UN-STARRING OF ITEMS

There were none. 21/05

MAJOR BUSINESS

6. PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

RECEIVED the report from the Principal. 21/06

NOTED the large number of documents and consultations published by the government in January relating to post-16 education in England. DISCUSSED the loss of London weighting in the teaching grant with a cost to the College of £1.3m, with government redirecting funding towards STEM subjects. 21/07

DISCUSSED Covid-19 and the impact on RHUL students and staff. NOTED the key actions to enable the flexible delivery of education and the extensive academic, financial and well-being support available for students throughout the year in response to the changing situation and direction from government. 21/08

AGREED Council recognised the extra effort staff had made to cope with, and respond to, the demands made by the pandemic and the support of the Students' Union and Trade Unions. 21/09

DISCUSSED provisional outcomes for award in summer 2019 with 91% awards of 1st or 2.1 (up from 82% in 2019) which was not sustainable. The increase was as a result of the emergency regulations rapidly introduced at the start of the pandemic with similar steps put in place across the sector. Progression rules for 2020/21 would balance protecting students' attainment with the need to protect the value of the qualification and it would take a number of years to gradually return to the level of awards pre 2019/20, as discussed at the Students Education and Research Committee. 21/10

NOTED that the Students' Union planned to share information to inform students about grade inflation, attainment gaps and the value of a degree to aid students' understanding of the issue. 21/11

NOTED the range of work being delivered by the College in arts and humanities knowledge exchange, including an additional £2m grant awarded to the StoryFutures Academy. 21/12

NOTED proposals to change the emphasis of the current student complaints process away from financial redress and to move towards a process of engagement aimed at resolving the problem. 21/13

NOTED two recent racist incidents one, of student major misconduct, resulting in three students being permanently excluded from the College and a second involving a student racist attack on social media resulting in a Police investigation. College had provided support to all the affected individuals. 21/14

AGREED that it was important to reduce racial incidents, Council to receive a report on racial harassment procedures, training and communications at the next meeting. 21/15

RECEIVED the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism and the background to the request for it to be adopted by universities as a commitment against anti-Semitism. 21/16

Council AGREED to endorse the recommendation of the Executive Board and the Academic Board and adopt the following statement: 21/17

- a. Royal Holloway, University of London, makes a clear and unequivocal statement that anti-Semitism, and any other hate crime, will not be tolerated on its campus.
- b. The university adopts the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism in its entirety.
- c. The university accepts the recommendations made by the Home Affairs Select Committee in 2016:
 - i. It is not anti-Semitic to criticise the government of Israel, without additional evidence to suggest antisemitic intent.
 - ii. It is not anti-Semitic to hold the Israeli government to the same standards as other liberal democracies, or to take a particular interest in the Israeli government's policies or actions, without additional evidence to suggest antisemitic intent.

7. THREE YEAR STRATEGY

7.1 RECEIVED the implementation plan for the 3-year Strategic plan NOTING the projects, each linked to one of the three strategic pillars, and the expected outcomes. Engagement had already started across the College, with Schools and Heads of Professional Services and directly with staff via the Open staff meeting and the Principal's newsletter. 21/18

DISCUSSED and AGREED the plan for ongoing engagement with Council and committees, to monitor progress with the implementation, NOTING that the People and Environmental strategies would be brought to the relevant committees. 21/19

NOTED the risk to the successful implementation of the strategy if there was a lack of staff engagement. Consultation on the People Strategy had been delayed due to the pandemic but was now planned to be carried out after Easter. 21/20

AGREED the People Strategy should now be given a more prominent focus and would be reviewed by the People Committee, reporting to Council. Staff and student buy in to the strategy was central to its successful implementation, Council to be kept informed about the responses to engagement activities. 21/21

DISCUSSED the draft set of KPI's for successful implementation of the strategy and AGREED that members would consider them further and make any suggestions by email. Strategy and Governance Committee would review the comments and make a final proposal for sign off by Council at the May meeting. 21/22

7.2 CONSIDERED the Resource Plan which brought together the financial implications of the activities in the strategic plan and would be used as the basis for future resource planning. The approval of annual budgets and major capital items would be brought to Council for approval in the normal cycle of business. 21/23

NOTED that whilst the figures included in the plan over the next decade were indicative and based on a number of assumptions it highlighted the challenge to the financial sustainability of the sector, and to the College, due to fixed fee income and rising costs. 21/24

CONSIDERED the impact of the pandemic would require a review of the capital plan to ensure it met the future needs of the Education Strategy and the new methods of delivery. 21/25

AGREED to update Council with progress of the Slough project. 21/26

8. FINANCE

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| | RECEIVED the 2020/21 December management accounts which showed a £2.3m surplus compared to a £4.8m deficit to date final budget. The full year forecast position in December was for a full year forecast deficit £6.6m better than the budget deficit as a result of higher than budgeted student numbers. | 21/27 |
| | NOTED that the January intake achieved an additional 304 students and fee income of £4m which were not included in the December management accounts. With current planning aimed at reopening the campus for term 3, delivery of a reduction in the budget deficit was considered possible. | 21/28 |
| | NOTED that the February position gave comfortable £10m clearance of the covenants. | 21/29 |
| 9. | STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2021 | |
| | NOTED the February Count census at 1 February 2021, with Home/EU student numbers exceeding target, compensating towards the underachievement of overseas student numbers. NOTED the recruitment to January start programmes. | 21/30 |
| | NOTED the report of student applications for 2021/22 entry and analysis of UCAS UG applications showing our UK applications exceeded the sector and those of our UCAS competitors. Whilst EU UG applications were significantly down the College was less affected than the sector and our competitors. | 21/31 |
| | NOTED the analysis of the change in applications by subject (subjects with more than 100 applications) compared to the sector, showing growth in market share in some subject areas. | 21/32 |
| | DISCUSSED that some subjects experiencing slowing growth in applications needed to rethink the subject area offered. | 21/33 |
| | NOTED the reports of PGT applications, in line with previous years, and PGR applications, slightly ahead, and the analysis of applications by School. DISCUSSED how to address shortfalls in recruitment to PGT/PGR particularly reliant on overseas students. | 21/34 |
| | AGREED: | 21/35 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to discuss tariff and to determine our approach before clearing took place this year, 2021 • to report back on how we intend to improve performance on PGT recruitment in line with the strategy. | |
| 10. | AUDIT RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE | |
| | NOTED the annual report of the committee, deferred from the November 2020 meeting of Council. | 21/36 |
| | DISCUSSED | 21/37 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant progress made in defining risk appetite and in starting to define the risk framework • the committee continued its review of progress with the IT and cyber security plan where the College needed to be able to rely on stable technology. | |
| | NOTED that progress had been made with addressing the priority actions from internal audits and there was a plan that would enable College to move to an improved position on assurance of the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls by the end of this year. | 21/38 |
| | AGREED: | 21/39 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit Committee would provide a report to Council addressing the risks around technology and cyber security • following completion of the effectiveness review in 2020, the Chair and Vice Chair (AE) to report to Council on the effectiveness review recommendations. | |

STARRED ITEMS FOR REPORT AND FORMAL APPROVAL

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| 11.* | REPORTABLE EVENTS | |
| | There were none. | 21/40 |
| 12.* | REPORT OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CHAIR OF THE GOVERNING BODY | |
| | NOTED the approval by correspondence with the Chair (in order to meet the OfS December deadline for submission) of the Annual report on compliance with the Prevent Duty for the Annual Accountability Statement to the Office of Students. | 21/41 |
| | NOTED Items 13-17 carried forward from the November 18 2020 meeting of Council | |
| 13.* | THE ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE PREVENT DUTY | |
| | NOTED the Annual Report for the Annual Accountability Statement to the Office of Students. | 21/42 |
| 14.* | PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE | |
| | NOTED the report from the Principal 18 November 2020; superseded by the February report to Council. | 21/43 |
| 15.* | MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT | |
| | APPROVED the annual Modern Slavery Statement. | 21/44 |
| 16.* | HILDA MARTINDALE TRUST | |
| | APPROVED the appointments and re-appointment of trustees and NOTED the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Hilda Martindale Trust. | 21/45 |
| 17.* | FOUNDER'S ENDOWMENT FUND | |
| | NOTED the report of the Founder's Endowment Fund | 21/46 |
| 18.* | TERMS OF REFERENCE | |
| | APPROVED Terms of Reference of the Students, Education and Research Committee. | 21/47 |
| 19.* | REGISTER OF INTERESTS | |
| | NOTED the Register of Council members' Interests of for 2020/21. | 21/48 |
| 20.* | FINANCIAL REGULATIONS | |
| | NOTED the updated Financial regulations received by Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee and Finance Committee. | 21/49 |
| 21.* | ACADEMIC MATTERS | |
| 21.1* | NOTED the Academic Board Annual report 2019/20. | 21/50 |
| 21.2* | NOTED the Academic Integrity Charter. | 21/51 |
| 22.* | RESEARCH MATTERS | |

APPROVED the Research Integrity Statement 2019/20 recommended by Students, Education and Research Committee. 21/52

23.* SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

08 February 2021: SSE lease supply connect Elm Lodge, Harvest Rd. 21/53
Ref 10010.003221TR.

THE EXHIBITION BOOK 21/54

NOTED the following minutes were provided in the Exhibition Book as a separate document:

EB1 Academic Board

Minutes of the meetings

- 21 October 2020
- 9 December 2020 (Unconfirmed)

EB2 Minutes of Council Committee Meetings

Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee 9 November 2020

People, Staff Development, Reward and Wellbeing Committee 12 November 2020

Principal's Pay Committee 7 January 2021 (*Not yet available*)

Strategy & Governance Committee 28 January 2021 (*Not yet available*)

Student's Education and Research Committee 2 February 2021

People, Staff Development, Reward and Wellbeing Committee 4 February 2021 (*Not yet available*)

Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee 8 February 2021 (*Not yet available*)

Finance Committee 11 February 2021 (*Not yet available*)

OTHER MATTERS

25. Other Business

NOTED Professor Michael Farthing left the meeting. 21/55

NOTED that Council currently held one vacancy for an independent member. 21/56

Strategy and Governance Committee considered how best to fill the vacancy at its meeting on 28 January 2021, noting the opportunity to address the number of co-opted members, and agreed to recommend to Council that Professor Michael Farthing be appointed to a full independent member of Council.

AGREED to appoint Professor Michael Farthing as a full independent member with immediate effect. 21/57

26. Dates of next Council meetings: 21/58

All meetings on MS Teams unless otherwise stated.

- Thursday 6 May 2021, 17:00
- Thursday 1 July 2021, 17:00



Dame Margaret Hodge DBE MP
Chair of Council

Date 6 May 2021