

Council Minutes:
9 July 2021

PRESENT: Rt. Hon. Alistair Burt (Pro-Chancellor) (in the Chair); Professor Andy Schofield (Vice-Chancellor); Professor Steve Bradley (Deputy Vice-Chancellor); Ms Hanah Burgess (lay member); Mr Anthony Carey (lay member); Professor Sir Ian Diamond (lay member); Ms Bobby Georghiou (lay member); Professor Simon Guy (Senate representative); Mr Ian Johnson (lay member); Ms Alison Mullan (Senate representative); Baroness Neville-Jones (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Ms Marcia Reid Fotheringham (lay member); Professor Ella Ritchie (Deputy Pro-Chancellor); Mr Oliver Robinson (Students' Union President); Ms Gayatri Shewani (Student member); His Hon. Phillip Sycamore (lay member); Mrs Valerie Young (lay member).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Paul Boustead (Director of People and Organisational Effectiveness) (*for items 17-18*); Mr Giles Carden (Director of Strategic Projects and Chief of Staff) (*for item 7*); Ms Claire Geddes (Committee Secretary); Mr Simon Jennings (Director of Strategic Planning and Governance); Ms Nicola Owen (Deputy Chief Exaatri

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 7 MAY 2021

PAPER A

3.1 Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2021.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Council noted that, regarding item 9: Revocation of an Honorary Degree, University records had been updated.

4.2 Council noted that its USS Pension's Sub-Group has completed its work regarding the UUK consultation and submitted a response on behalf of the Council.

5. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE AND QUESTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE

5.1 The Vice-Chancellor reported on the following:

- (i) the successful event programme which had been held to mark the end of the academic year through partnership working with the Students' Union;
- (ii) further work undertaken to support staffs' return to work on campus post 19 July 2021 and the development of a blended mode of working;
- (iii) recruitment and admissions performance for 2021/22 to date and the continuing adaptation of conversion activity including a targeted package of measures to support international students;
- (iv) plans for academic delivery in 2021/22 based on the resumption of face-to-face delivery but retaining the most effective elements of the blended teaching approach including work towards the adoption of a Performance Rights Policy to enable lecture recording;
- (v) indications that the Government was considering progressing recommendations from the Augar Report in Autumn 2021;
- (vi) the Government's growing interest in freedom of speech and expression at universities and potential future regulation in this area;
- (vii) the ongoing national negotiations regarding the USS Pensions position and the consequences of no agreement being reached;
- (viii) the appointment of Professor Wendy Robinson, currently a member of the senior team at the University of Exeter,

15. INTERIM UPDATE FOR COUNCIL ON THE OFFICE FOR STUDENTS' REQUIREMENT FOR REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE WITH CONSUMER PROTECTION DURING PANDEMIC JUNE 2021 PAPER I
- 15.1 The University Dean of Academic Quality introduced the paper which provided additional assurance to Council as to how the University had had due regard to an OfS requirement in January 2021 for universities to ensure academic delivery during the pandemic continued to be compliant with consumer protection requirements.
- 15.2 Council noted the steps taken to give the Council assurance including an audit of teaching delivery and the work of the Joint Faculty Teaching Committee in coordinating any changes to provision. Members noted the assurance given by the audit outcomes and the intention to repeat the exercise for teaching delivery in the Lent and Summer terms with outcomes to be reported through the Annual Teaching Quality Report.
- 15.3 Council noted the report and was satisfied with the level of assurance it provided regarding the University's compliance with consumer protection regulations.
16. UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE OUTCOMES FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2019/2020 PAPER J
- 16.1 The University Dean of Academic Standards presented the draft Degree Outcomes Statement for 2019/2020 which had been written to meet UKSCQA requirements. She highlighted the increased number of students awarded 1st and 2(i) degrees consistent with the patterns for this period in the sector, variations in attainment gaps overtime, the challenges of small data sets for BAME students and the potential impacts alternative assessment methods deployed due the pandemic.
- 16.2 Council reviewed and discussed the Degree Outcomes Statement, the explanations for degree outcome elevations and welcomed the steps being taken to further interrogate the data at a faculty and departmental level.
- 16.3 Council approved the Degree Outcomes Statement for publication.
17. RESPONSE TO COUNCIL SUB-GROUP ON CULTURE PAPER K
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18. REVIEW OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GOVERNANCE PAPER L
- 18.1 The Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) presented the context behind the proposals to realign the terms of reference and membership of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDI), a joint Committee of Council and the Senate.
- 18.2 Council was supportive of the need to ensure that the Committee was effectively discharging its governance role and recognised that the scope of the Committee's business was likely to grow over time. Council noted the introduction of forums to ensure University community engagement with EDI-related developments. Members advised that the use of data would be critical to advancing the EDI agenda.

18.3 Council noted Senate's approval of the proposed changes at its meeting of 16 June and confirmed its own approval of the changes to the EDI Sub-Committee terms of reference and membership as set out in the paper.

