

Summary of Business for  
**Council Effectiveness and Statutes Review**  
**Project Board**



Title	<b>Project manager's report</b>
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Status	For information
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Summary	This paper outlines the progress of the project since the last board meeting, including the outcome of the discussions of the review work at Council on 20 March 2013. The attached programme for the project shows that the expected completion date has slipped by three months due to constraints around the timing of presenting recommendations to Academic Board and to Council. Suggested copy for a web page for the project is presented. The Board is asked to consider methods for engaging staff in the process in a more active way.
Previous consultation	18 February 2013, 11 March 2013
Resource implications	Extended time commitment for Project Board members.
Risk analysis	See attached risk register
Effective date of introduction	Immediate
Recommendation	<b>The Project Board is asked to APPROVE the web page, CONSIDER the revised programme, and DISCUSS communications methods</b>

**Project manager's report**

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*1. Council paper on governance review project*

The Project Board met on 11 March solely to consider a draft paper from the Board to Council. The agreed paper is appended to this report. Council considered the recommendations presented in the paper:

- Council **noted** the benchmarking report and the results of the effectiveness survey; one correction was required in the benchmarking report, to state that only one other university surveyed has more than one non-academic staff member on their governing body (action complete)
- Council **approved** the changes to the operation of Secretariat and to meeting procedures
- Council **minuted** that an annual roundup of issues discussed by Academic Board and its related committees is requested for the March meeting of Council
- Council **approved** the extension of the current governance review project to encompass a review of the governance arrangements in operation for Academic Board
- Council **approved** the publication of the benchmarking report and the effectiveness survey on the College website
- Council **approved** sharing the benchmarking report with the universities that supplied information in its preparation
- Council **noted** that the project board will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of our governance arrangements, and will bring further recommendations to Council at future meetings.

Council also requested that there be an action plan for the implementation of the recommendations that had been accepted and for the next steps towards addressing the three outstanding issues, namely how to achieve the required skills mix for Council, how to handle the volume of business, and how to evaluate the optimal size for Council. A draft of this plan is presented in CESP/13/12, necessarily incomplete pending a meeting of the Secretariat to consider resources required and to specify the anticipated authorisation mechanism for each action.

*2. Communications to stakeholders*

Christine Cartwright has written to the chairs of the working groups (Statutes, Academic Board, and HR policies and processes required to support changes to Statutes) to invite them to consider the membership of their groups. Christine will follow this up with one to one meetings with the chairs to establish dates for the groups' first meetings.

Christine has also written to the UCU to invite them to nominate representatives for each of the working groups. Union representatives from GMB and Unite will also be invited to join the HR working group.

Christine has also written to the Students Union to invite them to nominate representatives for the Statutes and Academic Board working groups.

Draft copy for the proposed internal web page for the governance review project is appended to this paper. We propose launch this site week commencing 15 April, if the Board agrees this timing. The survey responses (graphs only, with summary of findings) and the (corrected) benchmarking report will be made available through this page as soon as the site is live. Consultation meetings and focus groups will be timetabled over the coming weeks and the schedule of these will be made available through this page. Anne Uttley, Head of the Internal and Corporate Communications, is supporting the project team in ensuring the page is of good quality and that notices are put on the message boards for staff and student home pages once the site is live. An email address for the project will also be created to be accessible to all members of the Secretariat, to be ready for use before the web page becomes live.

### *3. Project programme*

As there has been delay to programme due to needing Council approval to open consultation and to Easter shut-down period, it now seems extremely unlikely that the original timetable can be maintained. A revised programme is appended, which shows that the new expected timescale for having draft Statutes requiring Council resolutions is January 2014. This delay will require the creation of an extra meeting of Council in order to meet the requirement that the two special resolutions required to approve changes to Statute be between one and three months apart.

Alternatively the Project Board may see this delay as not requiring any additional Council meeting, as it is unlikely that any revisions to Statute 25 will be complete by the January 2014. Therefore the Board should consider whether it would be preferable to accept as a new working timescale that a **complete** set of revised Statutes, including amendments to the Statute relating to academic freedom, will be ready for consideration by Council in October 2014 and November 2014.

## Appendix 1: Website copy

In October 2012, the College and the Council approved the creation of a Project Board to oversee and direct work to evaluate the governance of the College. This included conducting a review of the effectiveness of Council and considering the revisions which might be necessary to the College Statutes. The Board began a thorough review of the College's governance arrangements which involved submitting a comprehensive survey to all Council members and members of the senior management team as well as conducting a benchmarking exercise with 16 institutions across the HE sector.

The 16 were chosen as appropriate comparators due to their similarity to Royal Holloway in size, degree of research focus and in many cases, their status as direct competitors for students. The list comprised 13 pre-1992 and 3 post-1992 institutions.

Based on the results of the benchmarking and the answers given to the survey questions, a series of initial recommendations were proposed to Council which addressed the issues raised. Council has accepted these recommendations and is prepared to receive further advice in the future. An action plan has been devised to implement the recommendations made. The Project Board will also further consider how best to achieve a good skills mix on Council, how to manage the volume of business, and how to evaluate the optimal size for Council.

In order for the Statute reform to be as thorough and of as high a quality as possible, the work to achieve this has been divided into several workstreams. Each workstream will be facilitated by a working group made up of representatives of the affected parties.

The first workstream will focus on the reworking of the Statutes themselves, taking on board legal advice as necessary. This group will be chaired by Rachel Knight (Deputy College Secretary) and the secretary will be Christine Cartwright (Governance Assistant).

The second workstream will examine academic governance at Royal Holloway and consider the composition and responsibilities of Academic Board as well as its schedule of delegations. This will enable the group to determine the true purpose of the Academic Board and examine its size and membership with greater understanding. This group will be chaired by Anna Sendall (Academic Registrar) and the secretary will be **TBC**.

The third workstream concerns the policies and processes of HR, ensuring they are up to date and comprehensive. This group will be chaired by Katie Normington (Vice Principal Staffing and Dean of Arts & Social Sciences) and the secretary will be Gemma Bailey (Acting Director of HR).

Each workstream will consider input from staff and students collected through a consultation process that will include open meetings, focus groups, and the opportunity to send in comments via email to ...@rhul.ac.uk. The schedule of open meetings will be posted [here](#) and those wishing to be invited to focus groups should email ...@rhul.ac.uk. There will be consultation through the summer term, and again in September when draft recommendations will be presented for discussion and refinement.

The aim of undertaking this consultation is to ensure that everybody has the chance to have their voice heard and that the document produced at the end of the project reflects the opinions of the College.