

Minutes of the Meeting of Council - Wednesday 21 May 2014 in MX001 at 5pm

Present:	Mr Stephen Cox (Chair) Mr John Brannan Mr Alex Cadier Mr Dave Cobb Mr Gurpreet Dehal Professor David Gilbert Mrs Christine Goodyear Mr Majid Hawa Mrs Margaret Jack	Professor Paul Layzell Ms Sarah Moffat Mr Iain Ross Professor Anne Sheppard Mrs Chris Shoukry (from item 8 onwards) Mr Amarbeer Singh Mr David Spence Ms Colette Wilson
Apologies:	Mr Paul Blagbrough Mr Jeremy McIlroy	Mr Mark Newlands Mr Nick Perryman
In attendance:	Ms Helen Coleman (until item xx) Professor Rosemary Deem Professor Paul Hogg Professor Rob Kemp Professor Bob O'Keefe Mrs Cheryl Newsome Mrs Julia Roberts Mr Graeme Robinson <i>Mr Simon Higman</i> <i>Mrs Rachel Knight</i> <i>Mrs Hilary Baker</i>	Director of Communications and External Relations Vice Principal Education Vice Principal and Dean of Science Deputy Principal (Planning, Resources and Partnerships) Vice Principal and Dean of Management and Economics Director of Human Resources Director of Strategic Development Director of Finance <i>Registrar and Secretary</i> <i>Deputy College Secretary</i> <i>Secondary Minutes</i>
Observer:	<i>Janice Cullen (not for item 19)</i>	<i>On behalf of UCU</i>

1 MEMBERSHIP

NOTED apologies received from Mr Paul Blagbrough, Mr Jeremy McIlroy, Mr Mark Newlands and Mr Nick Perryman. Mrs Chris Shoukry sent apologies for her anticipated late arrival. 14/60

NOTED that this would have been the first meeting for Mr Nick Perryman as a lay member whose term of office filling a casual vacancy would run until 31 July 2015. 14/61

2 REGISTER OF INTEREST

No member raised a conflict of interest, not previously declared, with an item on this agenda. 14/62

3 MINUTES

AGREED and signed the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 March 2014 (M14/01-M14/59) 14/63

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

RECEIVED a tabled updated draft of the Chair's response to the Students' Union petition submitted to Council at the last meeting (CL/14/21). The Chair outlined the three minor amendments that had been made to the circulated paper and following discussions it was AGREED that the response could be sent pending further clarification from the Director of Finance regarding the inclusion of an absolute figure which identified the value of investments directly sourced from increased tuition fees. 14/64

5 UNSTARRING OF ITEMS

NOTED that item 13, Report of decisions taken by the Chairman, had been unstarred. 14/65

6 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

RECEIVED the Principal's report (CL/14/13) 14/66

NOTED that net migration figures continued to exercise the government and the sector. The removal of the English language test and licensed examinations, whilst not thought to impact College's long term recruitment of international students in itself, remained a concern given the perception generated in international markets. Had the confirmed 180 international students with these qualifications had their visas revoked the financial impact would have been notable. The College remained committed not only to contributing to the efforts of trade bodies such as Universities UK to influence and respond to government policy, but also to taking opportunities that presented themselves to approach key figures directly. One such opportunity had recently presented itself in the form of a pending visit from Norman Baker MP, an alumnus and Minister of State for Crime Prevention at the Home Office. 14/67

NOTED the positive recruitment and admissions outlook for September 2014. Compared to the same time last year the numbers of those securing Royal Holloway as their first choice institution had increased by 18%. 14/68

NOTED the publication of a report on the economic impact of the College on the UK economy, Surrey and Runnymede. The report demonstrated that the College generated £482m gross added value to the UK economy and supported 7,290 jobs, of which approximately half related to the County of Surrey. The element generated by student spend alone was £133m and 3,331 jobs. This report would play an important role in developing relationships with Surrey County Council and Runnymede Borough Council. 14/69

NOTED that the 2013 – 14 pay dispute between the employers and the trade unions had ended with an agreement which included a 2% pay settlement for 2014-15. The UCU had published the ballot results by branch and it was noted that 11% of the members of the Royal Holloway branch had voted against the settlement, which was lower than the national average. 14/70

NOTED that further to the Estates master plan detailed work had been undertaken on developing an Estates Implementation plan that scoped, costed and prioritised specific projects to achieve the master plan objectives. The list of small projects needed over a five year horizon had been costed at £110 million net of external contribution. This included projects relating to the library, student residences, and £40 million on smaller projects, for example, a new media building. The list was subject to change and refinement. Council discussed its own role in the governance process, and noted that the forecast annual capital spends and financial forecast of all spending were extremely important and required full consideration. As per the normal schedule of business these key financial documents would be presented to Council at its next meeting. 14/71

NOTED the relationship with the University of London, which provided Royal Holloway with a number of services beyond degree awarding powers. It was expected that the scope of services offered would be widened in the near future which would be reported to Council as appropriate. The Principal invited the views of members with regard to whether they desired further discussion about the University, which could be facilitated at the Council strategic away day in November. 14/72

NOTED the update regarding development and alumni relations matters. Council discussed the progress of the Curiosity Project. It was observed that it was still early days for the project, but that there had been engagement with big donors. There had been a number of student sponsorships valued at £40 to £50 k, but there was still significant work to complete to achieve £10 million for the library project. 14/73

Council Meeting

7 ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS

RECEIVED an update on progress with the development of new programmes (CL/14/14) which had been initiated by discussions at the 2013 Council Strategy away day and the agreed strategic plan. Progress that had been made was crucial for the student and staff experience, and the increased student numbers would help finance the Estates plan. To date the focus had been on undergraduate provision because it provided a three year return, although attention was now turning to postgraduate taught provision. Taking into account relevant market intelligence and input from across the College the Student Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Group had identified nine new possible undergraduate programmes which were at different stages of development and approval. It was anticipated that the introduction of the new programmes would be staggered over three years starting in 2015-16 with law, software engineering, liberal arts and digital communication. The target student numbers had been agreed with the departments, and they were felt to be testing but achievable. Accompanied with a warning that they were subject to change, the Council were provided with an estimated baseline of an extra £9 million in 2018-19 and £13 million in 2021-22 compared to 2014-15 budget. 14/74

NOTED that most of the proposed programmes would build upon current strengths but that law and electronic engineering would mark entry into new discipline areas for Royal Holloway which would not be expected by outsiders, and that they could be potentially expensive to operate. Council discussed the development plan for the engineering programme, and noted that the footprint was the least expensive given the commonality with existing provision, particularly physics. There was also potential for matched funding from HEFCE who were looking to invest in STEM subjects. Of particular note was the desire to collaborate with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to create a female friendly course. Council welcomed this strategy and the opportunities and possible risks were discussed. 14/75

8 THE STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

RECEIVED a copy of the Strategic Risk Register (CL/14/15) with a presentation by members of the College Senior Management responsible for owning and mitigating the individual risks. This was a significant item on the agenda as a key responsibility of Council required by HEFCE and Council welcomed the opportunity to look at the risks in detail. 14/76

NOTED that this was an opportunity for members to be satisfied that they understood the risks and allowed them to identify other mitigations or to request further information in the future. Each risk was presented and subsequently followed by a detailed discussion led by the members. Points of clarification have been minuted. 14/77

NOTED that there were no risks related to capital projects because they were expected to change rapidly over the next few years. It was AGREED that a separate register would be provided to the next meeting which outlined the strategic risks of individual projects. 14/78

AGREED to revise the phrasing of the mitigation described within the first risk (regarding branding) to ensure that it was consistent. Council also discussed the difficulties posed by the interrelationship with other risks listed. Concern was expressed about the mitigation indicators of success, and it was noted that a number of feedback mechanisms are used, including surveys of incoming students and decliners and that the best measures that could be used were used. 14/79

NOTED that academic departments had different measurements of their own position in the sector, not all of which translated into student numbers (risk three regarding planned student recruitment targets). Some departments found it easier than others to meet their student recruitment targets and the Deans were working with their departments to address this challenge. Some departments were susceptible to changes across the sector, for example some disciplines were struggling to meet demand whereas others were finding the inverse. AGREED to add mitigation requiring repeated competitor analysis. 14/80

Council Meeting

- NOTED that risk four (regarding research activity) committed the College for the long term to improving interdisciplinary research activity regardless of the Research Excellence Framework (REF). Research was considered to be essential to the Royal Holloway reputation and brand, and this element should be protected, using additional resources where necessary. 14/81
- NOTED that risk five (regarding maintaining teaching arrangements and student academic experience) could be phrased more dynamically. Council queried why the risks were regarding processes rather than not being seen as a place of teaching excellence. A number of new initiatives had already been introduced to improve teaching excellence and the main risk was that the College would fail to combine those with processes with the consequence that they would be unsuccessful. Given all the work that had gone into improving teaching excellence and its importance it was AGREED that the high tolerance level would be reconsidered. 14/82
- NOTED that although the strategic risk register included risks related to the provision of non-residential and residential space, there was no reference to non-academic or extra-curricular activity in these spaces. The strategic risk register was described as the 'tip of the iceberg' and related to those risks with the biggest impact. Research had shown that extra-curricular provision did not influence student choice of institutions unless all other factors were equal, therefore although this element of College life remained important and an area of investment there were no plans to include it on the strategic risk register at the current time. 14/83
- DISCUSSED risk eight (UK Visa and Immigration highly trusted status) and the particular risks posed by overseas recruitment agents, particularly regarding fraud and bribery. Council received a verbal summary of the various checks used by the College and were assured that College was confident that should an incident occur it would be identified by the backwards control checks. 14/84
- DISCUSSED the role of Council in ensuring governance systems and processes were efficient and enabled development. Discussion focused on the effective operation of Council and its role in maintaining governance oversight of large programmes of work which ranged from the Estates programme to the donor programme. College committees, management and staff also had governance responsibilities and it was noted that College had improved the governance processes to ensure that all implications of work programmes were identified and managed whilst ensuring that processes were balanced with the ability to be agile and to respond to significant change, either locally or within the sector. 14/85
- NOTED that the Audit and Compliance Committee would receive the strategic risk register at its next meeting to check that the risks were reflected in the Internal Audit Programme. 14/86
- 9 INSTITUTIONAL RISK**
- RECEIVED HEFCE's annual assessment of institutional risk (CL/14/16). Noted that the assessment noted the best possible outcome available, and that the College's sector position was described in Annex A. 14/87
- 10 POLICY FOR APPROVAL**
- RECEIVED the Grievance Policy and Procedure (for all staff except those covered by Statute 25) (CL/14/17). The policy was the end product of a process which had reviewed the previous policy against employment law and best practice, and had been approved by the trade unions. It provided clear guidance for managers and staff, and that College had secured the use of a mediation service from an external provider to assist in resolving disputes. 14/88
- APPROVED the Grievance Policy and Procedure. 14/89
- 11 COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**
- RECEIVED an update on Council membership and the proposed induction programme for new lay, staff and student members in October 2014 (CL/14/18). The programme was an improvement on the current provision and it was expected to become part of the annual Council schedule. The revised start time of the Council meeting in October was noted. 14/90

- APPROVED the induction programme for new members. 14/91
- 12 GOVERNANCE**
- RECEIVED the interim Council Regulations (CL/14/19). These regulations brought the College up to date following changes to the statutes in 2011 and to College management structures. It was expected that Council would receive a package including proposed draft statutes and accompanying Council Regulations for consideration at its July meeting. 14/92
- APPROVED the immediate effectiveness of the interim Council Regulations with the removal of the last sentence of section 30.1 " *The procedures for appointments of Deans and Associate Deans and for review of appointments shall be in accordance with best practice*". 14/93
- 13 REPORT OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CHAIRMAN**
- RECEIVED a verbal report from the Chairman regarding the decision of the Finance Committee on 8 May 2014, which had agreed to recommend the purchase of a residential property adjacent to College land which was of strategic value in the development of the estate, as envisaged in the College's master plan. The purchase price was above Finance Committee's approval level for variations to the capital budget, and Chairman's approval was given to the purchase to enable it to progress in a timely manner. 14/94
- 14 REPORT OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY CIRCULATION**
- NOTED no decisions taken by circulation 14/95
- 16 RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING MINUTES (CL/14/20)**
- Audit and Compliance Committee 11 February 2014 14/96
- 17 NOTED THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES HAVE NOT MET SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF COUNCIL**
- Equality & Diversity Committee 14/97
Health and Safety Assurance Committee
- 18 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**
- NOTED that the following documents have been sealed since the last meeting: 14/98
Letter of certification for students (specified) admission to the Vatican museum. Sealed 26 March 2014
- 19 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- RECEIVED a verbal update regarding an ongoing Employment Tribunal. 14/99
- 20 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**
- NOTED that the next meeting of Council will be held on Wednesday 2 July 2014 at 17.00 in IN244. 14/100

Signed:

Mr Stephen Cox CVO
Chair of Council

Date

