University of Roehampton London

UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON COUNCIL

Minutes of the 93rd meeting of Council held at 4pm on Monday 18 March 2024 in the Oak Suite, Elm Grove, Digby Stuart College and remotely via Teams

Present:	Phil Walker (Chair), Mark Allen, Dr Priscilla Chadwick, Janet Cooper, Jennifer Coupland, Dr Mari Cruice, Lindsey Doud, Sr Christine Edwards, Prof Jean-Noël Ezingeard, Dennis Hone*, Revd Dr Tim Macquiban*, Ruth Martin*[1], Prof Sunitha Narendran, Michael Pearson, David Sharkey, Revd Canon Dr Jennifer Smith*, Kevin Thomas
Secretary:	Dr George Turner
Notes:	Elaine Lentell
Apologies:	Dr Aleata Alstad-Calkins, Amy Hopkins
In attendance:	Prof Anna Gough-Yates, Liam Hurley, Richard Keogh[2], Andy Lamb[3], Hiren Patel[4] Ian Pleace, Leigh Robinson[5], Tom Rowson, Rachael Stone

* *Attended the meeting remotely via MS Teams*

Regular Business Matters, Minutes and Reports

1. Welcomes, introductions, apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting, in particular:

- Hiren Patel, Deputy Director of IT Services, who attended to present Item 14.
- Professor Leigh Robinson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Education), who attended to present Item 15.
- Dr Richard Keogh, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & External Engagement), who attended to present Item 16.
- Andy Lamb, Executive Director of Human Resources, who attended to present Item 17.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 A declaration of interest was noted and explained for three Council members as follows:

2.2 Council noted that the Southlands Methodist Trust (SMT), by which Tim Macquiban and Jennifer Smith were nominated as Council members, was

[1] Left the meeting following Item 13.
[2] Joined the meeting for Item 16 only.
[3] Joined the meeting for Item 17 only.
[4] Joined the meeting for Item 14 only.
[5] Joined the meeting for Item 15 only.

involved in an ongoing matter relating the University's lease of Mount Clare. This was relevant to Item 13 on the agenda.

2.3 Council further noted that the Society of the Sacred Heart, by which Christine Edwards was nominated as a Council member, acts as a guarantor for the University's loan with Lloyds Bank. This was relevant to Item 13 on the agenda.

All who declared a conflict agreed to withdraw for discussion of the relevant item.

3. Notification of Any Other Business

3.1 The Following additional items of business were noted:[6]

3.2 Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

3.3 Fellowship of the University. Council **approved** the conferment of a fellowship to Janet Cooper on the recommendation of the Joint Honorary Awards Committee. Council was advised that the Vice-Chancellor had taken Chair's action to endorse the award on behalf of Senate earlier in the day.

4. Minutes

4.1 The minutes of the 91st and 92nd meetings of Council, which were held on 11 December 2023 and 3 January 2024 respectively (Paper RUC93/1), were **confirmed** and Council **approved** the redactions for the published minutes as highlighted.

5. Matters arising

5.1 Council noted the matters arising as set out in Paper RUC93/3.

6. Chair's action/ Items approved by electronic circulation

6.1 Council noted the items approved by electronic circulation since the last meeting as detailed in Paper RUC93/3.

Strategic Reports and Items

7. Chair's Items

7.1 There were no items to report.

8. Vice-Chancellor's Report

8.1 Council received the Vice-Chancellor's Report (Paper RUC93/4), and noted the following points in particular:

[6] Janet Cooper left the meeting for these items.

a) Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

b) Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000

c) The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) was overseeing a review of the Student Route Visa. There was a risk that the Government would further restrict the basis on which the Student Route operates, thereby making the UK a less attractive destination for international students.

9. Director of Finance's Report

9.1 Council received the Director of Finance's report (Paper RUC93/5). The following points were noted in particular:

9.2 That the TRAC return had now been concluded and submitted to the Office for Students.

9.3 That work on third-party debtors was progressing and a consultant had been engaged to conduct a review.

9.4 Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

9.5 Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

10. Students' Union Report

10.1 Council noted the contents of the report (Paper RUC93/6), which was taken as read in the RSU President's absence.

11. University of Roehampton's Strategy 2030

11.1 Council received the final draft of the University's new strategic plan (Paper RUC93/7).

11.2 Council noted that a high-level draft had been provided which focussed on three key themes. The next steps would be considered at the Council Away Day on 9 May 2024 along with the initial formation of KPIs.

11.3 Council discussed the draft strategic plan and provided a range of feedback that would be incorporated into the next iteration of the strategy. It was agreed that it would be helpful to discuss more explicitly the strategic journey that the University has been on during the course of the Enabling Strategies, and the strategic shifts that have occurred in that time.

12. Reputation Management and Enhancement

12.1 Council received an update, in Paper RUC93/8 on how the University is navigating strategic positioning and reputation management, Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Items for discussion and/or approval

13. Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000

13.1 Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000

13.2 Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000

13.3 Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

13.4 Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

14. Overview of the University's IT Systems

14.1 Council received the report and noted the contents therein (Paper RUC93/10).

14.2 Council was assured that a deep dive on cyber security was presented at Audit Committee every 6 months.

15. Accelerating Student Outcomes work to address emerging challenges

15.1 Council received the update on student outcomes (Paper RUC93/11), and noted the following key points:

- That the cost-of-living crisis and the need to work while studying had affected outcomes, along with the removal of COVID-era support in the University's academic regulations.
- That student attendance had improved and the number of study coaches had been increased.

15.2 Council thanked the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Outcomes) for the update.

16. Online Education

16.1 Council received an update on online education (Paper RUC93/12) and noted the contents therein. It was noted that the online model would appeal to different demographics and that the variable model would enable market penetration in new markets.

16.2 Council thanked the PVC (Research & External Engagement) for the update.

Annual Reports and Returns

17. Gender Pay Gap Report

17.1 Council received the annual Gender Pay Gap Report for 2022-23 (Paper RUC93/13), which showed a mean gender pay gap of 6.3% and a median gender pay gap of 7.7%. It was explained that the increase in the median gap was mainly due to an increase in female staff in lower pay profiles.

17.2 Council noted the overall progress made on the gender pay gap and that the University continued to be ahead of the sector average.

Committee reports

18. Council Committees

18.1 Audit Committee

a) Council received the report from the Chair of the Audit Committee (Paper RUC93/12).

b) Council noted that good progress was being made on the planned mitigating actions in the strategic risk register. Council further noted that the Committee was intending to test the market for internal audit.

c) Council **approved** the proposed changes to the strategic risk register as set out in the report (Strategic Risk Register provided at Appendix 1).

18.2 Finance and Resources Committee

a) Council received a verbal update from Lindsey Doud in the Chair's absence and noted that the Committee had considered the following:

- The updated financial forecast.
- Human Resources matters, including in relation to pensions and staff development.

18.3 Health, Safety and Welfare Committee

a) Council received the report from the Chair of the Health, Safety & Welfare Committee (Paper RUC93/13).

b) Council **approved** the revised Fire Safety Policy (provided at Appendix 1).

19. University Senate

19.1 Council received the report from Senate and noted the contents therein (Paper RUC93/14). Council took assurance that the University was continuing to deliver improvements to support both student and graduate outcomes, with a focus on student engagement and continuation.

Other items for information

20. Committee Schedule for 2024-25

20.1 Council noted the schedule of business for 2024-25 as set out in Paper RUC93/17.

21. Any Other Business

21.1 Council granted approval to authorise the bank mandate presented by the Director of Finance.

Farewells and thanks

Council gave its sincere thanks and bade farewell to Janet Cooper, who was stepping down as Vice-Chair after 12 years on the University Council. The Chair of Council and Vice-Chancellor gave speeches expressing the significant contribution that Janet has made to the University during her time on Council, and Janet was informed that she would be bestowed with a University fellowship.

Signed: Phil Walker

……………………………….Date: 01.07.2024
Phil Walker, Chair of Council