

UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON COUNCIL

Minutes of the 97th meeting of Council held at 3pm on Monday 9 December 2024 in the Oak Suite, Elm Grove, Digby Stuart College and via MS Teams

Present: Phil Walker (Chair), Mark Allen, Dr Priscilla Chadwick, Dr Mari Cruice, Dr Aleata Alstad-Calkins, Lindsey Doud,¹ Tamsin Eastwood, Professor Jean-Noël Ezingard, Dennis Hone, Professor Jane Longmore, Ruth Martin, Professor Sunitha Narendran, Michael Pearson, Imran Shafiqi, David Sharkey, Revd Canon Dr Jennifer Smith, Kevin Thomas²

Secretary: Dr George Turner

Apologies: Jennifer Coupland, Sr Christine Edwards

In attendance: Richard Keogh, Ian Pleace, Leigh Robinson³, Tom Rowson, Rachael Stone

Regular Business Matters, Minutes and Reports

1. Welcomes, introductions, apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting, in particular Dennis Hone who was attending his last meeting of Council before stepping down.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Notification of Any Other Business

- 3.1 The Secretary notified Council that there was an item of additional business relating to the appointment of a new member of Council and Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee to succeed Dennis Hone.
- 3.2 There was no other business.

4. Minutes

- 4.1 The minutes of the 96th meeting of Council held on 14 October 2024 (Paper RUC97/01), were **confirmed** and Council **approved** the redactions to the published minutes as highlighted.

¹ Joined the meeting remotely.

² Joined the meeting remotely.

³ Joined the meeting for Item 10 only.

5. **Matters arising**

5.1 There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

6. **Confirmation of items approved by Chair's action**

6.1 Council **noted** the matters that had been approved by Chair's action since the last meeting, as set out in Paper RUC97/02.

Strategic Reports and Items

7. **Chair's Items**

7.1 There were no items to report.

8. **Vice-Chancellor's Report**

8.1 Council **noted** the Vice-Chancellor's Report (Paper RUC97/3), including the following points in particular:

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

8.3 **Policy Environment:** Despite increases in tuition fees and changes to NI employer contributions, financial challenges persist. OfS modelling suggests 72% of higher education providers could be in deficit by 2025-26. Recruitment remains challenging with a modest rise in UK undergraduate acceptances and a 16% drop in international student recruitment at a sector level.

8.4 **Student Education:** Campaigns to improve academic outcomes have led to significant improvements in attendance rates. The SAIL project is progressing with revalidation of programs. Career Development Week was a great success and attracted over 1500 attendees.

8.5 **Research and Engagement:** Q1 saw 21 bids submitted, with eight awarded. Highlights include a staff member featured in Tech and Science Daily and involvement in the London Regional Defence and Security Cluster.

8.6 **Media Activity and Events:** University research continues to garner media attention. A successful Civic Reception in November focused on partnerships in local boroughs and beyond.

9. **Students' Union Report**

9.1 Council **noted** the Students' Union Report (Paper RUC97/4), including the following points in particular:

- 9.2 The financial performance at the start of the academic year has been positive, with the Union being approximately £11k ahead of budget across August and September.
- 9.3 The Union's annual audit commenced in October and has been smooth, with audited accounts to be presented in December.
- 9.4 Four new trustees were appointed to the Students' Union's Board of Trustees in October.
- 9.5 The Union has engaged Bates Wells to review the Articles of Association and byelaws.
- 9.6 Speak Week, an annual campaign, was used to launch the Digital Rep System, receiving 363 submissions.
- 9.7 The Representation team supported the launch of Student Voice Forums, attending 11 events and sharing five feedback reports.
- 9.8 In late September, the Union delivered 14 events, with over 3000 students attending. Despite some challenges, the overall week ended in a surplus position.

10. A data-led approach to delivering student education ambitions

- 10.1 Council **noted** the report from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Paper RUC97/5) and the presentation at the meeting of the University's student analytics dashboards. Council noted in particular the following:
- 10.2 That the University's student data analytics capacity had been transformed, with data now much more readily available and easy to manipulate. The dashboards being presented to Council were now routinely used as part of the University's management and governance arrangements to drive improvements in student outcomes.
- 10.3 That the dashboards were available to everyone and represented an easier way of managing student outcomes. However, take-up of the provision was variable and consistent use of the resources would be a focus going forward.
- 10.4 Council thanked the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) for the interesting and informative presentation.

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

- 11.1** Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000..

12. Director of Finance report

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

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

- 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.Flexible options voluntary severance costs of £1.9m.
- c) Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- d) Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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

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

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

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

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

13. Updated Financial Forecast

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. Going concern analysis

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

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

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

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

15. External Audit Report

15.1 Council **noted** the External Audit Report (Paper RUC97/10). Council noted that almost all items listed in 'outstanding matters' in the paper were now complete, with the final version of the report due to be issued imminently.

16. Letter of representation

16.1 Council **approved** the letter of representation as set out in Paper RUC97/11 and authorised the Chair of Council to sign the letter on behalf of Council.

17. Annual report and financial statements for year ended 31 July 2024

17.1 Council **approved** the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2024 (Paper RUC97/12). In doing so, Council noted information it had received under Items RUC97.12 – RUC97.16.

18. Audit Committee Annual Report 2023-24

18.1 Council **approved** the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2023-24 (Paper RUC97/13). In doing so, Council noted the following:

18.2 That a small number of changes to the version of the report presented to Council had been agreed by the Audit Committee on Friday 6 December 2024. These included changes to the wording around internal audit, and some other minor disclosure points. The report still needed to be finalised following completion of the external audit. The final version would be submitted to the Chair of Council and the Vice-Chancellor in due course.

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

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19. University Group Structure

19.1 Council **noted** the report set out in Paper RUC97/14.

20. Annual Research Integrity Statement

20.1 Council **approved** the report set out in Paper RUC97/15, noting that the date of approval had been stated incorrectly and would be amended.

21. SETEC – Building name change proposal

21.1 Council **approved** the proposal to change the name of the Jubilee Building to the Dorothy Buchanan Building, as set out in Paper RUC97/16.

Committee reports

22. Council Committees

22.1 Nominations and Governance Committee

- a) Council **noted** the report as set out in Paper RUC97/17.
- b) Council **approved** the proposed changes to the University Regulations.

22.2 Health, Safety & Welfare Committee

- a) Council **noted** the report as set out in Paper RUC97/18.
- b) Council **approved** the proposed changes to the Fire Safety Policy.

22.3 Joint Honorary Awards Committee

- a) Council **approved** the proposed changes to the composition of the Joint Honorary Awards Committee as set out in Paper RUC97/19.

22.4 Remuneration Committee

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

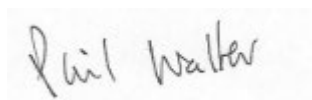
23. Other business

- 23.1 Council **noted** the verbal update from the Chair on a recent recruitment process for a new member of Council and Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee. Council **noted** that the Secretary would share details of the proposed appointment for approval by circulation.

Farewells and thanks

Council gave its sincere thanks to Dennis Hone, who was stepping down as a Member of Council and Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee after 7 years, having previously served on the Finance & Estates Committee as an independent member. Council thanked Dennis for his service, leadership and commitment to the University over the years, and wished him well for the future.

Signed:



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Phil Walker, Chair of Council

Date: 17.03.25