

UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON
COUNCIL

**Minutes of the 79th meeting of Council held at 4pm on 4 October 2021
in the Oak Suite, Elm Grove, Digby Stuart College**

- Present: Phil Walker (Chair), Mark Allen, Farrah Black, Dr Priscilla Chadwick, Bishop Jonathan Clark, Janet Cooper, Jennifer Coupland, Prof Ann R. David, Sr Christine Edwards, Prof Jean-Noël Ezingard, Revd Dr Tim Macquiban, Prof Laura Peters, Sheena Pindoria, Revd Canon Dr Jennifer Smith, Kevin Thomas
- Secretary: Dr George Turner
- Notes: Elaine Lentell
- Apologies: Dennis Hone, Liam Hurley, Dr Sacha Powell, David Sharkey
- In attendance: Prof Anna Gough-Yates, Baljit Kaur, Liam Hurley, Jordan Kenny, Prof Sunitha Narendran¹, Tom Rowson

Regular Business Matters, Minutes and Reports

1. Welcomes, introductions, apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present and noted that it was the first Council meeting on-campus since November 2019.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Notification of Any Other Business

- 3.1 It was agreed that any other business would be discussed at the end of the meeting.

4. Minutes

- 4.1 The minutes of the 78th meeting of Council, which was held on 21 June 2021 (Paper RUC79/1), were **confirmed** and Council **approved** the redactions for the published minutes as highlighted.

5. Matters Arising

- 5.1 Council noted progress on the matters arising as set out in Paper RUC79/2.

¹ Attended for item 10

Strategic Reports

6. Chair's Items

There were no items to report.

7. Vice-Chancellor's Report

7.1 Council received the Vice-Chancellor's report (Paper RUC79/3) and noted the following points in particular:

External Environment

- a) That there was continuing uncertainty in the external environment. The sector was anticipating possible changes to Higher Education funding during the upcoming Government spending review, which could result in reduced funding for Universities. However, no changes were expected to be confirmed until after the spending review concluded on 27 October 2021, and the University's Strategy Delivery Programme had endeavoured to factor in anticipated changes to the HE funding regime.
- b) That the UCU would be balloting for strike action on pay and conditions as detailed at 1.2 in the paper. The University was aiming to minimise the impact and staff take-up of any potential strikes, in light of the disruption students had already experienced during the pandemic and the strike action in late 2019/ early 2020.

Sustainability

- c) That while there had been a significant increase in applications for 2021-22, the resulting acceptances and enrolments were lower than expected due to a number of factors including admissions threshold decisions, competition from more selective universities and better school exam results. Work would continue on improving conversion and there would be increased focus on the January 2022 intake. Council offered its thanks to all of the teams involved in the application and enrolment cycle.

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

- d) The University's first cohort of Adult Nursing students based at Croydon College have begun their studies for this semester. Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- e) That under the Strategy Delivery Programme, a significant number of new courses had been approved for delivery in September 2022. A range of Apprenticeship programmes were also in the process of being developed.

Student Education

- f) That positive graduate outcomes had shown an improvement, primarily due to students progressing to postgraduate study.
- g) Council noted the recent press coverage of the University.

Secretary's note: Under press coverage on page 10 of the report, it should state 'Professor' and not 'Dr' Aisha Gill. The paper has been duly amended.

8. Director of Finance's Report

- 8.1 Council received the report (Paper RUC79/4) and noted the following key points:
- 8.2 Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 8.3 That QAHE had recruited a higher number of students than forecasted and continuation rates had improved Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 8.4 Forecast 2021-22. That the latest forecast scenarios reflected the pay and non-pay costs achieved and identified. Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

9. Students' Union Report

- 9.1 Council received and noted the contents of the President of the RSU's report (Paper RUC79/5), including the following:
- 9.2 That at the latest meeting of the Trustee Board, the board had formally approved a new relationship and services agreement between the Students' Union and the University, which sets out operational and governance arrangements that define the partnership between the two entities. The Finance and Resources Committee approved the agreement at its meeting on 29 September.
- 9.3 That the by-election for the vacant V-P (Education) and part-time voluntary officer posts were scheduled to take place across the week of 18-22 October, with nominations open from 14 September to 13 October.
- 9.4 The President and the RSU were thanked for coordinating a successful and well-attended Welcome Week back on-campus while ensuring that students adhered to the COVID-19 measures in place.

Other items for discussion and/or approval

10. Faculty of Business and Law Presentation

- 10.1 Council received a presentation on the newly formed Faculty of Business and Law from the Faculty's Dean, Professor Sunitha Narendran.
- 10.2 Council thanked Professor Narendran for a highly informative presentation and wished her well with the planned initiatives.

11. Teaching Delivery for 2021-22

11.1 Council received the paper (RUC79/6), outlining the scenario planning and measures put in place for the delivery of teaching in this academic year, in view of the return to campus and continuation of both online and face to face teaching.

12. Research Integrity Statement

12.1 Council received the Research Integrity Statement (Paper RUC79/ 7) and noted the contents thereof.

12.2 Council **approved** the Research Integrity Statement for 2020-21.

Committee reports

13. Council Committees

13.1 Audit Committee

- a) Council received a verbal update from the Chair of the Audit Committee.
- b) Council noted that the Committee had received assurance on planning for the potential forthcoming industrial action by the UCU.
- c) Council was advised that the Internal Auditors had carried out audits on the School of Arts and Data Quality and had given satisfactory assurance and substantial assurance respectively. KCG also conducted a 'lessons learned' review into the University's COVID-19 response, from which actions would be fed into the University's business continuity processes.
- d) Council noted that the review of the Internal Auditors had been a positive exercise. The Committee had discussed a number of opportunities for enhancing the provision of internal audit, which would be fed back by the Chair.
- e) Council **noted** the proposed changes to the high-level risk register to include two new risks:
 - E8: If the government's restructuring of the ITT market leads us to losing our ITT provision, then there will be a significant loss of income
 - A9: If we are unable to identify and smoothly implement a new student records system, there could be significant and costly disruption to core student administration.

The revised risk register will be circulated to Council following the meeting.

Action: Secretary

13.2 Finance and Resources Committee

- a) Council received a verbal update from Mark Allen, member of the FRC, in the Chair of the Committee's absence.

- b) Council was advised that the University's loan with Lloyd's bank would be transferred from the LIBOR inter-bank benchmark rate to SONIA (Sterling Overnight Indexed Average). The proposed transfer would be presented to Council for approval at the next meeting.
- c) Council noted that the Committee had approved the Roehampton Students' Union budget for 2021-22.
- d) Minute exempt from publication under s.43 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

13.3 Nominations and Governance Committee

- a) Council received the Nominations and Governance Committee report (Paper RUC79/8).
- b) Council noted the update on the Governance Review and that further changes would be made to the University Regulations on the scheme of delegation and Senior Officer reporting lines. The revised regulations would be presented to Council for approval at a future meeting.
- c) Council was advised that some minor amendments would be made to the competency matrix as detailed in the report. The updated document would be circulated to members for review before the next meeting.
- d) Council members were notified that the Governance & Legal Office would be in contact shortly to request brief biographies and photos for the University website.

Action: Governance & Legal Office

14. University Senate

14.1 Council noted the Senate report (Paper RUC79/9) and the following points were highlighted.

14.2 129th meeting. Senate approved a proposal from the Curriculum Strategy Committee (CSC) regarding changes to its terms of reference and membership. The proposal also recommended changes to the curriculum development process, to make it more streamlined and to reflect the increased emphasis on market demand and employability outcomes for students. Senate also approved changes to the programme review process, from a time-based review to a risk-based review, that reflect the approach the Office for Students would take, which it considered would better enable it to discharge its responsibilities in relation to academic governance and quality and standards at the University on behalf of Council. Senate also endorsed a proposal for the University to review its degree algorithm once data for the 2020-21 academic year was available, with a view to placing additional weight on a student's exit velocity in any revisions to the algorithm.

14.3 130th meeting. Senate approved a proposal to amend the composition of the Research Integrity and Ethics Committee, to enhance its independence and

reduce the potential for conflicts of interest, while ensuring sufficient oversight. One of the changes was to introduce a requirement that the Council appointee to the Committee should be from among the independent members of Council. This would be taken forward by the Nominations and Governance Committee.

15. Annual Schedule of Council Business

15.1 Council **noted** the cycle of strategic updates on the University's enabling strategies and assurance papers (Paper RUC79/10).

16. Any Other Business

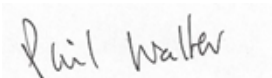
16.1 The Chair thanked the University Executive team on behalf of Council for the recent graduations at the Royal Festival Hall, which had been a suitably joyous occasions and very well-attended.

16.2 The Chair noted that he had contacted Nancy Richards, the outgoing Academic Support Representative to Council, to thank Nancy for her contribution to Council during her tenure on Council's behalf.

16.3 The Vice-Chancellor reiterated the invitation to the official opening of the Clinical Simulation Centre at Croydon College on Friday 15 October. It was agreed that the invite would be recirculated to members of Council following the meeting.

Action: Governance & Legal Office

Signed:


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Phil Walker, Chair of Council

Date: 22 November 2021

Minutes prepared by:
Elaine Lentell, Governance Officer, October 2021