

COUNCIL
Wednesday 26 October 2016

DRAFT UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

Present:

Sir Nicholas Montagu (Chairman)	Professor Paul Anderson	Professor Richard Ashcroft
Miranda Black	Dr Veronique Bouchet	Monica Chadha
Sarah Cowls	Professor Simon Gaskell	Celia Gough
Stella Hall	Simon Linnett	Bushra Nasir
Luke Savage	Professor Bill Spence	Professor Steve Thornton
David Willis		

In attendance:

Eleanor Crossan	Laura Gibbs	Joanne Jones
Professor Lingwood	Jonathan Morgan	Jane Pallant
Rachel Soper		

Apologies:

Will Atkins	Kath Barrow	Dr Annette Doherty
Professor Geraint Wiggins	John Yard (Vice-Chairman)	

Part 1: Preliminary Items

Welcome

2016.001 The Chairman:

[a] Welcomed Celia Gough, Professor Jane Wills, Sarah Cowls, Professor Bill Spence and Miranda Black, who were attending their first meeting as members of Council.

[b] Welcomed Laura Gibbs, who was attending her first meeting of Council.

QMUCU: The individual, the College, the National Picture [Presentation]

2016.002 Council **received** a presentation on the Queen Mary University and College Union (QMUCU). The following points were noted in discussion:

[a] Between 50% and 60% of eligible staff were members of QMUCU, a similar proportion to comparator institutions such as KCL. The ageing membership was a concern and there were efforts to recruit younger staff.

[b] An important benefit of membership was the support available should it be required by an individual member of staff. Union representatives performed a helpful role in accompanying members at disciplinary and

appeal panels, and their involvement in casework could lead to policy developments.

[c] The three key issues for the union within QMUL were the National Student Survey results, hourly paid staff and the Prevent Duty.

[d] The Chairman thanked Professor Anderson for his presentation.

Minutes: 28 June 2016 (Paper QM2016/01)

2016.003 Council **confirmed** the confidential and non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2016.

Matters Arising (Paper QM2016/02)

2016.004 Council **noted** the matters arising from the meeting held on 28 June 2016.

Chairman's Opening Remarks (Oral Report)

2016.005 The Chairman said:

[a] He had arranged an introductory meeting with the Deputy Chairman of the Barts Health Trust, following the recent departure of the BHT Chairman.

[b] He had visited the University of London Institute in Paris and taken part in induction programmes for the LLM and MA in International Relations.

President and Principal's Report (QM2016/03)

2016.006 Council **received** the President and Principal's Report.

2016.007 The President and Principal said that:

[a] *Minute 2016.007[a] is confidential.*

[b] *Minute 2016.007[b] is confidential.*

[c] The vote to leave the EU had created an environment that was less attractive than it used to be for all members of university staff, whatever their nationality, making recruitment and retention of UK staff as much a concern as it was for EU and other international employees.

[d] Debate on the HE Bill in the House of Commons had been minimal, with few amendments accepted. More debate was expected in the House of Lords. The issues related to matters of implementation, rather than of principle, and the need to safeguard the reputation of UK higher education and the position of students. The President and Principal was due to meet with Jo Johnson shortly.

2016.008 The following points were noted in discussion:

[a] The deadline for a TEF2 submission was January 2017. The requirements in terms of metrics and data were due to be released to institutions on 31

October 2016. The NSS data used in TEF2 would be averaged over three years.

[b] *Minute 2016.008[b] is confidential.*

[c] A working group, including QMSU representatives, had been established to examine the data and contextual detail, and to draft the accompanying narrative. The narrative, limited to 15 pages, was important to support or refute the position revealed by the metrics. For example, where POLAR data were used to determine how well a university catered to the needs of under-represented groups, measures based on these data were widely acknowledged not to work well in London.

[d] The TEF2 submission would be shared with Council and would then be in the public domain.

[e] *Minute 2016.008[e] is confidential.*

[f] HEFCE was launching a three-month consultation on the next research excellence framework and the implementation of the recommendation from the Stern Review. Further details on the next REF exercise would be known by summer 2017. As a broader definition of impact might benefit QMUL, the wording in the consultation would be looked at carefully to determine an appropriate response.

Action Vice-Principal (SETL) [e]

QMSU President's Report (Paper QM2016/)

2016.009 Council **received** the QMSU President's Report.

2016.010 The President said:

[a] QMSU was launching a number of campaigns, including the 'Be kind to your mind' programme, responding to feedback suggesting that mental health and loneliness were key reasons for students dropping out, and the 'Scream Mary' campaign, intended to provide a forum for students to discuss their concerns and learn more about what the QMSU officers would be doing during the year. Themes coming out of the latter exercise included student housing, the link between TEF and increases in tuition fees, and overcrowding on campus.

[b] RAG had raised more than £13K (£3K reported in the paper), and had set up a competition between students on the Mile End and Whitechapel campuses to raise the most money.

[c] The Blomeley rooms had been made available to students wishing to observe Friday prayers and were being used to capacity. QMSU had noted that more space was still being sought, and the Chief Operating Officer was working with colleagues across Professional Services to ensure that all unnecessary barriers to making suitable space available for Friday prayers were eliminated.

- [d] Overcrowding had been raised as a general issue at the start of the year. More problems had been identified with first-year students than with other groups, linked to large-group teaching. A task and finish group looking at space utilisation and timetabling policy had been established and would report to QMSE in January. Additional, refurbished space would be coming on stream in the Library in the near future.

2016.011 The following points were noted in discussion:

- [a] QMSU was asked by Council to review its arrangements for welcome week next year to avoid the overcrowding problems experienced this year in what was otherwise a very successful event.
- [b] Students had asked whether the rule requiring them to seek permission 20 days in advance to invite external speakers for events that are held on campus could be relaxed. The Academic Registrar and Council Secretary reported that QMSU's arrangements for approving external speakers appeared to be working well and that it was rare for decisions to be overturned by QMUL. There was therefore scope to review the timescales at least on a pilot basis.
- [c] Whilst healthy competition, exemplified by QMSU's RAG campaign, was to be welcomed, Council expressed concern over signs that different loyalties and levels of engagement of students and members of staff to the university as a whole persisted. Discussions of how the value attached to the Barts and The London name could be appropriately utilised in the wider context of QMUL were under way. The Vice-Principal (Health) was commended for his leadership and personal example in changing the culture in the School.

Part 2: Performance review

Vice-Principal (Health)'s report

2016.012 *Minute 2016.012 is confidential.*

2016.013 *Minute 2016.013 is confidential.*

National Student Survey – interim report on outcomes and steps taken (Confidential Paper QM2016/05)

2016.014 *Minute 2016.014 is confidential.*

Part 3: Strategic planning

Search for new Chair and new President and Principal (oral reports)

2016.015 Council **received** an oral report on the search for the new Chair. The Academic Registrar and Council Secretary said:

- [a] The search was proceeding on schedule.
- [b] There was a shortlist of three candidates engaging with various internal

and external members of QMUL and having tours of the campuses.

[c] Formal interviews for two candidates were taking place the following week, and the interview for the third candidate was being arranged.

2016.016 Council **received** an oral report on the search for the President and Principal. The Chairman said:

[a] A note had been circulated setting out the process. The interview panel comprised the Chairman, Monica Chadha, Professor Richard Ashcroft, Professor Rebecca Lingwood, Emma Bull and Professor Mike Curtis. His successor would join the panel once appointed.

[b] A wider selection grouping would meet the candidates and its views would formally feed into the assessment. The detailed arrangements were to be determined and would probably include some individual and group meetings.

[c] Online advertisements had been placed in the Times Higher Education (THE) and the Sunday Times. Advertisements would appear in print on 3 November 2016 in the THE. It was **agreed** that the candidate pack would be circulated to members for information.

[d] The selection of candidates for the long list would be made in December 2016, with shortlisting due by the end of January 2017. All being well, the interviews would be completed and an appointment made by the end of March 2017.

[e] Sir Leszek Borysiewicz had been appointed as an external advisor.

Action Council Secretariat [c]

Life Sciences (oral report)

2016.017 *Minute 2016.017 is confidential.*

Part 4: Legislative and Conformance Issues

HEFCE Annual Provider Review (Paper QM2016/06)

2016.018 Council **considered** a report on QMUL's compliance with HEFCE's revised operating model for quality assessment. The following points were noted:

[a] HEFCE's revised operating model for external quality assessment required governing bodies to provide assurances to HEFCE as part of the annual accountability returns in relation to the continuous improvement of the student academic experience, student outcomes and the reliability of degree standards. The revised model significantly reduced the burden of external quality assessment.

[b] The paper had been brought to Council in advance of the meeting in November 2016, when the annual accountability return was to be

discussed in its entirety again, to enable members to request clarification or additional information, or to suggest additional actions in 2016-17.

[c] Council had received reports on issues relevant to the assurances during its meetings in 2015-16. These included the presentations from the Vice-Principals, the summary reports from each meeting of Senate and annual reports on student surveys, student complaints and retention. So the evidence on which Council was asked to provide assurances was spread across the annual cycle of business, reflecting the accountability framework within QMUL where authority was largely delegated to senior members of staff and the role of Senate.

[d] The effectiveness review of Council in 2014 and the review of compliance with the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance had identified the need for enhanced reporting about academic assurance and the student experience. The number and nature of reports from Senate and the Vice-Principals had been extended, and the action plans from the review were monitored by Governance Committee.

[e] It was **agreed** to prepare a revised report for the next meeting, providing more detail about the information Council had received and how this related to the assurances Council was being asked to make.

Action Academic Registrar and Council Secretary [e]

Modern Slavery (Paper QM2016/07)

2016.019 Council **approved** a statement on QMUL's compliance with its obligations under the Modern Slavery Act and **noted** advice given by the external auditors that it did not need to be included in the financial statements.

Part 5: Other Matters for Report

Audit and Risk Committee report (Paper QM2016/08)

2016.020 Council **received** the report of the meeting of Audit and Risk Committee held on 3 October 2016. The Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee said:

[a] The Strategic Risk Register had been included in the additional reading for the meeting to draw Council members' attention to the increased risk profile of QMUL at this time. The contributory causes, including the EU referendum, TEF and student recruitment, had all been highlighted in the President and Principal's reports to Council in the last few months.

[b] The regular internal audit reports received during 2015-16 had been encouraging, with few recommendations arising and the recommendations from the more critical Maths Building Refurbishment Project review being actioned promptly. The Head of Internal Audit had given QMUL a positive overall assessment for 2015-16.

Finance and Investment Committee Report (Paper QM2016/09)

2016.021 *Minute 2016.021 is confidential.*

Senate Report (Paper QM2016/10)

2016.022 Council **noted** the report of the meeting of Senate held on 13 October 2016. Members said that they felt that the format and detail of the report were appropriate. It was **agreed** to circulate a brief summary of the QMUL model and TEF developments.

Action: Vice-Principal (SETL)

Use of the Common Seal of the College (Paper QM2016/11)

2016.023 Council **noted** a report on the use of the Common Seal of the College and action taken by the Chairman since the last meeting of Council.

Agenda for next meeting (Paper QM2016/12)

2016.024 Council **noted** the draft agenda for the next meeting on 21 November 2016.