

COUNCIL
25 November 2021 at 9.30
Oak 1 and 2 and Teams

MINUTES

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Members:	Chair – External member	Mr Michael Queen
	Joint Vice-Chair – External member	Mr Vib Baxi
	Joint Vice-Chair - External member	Ms Rachel Hubbard
	Treasurer - External member	Mr Robert Napier
	President & Vice-Chancellor	Prof Max Lu
	Provost & Executive Vice-President	Vacant
	Vice-Provost, Education	Prof Osama Khan
	Chief Operating Officer	Mr Andy Chalklin
	President, Students' Union	Ms Ajay Ajimobi
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Esat Alpay
	Member elected by Senate	Prof Karen Bullock
	Member elected by Senate	Dr Daniel Horton
	External member	Mr Elliot Antrobus-Holder
	External member	Ms Judith Eden
	External member	Mr Charlie Geffen
	External member	Dr Mike Goodfellow
	External member	Ms Pam Jestico
	External member	Mr Nigel Jones
	External member	Ms Pam Powell

In attendance: Ms Ros Allen, Head of Governance Services
Ms Martine Carter, Vice-President - Strategy, Planning & Performance
Mr Phil Grainge, Chief Financial Officer
Ms Sarah Litchfield, University Secretary & Legal Counsel

By invitation: Ms Jessie Billing, Director of Advancement (21/105)
Mr Patrick Degg, Vice President External Engagement (21/103-105)
Ms Lucy Evans, Chief Student Officer (21/101)

A INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

21/091 Preliminaries

- .1 There were no apologies.
- .2 Karen Bullock and Dan Horton were welcomed to their first meeting of Council as the new Senate Representatives. Esat Alpay was welcomed to his second term as Senate Representative on Council.

21/092 Declarations of Interest

- .1 None

21/093 Minutes

- .1 The minutes of the meetings held on 28 September 2021 were **adopted** and agreed for publication on the website.

21/094 Matters Arising

- .1 The updated actions log was **noted**.
- .2 It was noted that the action concerning the establishment of a Commercialisation Committee was well in hand and could therefore be closed.
- .3 It was noted that the information regarding the student numbers in the departments receiving enhanced support had been emailed to members earlier in the day.

21/095 Chair's Items

- .1 Council **ratified** the extension of Mike Goodfellow's term of office by three months to 31 March 2022 and the appointment of Nigel Jones as the Chair of Audit and Assurance Committee.

21/096 Vice-Chancellor's Report and Performance Monitoring

- .1 The VC presented the report.
- .2 It was noted that, as a result of the Augur Review, there may be changes to the student loans – with the threshold for repayment likely to be lowered and interest rates also lowered.
- .3 It was noted that the satisfaction score from the People Survey had risen to a 10 year high of 74%.
- .4 There was discussion of the lower than planned take up rates for the PTY. This was mainly driven by fewer placements being available as we emerge from the pandemic and fewer students choosing to do the PTY. It was anticipated that take-up will return to previous levels in due course. The University was taking a number of measures to address the issues, including providing opportunities for shorter placements and scholarships for PTY students. Additionally, a Director of Employability had been appointed for each department and a bimonthly forum was being held to promote opportunities, including the funding available through the Turing Scheme. KPIs were being monitored.
- .5 It was noted that there had not been any issues relating to Freedom of Speech at the University. It was recognised that it was complicated to balance the need for Freedom of Speech with related legislation such as the Equality act. The new established Partnerships and Reputation Committee would review any issues arising.
- .6 Council recognised the competitive market for skilled staff and noted that the University was focused on retention but that it was hard to match high salaries offered elsewhere.
- .7 It was noted that the progression rates had reduced, mainly due to the removal of the 'safety net' policy introduced due to the pandemic. The Student Success team and the Learning Analytics programme were pivotal to improve progression rates.

- .8 There was discussion of the One Surrey internal customer service function. It was noted that mean satisfaction had decreased and mean response time increased as the significant backlog of enquiries was being dealt with. The vast majority of the backlog was staff rather than student enquiries.
- .9 Council was pleased to note that Research bidding rates had started to increase after the recent push. Areas requiring more support had been identified.

B ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR APPROVAL

21/097 USSU President's Report

- .1 Ajay Ajimobi presented the report.
- .2 There was support for the proposal to 'decouple' graduation ceremonies from the graduation receptions to allow guests to choose to just attend the ceremony which should be free or pay to attend the reception as well as the ceremony. It was suggested that the hardship fund should be used to support students who could not afford the graduation costs to enable them to have the full experience. It was **agreed** that AA should discuss further with the Vice President External Engagement, including consideration of whether to survey students on their views.
Action: AA
- .3 It was noted that Unconscious Bias training was mandatory for all staff, but further work was needed to enforce this and monitor completion. We should consider embedding the training into certificates or designating certain days 'training days' for departments (as is done in the Chief Student Officer Directorate). It was noted that bespoke Racial Equality training would be offered to staff. The Chair of Council would like to complete the training, and it was suggested that all Council members should take the training.
**Action: OK to consider embedding mandatory training within certificates.
RA and OK to enable lay Council members to complete training modules.**
- .4 It was noted that there would be 24 hours gap between online exams in future.

21/098 Student Experience/85 Plan

- .1 Osama Khan gave a presentation, noting that the 85 Plan now covered all levels of students.
- .2 The following additional points were noted:
 - .2.1 Students should be enabled to attend lectures online where required.
 - .2.2 The innovation in assessments brought in as a result of the pandemic should be retained.
 - .2.3 There was uneven progress amongst the departments towards achieving the 85 Plan. Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs) provided useful information regarding this progress and a detailed analysis of the MEQs by gender and ethnicity was carried out.

21/099 Education Report

- .1 Osama Khan presented the paper.
- .2 It was noted that the data on the attainment gap was available at a modular level.

21/100 Annual Quality Assurance Report

.1 Osama Khan presented the paper, noting that it provided a summary of information already provided to Council throughout the year.

.2 Council **approved** the report and recorded its thanks to OK for the good progress.

21/101 Annual Prevent report for submission to the OfS

.1 Lucy Evans attended to present the paper.

.2 It was noted that cases in South East England tended to be low, so it was not surprising that only one Prevent-related case had been escalated from the University in 2020/21.

.3 Council **approved** the Prevent Report.

21/102 Senate Report and Terms of Reference

.1 Osama Khan presented the report.

.2 Council noted the changes to the academic careers pathways and noted that a proposed change to the Ordinances would come forward to designate research only staff as academic staff.

.3 Council **approved** the Senate Terms of Reference.

21/103 Financial Statements

.1 Phil Grainge presented the papers with Patrick Degg in attendance.

.2 The Chairs of Audit and Assurance Committee and Finance Committee reported that the committees had reviewed all the documents between them and were satisfied.

.3 Council was pleased to note the attractive and engaging Annual Report and Financial Statements document and thanked all involved in its production. It was requested that in future the names of the students in the photographs should be included. The document will primarily be circulated electronically, and a link would be provided in the Your University newsletter distributed locally.

.4 Council **noted** the following documents:
External Auditor's Year End report
Going Concern
Performance summary for University subsidiaries

.5 Council **approved** the following documents:
Representation Letter
Annual Report and Financial Statements 2020/21
Trust Fund accounts

.6 The Annual Financial Return to the OfS was discussed. The return comprises the Annual Report and Financial Statements, External Auditors letter, and a financial workbook with commentary. The workbook and commentary will contain information that Council has largely seen (2 years history, Budget 21/22 and future year forecasts) in a format prescribed

by the OfS. Council **agreed** to delegate approval of the workbook and commentary to the Chair and Treasurer, who would receive the documents before Christmas.

21/104 Honorary Degrees

- .1 Max Lu presented the paper.
- .2 Council **approved** the nominations for honorary degrees.

21/105 Campaign

- .1 Jessie Billing and Patrick Degg attended to give a presentation after an introduction from the VC.
- .2 The launch of Campaign had been delayed due to the pandemic, but the public launch event would likely take place on 16 February 2022. The campaign was expected to run for three years in its public phase.
- .3 The marketing material shown was focused on research centred on the two new institutes, plus human and animal health, together with a range of student projects. There would also be an opportunity for donor-led projects. The growing interest in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) may bring about a growth in corporate donations. It was suggested that it would be more appropriate to refer to 'partnership' rather than 'fundraising' in some of the marketing material.
- .4 With respect to the campaign board, it was suggested that it might be good to have more younger members on the board to ensure that current students and new alumni were engaged.
- .5 Advancement would work within the resource envelope allotted initially to deliver the Campaign but may request more resource as it develops.
- .6 The fundraising targets were challenging as they represented a significant increase on existing levels of philanthropy.
- .7 Council asked to be kept updated on the progress of Campaign and receive as much notice as possible of events.

21/106 Senior Independent Member report

- .1 Judith Eden presented the paper.
- .2 It was noted that she would be arranging individual meetings with Council members.

21/107 Nominations and Governance Committee report

- .1 Michael Queen presented the paper.
- .2 Council **approved** the Three-year effectiveness review plan and Code of Conduct and Regulations for Council

21/108 Annual Report on OfS Conditions of Registration

.1 Sarah Litchfield presented the paper.

.2 It was noted that an update to the Reportable Events table would come to February Council.

21/109 Ordinances

.1 Sarah Litchfield presented the paper.

.2 Council **approved** the amendments to the Ordinances.

21/110 Annual report from the Audit and Assurance Committee

.1 Mike Goodfellow presented the paper.

.2 Council noted formal thanks to MG for his chairmanship of the Committee.

21/111 Finance Committee report

.1 Council noted the report.

21/112 Remuneration Committee report

.1 Council noted the report.

C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

21/113 Annual Research and Innovation report

Council **noted** the report.

21/114 Research Integrity Annual Statement

Council **noted** the report.

21/115 Blackwell Park update

Council **noted** the report.

21/116 Health and Safety Report

Council **noted** the report.

21/117 Student Protection Plan

Council **noted** the report.

D CLOSING ITEMS

21/118 Any Other Business

.1 It was noted that the recruitment process for a new Provost had not yet concluded but the candidates were high quality.

21/119 Date of next meeting

10 February 2022

