

Summary Report of Council 2: 26 February 2020

The University Council met on 26 February 2020, and welcomed Mr Michael Ziff, a new lay member who was attending his first meeting of Council. The meeting was preceded by a presentation from Professor Zahir Irani, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic Innovation and Quality, Professor Sankar Sivarajah, Interim Head of School of Management and Mr Liam Sutton, Associate Director, Research and Innovation on Bridging the Digital Skills Gap: AI and Data Science for Business and Community.

This paper provides a high-level summary of the business considered by Council, which will be published on the University website. This is not a formal record of the Council meeting but presents an update on matters discussed by the University's governing body.

Baroness Ann Taylor
Chair of Council

1 Report from the Chair of Council

The Chair provided a brief oral update on the complex and increasingly regulated environment that the University was operating in. Points of note included the University's continued compliance with the Office for Students regulatory framework; the renewed emphasis on apprenticeships; transparency on value for money in the provision of Higher Education; duty of care to students; and the late introduction of the new universal bursaries for nursing students.

2 Vice-Chancellor's Report

The Vice-Chancellor provided a summary of items arising since the previous Council meeting. Among topics highlighted were the extensive internal and external engagement activities that had been undertaken by the Vice-Chancellor, this included staff, students and local / City and regional engagement; a brief update on the staff survey that was conducted in October 2019 and achieved a response rate of 77%; an update on the sector-wide industrial action by UCU over the 2019/20 pay round and USS changes; and the contingency plans had been put into place in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

3 Institutional Key Performance Indicators

Council received a report on the latest performance against the University's agreed KPIs. Council noted that a new set of KPIs would be developed to support the revised University Strategy. These would be presented to the Council in May 2020.

4 Early Financial Forecast 2019/20

Council considered the early financial forecast which was based on student numbers and associated income at the end of October 2019. The forecast, which had been subject to review by the Finance Committee, presented a favourable position and Council was pleased



to note that the University remained on track to deliver its planned financial results for 2019/20. The University's financial position would continue to be monitored closely in order to maintain a financially sustainable position going forward.

5 Student Recruitment

Council received a detailed presentation from the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Academic Innovation and Quality on specific marketing activities (immediate and medium-term) that were being undertaken to enhance UK and PGT home student numbers for 2020 applications, conversion and clearing activity and 2021 full cycle activity. Council strongly supported the approach and noted that detailed application data would continue to be monitored closely by the Executive. A further briefing would be presented to the Council in May.

6 Revised University Strategy

Council considered and approved the revised University Strategy which was built around four key themes, each of which would form the basis of a further sub-strategy: Learning, Teaching and Student Experience; Research and Innovation; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; and Business and Community Engagement; these would be developed under the leadership of strategic portfolio holders. The revised Strategy would address the key strategic risks faced by the University and would place the University in a strong position for the future; enable delivery of its Financial Strategy; and investment in the student experience. The sub-strategies would be approved by the Council at its meeting in May 2020 with the enabling strategies to be approved in July 2020.

7 Update on Manningham Site

Council endorsed the report which presented an update on options for the University's Manningham site. A further report would be presented to the Council in July 2020.

8 China Report

Council considered a report on the China Office and approved the proposed appointments; approval complied with Chinese company legislation. Formal resolutions which gave effect to these changes were signed at the meeting.

Standing Items

9 Report on Chair's Action

Council received a report which confirmed the action taken by the Chair of Council, Treasurer and Vice-Chancellor in relation to the submission of the University's annual financial and student number returns and its third enhanced monitoring report to the Office for Students in December 2019 and January 2020, in accordance with the previous delegated authority by Council.

10 Report from the University Secretary

Council received an update from the University Secretary which summarised ongoing work relating to areas of governance pertinent to the work of Council and the University. This included an update on ongoing compliance with the Office for Students conditions of registration, Senate elected Council members, the Council strategic away day in April 2020, and the Committee Year Planner for 2020/21. Outcomes from the recent Senate Effectiveness Review were noted, as was the preparation of a roster of lay governors to ensure that all would attend at least one Senate meeting annually; this would further support Council in its role of maintaining assurance in the effectiveness of academic governance at the University.

11 Report from the Students' Union 2019/20 Student Leadership Team

Council received a report from the UBU Education Officer and UBU Student Affairs Officer on current issues and recent activities which included an update and video on the Union's new initiative 'Kick Start' which aimed to engage students in UBU projects, give them the opportunity to develop and gain transferable skills, and to create social networks; the video, which was positively received by Council, was available online: <https://youtu.be/Wyd7LfNw29o>. The intention was to roll out the programme to a wider number of students in 2020/21 and 2021/22. Council welcomed the initiative and was pleased to note that the Executive would work in partnership with the Students' Union on its development.

12 Business from Committees of Council, and Senate

Council noted summary reports from Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Remuneration Committee, and Senate on issues discussed since the last meeting of the Council. In addition, Council approved two recommendations from the Governance and Nominations Committee:

- Changes to Ordinance 17 to reflect changes to the Alumni Association governance arrangements;
- Terms of reference of the new Alumni Advisory Panel to support the Alumni and Development Team in its management and coordination of engagement and activities for the Alumni Association.

13 Council received the following reports, for information:

- Minutes from the Council meeting held on 20 November 2019;
- 2018/19 Access Agreement Monitoring Return;
- Prevent Duty update;
- Staff Survey update;
- Industrial action update;
- Draft Council 3 agenda;
- Council terms of reference and membership 2019/20;
- Council schedule of business for 2019/20.

14 **Date of next Council meeting:**
Wednesday 20 May 2020

Jacqui Holgate, Assistant Head (Governance)
February 2020