

## Academic Committee

### Minutes

07 July 2021

14.00 – 16.00

MS Teams

#### Present Members

##### Ex-Officio

Professor Geoff Smith  
Professor Niamh Downing  
Professor Castulus Kolo

Professor Mark Allinson

Professor Lawrence Phillips  
Professor Gill Stark  
Beverley Roberts  
Carl Teigh  
Jo Phillips  
David Elefteriou  
Gerry Greyling  
Pam Taylor  
Camille Merré  
Oluwatanyosi Ibiroba Obiaz

Vice-Chancellor & CEO (Chair)  
Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor  
President, Macromedia University & Non-executive Board member  
Associate Provost & Head of Academic and Educational Development  
Associate Provost  
Associate Provost  
Head of Registry  
Director of Finance  
Director of Enrolment Management (alt)  
Director of Strategic Projects  
Director of Academic Services  
Head of Student Support  
President of the Student Union  
Vice-President of the Student Union – Academic Affairs

##### Elected Representatives

Amparo Lallana  
Professor Zubin Sethna  
Oliver Sterland  
  
Elise Goodman

Academic Representative at Director level  
Academic Representative at Director level  
Academic Representative at Assistant Professor / Senior Lecturer level  
Representative for Professional Service

#### In Attendance

Jenny Bannocks

Governance Advisor & Secretary to Committees (Minutes)

#### Opening Items

##### 1. Welcome from the Chair

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting of the Academic Committee and gave a special welcome to Oliver Sterland, the newly appointed Academic Representative, and to the recently elected Student Union Team.

##### 2. Apologies for absence

	Apologies were received from Valérie de Saegher, Richard Reger, Ana-Maria Pascal and Kyla Watkins.
3.	<b>Declarations of Interests</b>  No declarations of interest were made.
4.	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting (31 March 2021)</b>  The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting on 31 March 2021.
5.	<b>Actions and Matters arising from the previous meeting (31 March 2021)</b>  Committee actions were noted as completed or to be discussed on the agenda.
<b>Part A: Items for Discussion and / or Approval</b>	
6.	<b>Chair's Report and Chair's Actions</b>  <b>6.1 Chair's Report (verbal)</b>  The Chair gave a report on recent University activity and highlighted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ [REDACTED]</li> <li>■ [REDACTED]</li> <li>■ [REDACTED]</li> <li>- The <b>Strategic Plan</b> had been launched in June after the approval of the Board of Directors. Staff had shown high levels of engagement and to date there had been 131 expressions of interest for involvement in the priority projects.</li> <li>- The University had achieved an overall response rate of 65.8% for the <b>National Student Survey</b>, and thresholds for all eligible courses had been met. Further details would be published on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021.</li> <li>- The <b>Graduate Outcomes Survey</b>, a survey run by HESA to determine student activity 15 months after graduation. The University is using the <i>Guardian Method</i> to measure its effectiveness, looking at whether graduates:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are in professional level employment</li> <li>○ Have completed a professional education course</li> <li>○ Are currently in further education.</li> </ul> <p>Last year, the University achieved 80% using this measure, positioning Regent's around 60<sup>th</sup> place out of c.120 UK institutions – this was based on data from those students graduating in 2017/18. For 2018/19 data, using the same measure, the University achieved 79% for Undergraduate and 73% for Postgraduate with a position of around 60-65<sup>th</sup> place. More information will be made over the coming weeks to benchmark data against the sector.</p> <p>A number of initiatives will be launched this year to support graduating students, such as Careers Coaching, a dedicated Careers Platform to highlight opportunities as well as including senior leaders via the University's Visiting Professorships programme.</p> </li> <li>- The <b>Open University</b> has re-approved its partnership with the University, following a recent Institutional Review, subject to a small number of conditions and recommendations. Some of these would be fulfilled by July, with others such as</li> </ul>

	<p>staff training to be completed by November. The Chair thanked colleagues for their work on this.</p> <p>The Committee noted the Chair's Report.</p>
7.	<p><b>Student Matters (paper)</b></p> <p>The Student Union President and Vice President presented the issues for discussion and the Committee noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Face to face and Online Learning</b> It was noted that this had also been discussed at the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee, and colleagues had noted that while teaching would be focused on face-to-face learning on campus, no online material would be lost, but would continue to be made available on Blackboard. The Associate Provost (HAED) added that the upcoming Learning &amp; Teaching Conference would hold sessions on how the University turned online learning into a positive, and noted that FAQ sheets had been updated to inform students on how they will learn from the autumn. He also noted that the Global Perspectives module had received positive feedback from students and the University would look at how this could be further developed into a Global Leader elective outside of level 4 studies.</li> <li>- <b>Communication from Professors</b> Students noted that this had been very positive throughout the Pandemic and was highly appreciated amongst students.</li> <li>- <b>Financial Package Availability</b> Financial Support had been offered to new students, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He highlighted that the University still promotes the Regent's Promise for existing students and advised any students in financial difficulty to contact the Student Finance Team who would be able to talk through various support options. He agreed to further discuss communication of financial support with the SU President and the Communications team, and to confirm outside of the meeting that PCR tests for students would be free of charge.</li> <li>- <b>Language electives</b> A student petition showed strong support from the student body to improve the availability of language electives each term and across degree programmes. There was also support to include cultural orientation into the modules in preparation for study and work abroad. The Director of Content for Languages noted that the University was already planning to expand the language offering so it was more prominent across the University.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee noted the papers.</p> <p><b>New Action:</b> AC 2020/21 – 3.1. The Director of Finance and the SUP to discuss communications of financial support to existing students with the Communications Team, and to investigate if PCR tests will be free of charge for students.</p>
8.	<p><b>Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 – Governance and Decision Making</b></p>

	<p>The Director of Strategic Projects presented the item, noting that the Strategic Plan had been recently approved and launched, and this included a number of priority projects that require effective management and governance to ensure they are delivered successfully. He highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Strategic Project governance structure will run parallel to the existing academic governance structure, ensuring key personnel are involved in discussions and decision making, and that these decisions are taken at the right time.</li> <li>- Where tasks are completed, these deliver on workstreams, which report into a project board, and then the Transformation Board.</li> <li>- The Transformation Board will report in to VCET and the Academic Committee.</li> <li>- All projects will be mapped against the Academic Governance structure and the committee terms of reference to see where items require discussion and decision.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair noted that this framework will allow the University to collaborate effectively in delivering the transformation agenda.</p> <p>The Committee noted the item.</p>
9.	<p><b>Return to Campus Plan</b></p> <p>The Director of Finance provided an update from the Return to Campus Group, noting that the University aimed to balance the needs and preferences of students with safety and Government advice. He noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students who require a visa would now be allowed to return to campus up until April 2022.</li> <li>- The University has committed to face-to-face teaching for the autumn term, and students are encouraged to return to campus in September 2021 to commence their learning.</li> <li>- Safety measure in place include 72-hour testing, hand sanitizing and face masks, all of which will continue for the foreseeable future. New spaces are being piloted and hybrid working for staff is also being tested to manage the return for September.</li> <li>- The Group is considering contingency plans in the event of an outbreak or if social distancing measures are to be reintroduced.</li> <li>- The University will review data as it becomes available and prepare its own risk assessment.</li> <li>- There will be an element of personal choice for individuals where possible.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee noted the update.</p>
10.	<p><b>Update on Student Recruitment</b></p> <p>The Director of Enrolment Management (alt) presented the slides and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- [REDACTED]</li> <li>- [REDACTED]</li> <li>- [REDACTED]</li> <li>- [REDACTED]</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- [REDACTED]</li> <li>1 [REDACTED]</li> <li>1 [REDACTED]</li> </ul> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Committee noted the paper.</p>
11.	<p><b>Portfolio Update from VCET</b></p> <p>The Provost (DVC) presented the item, noting that a number of strategic, project work streams were focused on the University's offering and how this can be repositioned to ensure it is competitive in the current market. She noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Qualitative and quantitative research has been carried out to indicate what potential students are looking for in a degree programme.</li> <li>- [REDACTED]</li> <li>1 [REDACTED]</li> <li>1 [REDACTED]</li> </ul> <p>The Committee noted the paper.</p>
12.	<p><b>Academic Regulations</b></p> <p><b>12.1. Academic Regulations 2021/22</b></p> <p><b>12.2. Key Changes to Academic Regulations 2021/22</b></p> <p>The Head of Registry presented the papers and highlighted the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organisational changes had been made throughout the document to reflect the new University structure.</li> <li>- B2-6 Regulations have been broadened to allow flexibility to (re) validation processes and to allow programme title changes through the PPP (where there are no changes to content). This allows the University be more agile.</li> <li>- B7 Wording has been updated to reflect the removal of the Senate Portfolio Scrutiny Panel. Any decisions around programme suspension / discontinuation will now be considered by VCET.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- B8 Wording has been updated to reflect the removal of the Institutional Overview Panel and an annual overview report will now be received by the Quality Committee. This change will allow more flexibility in developing a new annual monitoring process for the University.</li> <li>- C6 Failure to meet legal, ethical or professional obligations has been included as an Academic Misconduct offense.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee approved the changes to the Academic Regulations for 2021/22.</p>
13.	<p><b>Review of Academic Policy</b></p> <p><b>13.1. Academic Policies for Ratification by the Academic Committee</b></p> <p>The Committee ratified the academic policies in paper 13.1.</p> <p><b>13.2. Academic Policies for Review and Approval by the Academic Committee</b></p> <p>The Committee approved the policies in paper 13.2.</p> <p>The Committee discussed moving the ownership of the Timetabling Policy and the Student Disability Policy to the remit of the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (rather than the remit of the Academic Committee). Following discussion, the Committee agreed to move the Timetabling Policy to the remit, and ownership, of the LTSEC. However, it was agreed that the Student Disability Policy is a more global responsibility that requires reporting to the Board of Directors, and so this would stay within the remit of the Academic Committee.</p> <p><b><u>New Action:</u></b> AC. 2020/21 – 3.2. The Secretary to ensure that all Academic Policies are published on the University web site and the University intranet.</p> <p><b><u>New Action:</u></b> AC. 2020/21 – 3.3. The Secretary to update the terms of reference of the Academic Committee and the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee to show that the Timetabling Policy is within the remit of the latter committee (LTSEC).</p>
14.	<p><b>Amendments to the Code of Conduct for Research Integrity – review and approval</b></p> <p>The Associate Provost presented the paper, noting that this had been updated to reflect organizational changes, rather than content. He added that this had been reviewed by the Research Committee.</p> <p>The Committee approved the paper.</p>
15.	<p><b>Academic Assurance Report</b></p> <p>The Committee noted that this would be circulated to committee members within the next few weeks for comment for approval, if supported, by Chair's Action.</p> <p><b><u>New Action:</u></b> AC 20/21 – 3.4 The Secretary to prepare a Chair's Action for approval of the Academic Assurance Report, once finalized.</p>

16.	<p><b>Review of the Student Protection Plan</b></p> <p>The Provost (DVC) presented the paper noting that this had been amended to take into account the University's new collaborative provision arrangements, and to ensure that the paper covered those students also studying a Regent's Validated degree at a partner institution.</p> <p>The Committee approved the paper.</p>
17.	<p><b>Access and Participation Statement</b></p> <p>The Associate Provost (HAED) presented the item noting that this had been updated in line with organizational changes to structure and roles, as well as to include information around a Covid 19 support package and updated statistics.</p> <p>The Head of Student Support suggested an addition to the paper around Mental Health and Wellbeing and agreed to send through some wording.</p> <p>The Provost (DVC) noted some amendments to wording around Charitable Status and suggested she meet with the Associate Provost (HAED) to finalize the document prior to approval. It was noted that this would also require approval from the Board of Directors and may require a Chair's Action.</p> <p><b><u>New Action:</u></b> AC 20/21 – 3.5. The Provost (DVC) and the Associate Provost (HAED) to review and finalise the wording of the Access and Participation Statement and to seek approval from the Academic Committee and the Board of Directors (by Chair's Action if necessary) prior to publication.</p>
18.	<p><b>Appointment of Visiting Professors</b></p> <p>The Chair presented the item, noting that as part of the Strategic Project on 'Industry Connectivity', he had talked to a number of senior leaders [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>In addition to their professorial lectures, the expectation is that they'd also facilitate internship opportunities, behind-the-scenes access, mentorship, live projects and so on.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that a small group is set up to take our Visiting Professorships scheme forward, and suggested the following members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vice-Chancellor (Chair)</li> <li>- Associate Provost(s)</li> <li>- Director of Graduate Outcomes</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Director of Marketing</li> <li>- Head of Alumni</li> <li>- Academic Director(s)</li> </ul> <p>The purpose of the group would be to oversee the sourcing, appointment and deployment of VP's.</p> <p>Both staff and student members expressed their support for the initiative and noted that the lecture series would start in the autumn term, with a Visiting Professor attending each month (October, November, December). A member clarified that dates had been scheduled with assessment periods in mind, to enable student attendance.</p> <p>The Committee endorsed the approach to managing Visiting Professorships at Regent's.</p>
19.	<p><b>Report on any academic or student experience related risk</b></p> <p>The Committee noted the paper.</p>
20.	<p><b>Calendar of Academic Committee Meetings for the 2021-2022 Academic Year</b></p> <p>The Secretary presented the paper, noting that in response to action AC 20/21 – 2.2, consideration had been given to whether meetings could be set within term times to better facilitate student attendance. She noted that there were a number of factors to consider in setting the calendar, and while the majority of meetings take place within term time, there are a small number that fall outside of these dates.</p> <p>The Committee approved the paper.</p>
21.	<p><b>Updated Terms of Reference for the Quality Committee, Research Committee and the Admissions Panel for approval of the Academic Committee</b></p> <p>The Secretary presented the updates, noting that these had been reviewed by the relevant Committees. Following some minor amendments around job titles, the Committee approved the updated terms of reference.</p>
<b>Part B: Items for Noting</b>	
22.	<p><b>Updated Terms of Reference for the Academic Committee as approved by the Board</b></p> <p>The Committee noted the paper.</p>
23.	<p><b>Sub Committee Meeting Minutes and Annual Reports (papers)</b></p> <p>23.1. Quality Committee – 26 May 2021          23.2. Collaborative Provision Committee – 07 June 2021          23.3. Admissions Panel – 17 June 2021          23.4. Research Committee – 21 June 2021          23.5. Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee – 28 June 2021</p> <p>The Committee noted the papers.</p>



24.	<b>Conferment Lists for Noting (papers)</b>  24.1 UG 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2020 24.2 PG 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2020  The Head of Registry noted that the reports state 'Senate' rather than 'Academic Committee', and informed members that this required a system update in SITS, but would be resolved shortly.  The Committee noted the reports.				
<b>Closing Items</b>					
25.	<b>Confidentiality</b>  Discussions considered commercially sensitive under item 18 would be redacted before minute publication.				
26.	<b>Communication from the committee</b>  No communications from the committee were noted.				
27.	<b>Risk Management Update</b>  No additional items of risk were noted.				
28.	<b>Any Other Business</b>  No other items of business were noted.				
29.	<b>Next meeting</b> <table border="1"><tr><td><b>Meeting Date</b></td><td><b>Deadline for Papers</b></td></tr><tr><td>17<sup>th</sup> November 2021</td><td>03<sup>rd</sup> November 2021</td></tr></table>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Deadline for Papers</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> November 2021	03 <sup>rd</sup> November 2021
<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Deadline for Papers</b>				
17 <sup>th</sup> November 2021	03 <sup>rd</sup> November 2021				

Item	Action Required	Staff responsible	Due Date
<b>New Actions:</b>			
AC 20/21 – 3.1	The Director of Finance and the SUP to discuss communications of financial support to existing students with the Communications Team, and to investigate if PCR tests will be free of charge for students.	Director of Finance / SUP	September 2021
AC 20/21 – 3.2	The Secretary to ensure that all Academic Policies are published on the University web site and the University intranet.	Secretary	September 2021
AC 20/21 – 3.3	The Secretary to update the terms of reference of the Academic Committee and the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee to show that the Timetabling Policy is within the remit of the latter committee (LTSEC).	Secretary	ASAP
AC 20/21 – 3.4	The Secretary to prepare a Chair's Action for the approval of the Academic Assurance Report, once finalized.	Secretary	ASAP
AC 20/21 – 3.5	The Provost (DVC) and the Associate Provost (HAED) to review and finalise the wording of the Access and Participation Statement and to seek approval from the Academic Committee and the Board of Directors (by Chair's Action if necessary) prior to publication.	Provost (DVC) / Associate Provost (HAED)	ASAP
<b>Closed Actions:</b>			
AC 20/21 – 2.1	The HAED to consider MS Teams as an alternative platform to Collaborate for live sessions.		
AC 20/21 – 2.2	The HAED will prepare guidance on how the new Student Voice meetings should be managed.		
AC 20/21 – 2.3	The Provost & DVC to include a section on collaborative provision in the Student Protection Plan		