

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Wednesday, 27 January 2021, at 4.00 pm
By Microsoft Teams conference call

MINUTES

PRESENT

Jane Andrewartha
Stella Beaumont
Abdul Bhanji
Professor Frances Corner
Sir Richard Dearlove (Chair)
Andrew Halper
Professor Paul Layzell
Kieran Murphy
Andrew Ratcliffe
Professor Stuart Reid
Malcolm Roberts
Mark Storey
Professor Wendy Thomson
Rosalyn Wilton (Deputy Chair)

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Matters Arising

Information at BTM 5238 is considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

5238 The Vice-Chancellor updated the Board on the Collegiate Council's discussion, at its meeting on 11 December 2020, in relation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. This followed the approval by the Board, at its meeting on 25 November 2020, of the adoption of a statement on antisemitism (BTMM 5223-27 refer). []

Vice-Chancellor's Report

- 5239 The Board noted the Vice-Chancellor's Report (BT1510, Confidential), including the update on the Vice-Chancellor's Main Activities and Meetings (Appendix BT1510C). The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the following:
- (i) Ongoing challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, aspects of which were covered in more detail elsewhere on the agenda.
 - (ii) The Vice-Chancellor's objectives for the coming year, which had been agreed with the Chair of the Board. The objectives had also been considered by the Remuneration Committee and were provided for the Board's information (Appendix BT1510A, Confidential).
 - (iii) Key elements of the Brexit agreement with the European Union (EU), including early implications for higher education institutions, staff and students.
 - (iv) The range of announcements made by the Department for Education (DfE) on 21 January 2021, on post-16 and post-18 education reforms, including the publication of a Skills for Jobs White Paper. Members noted the associated letter of 21 January 2021 from Michelle Donelan, the Minister of State for Universities (Appendix BT1510B).
 - (v) The potential implications for the Member Institutions of the proposed changes to teaching grant funding (see also BTM 5240 below).
 - (vi) The update in the report on Member Institutions' applications for University Title.
- 5240 Members expressed concern about the changes to teaching grant funding proposed by Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Education, in a letter of 19 January 2020 to the Office for Students (OfS), including the loss of London Weighting and changes to funding of high-cost subjects. The proposed changes would see a 50% reduction in funding for those high-cost subjects that did not support the priority areas identified in the letter. While additional funding would potentially be available for specialist institutions, it was noted that a large number of students in subjects that would be affected, such as the creative arts, media studies, the performing arts and archaeology, were not based in specialist institutions. The Vice-Chancellor offered to convene a group, with membership from the Member Institutions, to consider the matter further and how best to represent these concerns to the OfS and Government as appropriate. Members noted that London Higher was also making representations in relation to the potential changes.

5241 Members noted the potential impact of the Brexit agreement on student recruitment from EU countries, and that the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Public Engagement) was convening a meeting of Deans of Arts and Humanities from across the federation to discuss related

review, and provide leadership for the associated Library Transformation Programme. The candidate brief was available to any members interested in receiving a copy for information.

Collaboration with the UN Refugee Agency

5248 Members welcomed the news that the University had signed an agreement with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), which would enable eligible UNHCR employees and affiliates working globally to obtain a 10% bursary for the University's MA in Refugee Protection and Forced Migration Studies, with

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opportunity to strengthen and enhance the partnerships that UoLW had with Member Institutions and others. []

5254 There was discussion on the potential timeframe for implementing the recommendations of the report and the value of articulating a

The Board noted that it would receive a report on the Gender Pay Gap analysis at its next meeting. Further work was also being conducted in relation to the Race Pay Gap analysis; the Board would be updated in due course.

Annual Status Report on the Exercise of Staffing Functions

5268 The Board considered the annual report on the staffing functions which the Board delegated to the Vice-Chancellor, presented in accordance with the requirements of Ordinance 6, Annex 2 (BT1516). The Director of HR informed the Board that he was giving consideration to the format of the report, which might be amended for future iterations.

Update on Other Activities

Information at BTM 5269 is considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

5269 The Board received an oral report on other activities falling under the remit of the CFO. In terms of recent estates-related activity, fire-door

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5283 Members noted that the proposed granting of a long lease for Student Central had the support of the Estates Committee and was a strategic decision that supported the aim to drive best value from the property portfolio and to respond to Member Institutions' needs. Birkbeck had been selected as the University's preferred partner,

