

School of Technology

Council of the School

2.00 p.m. on Friday, 27 November 2020

Meeting online via Zoom

UNRESERVED MINUTES

Present: Professor John Dennis (Chair)
Professor Richard Prager
Professor Clemens Kaminski
Professor Ann Copestake
Professor Christoph Loch
Dame Polly Courtice

Dr Stella Pachidi
Professor Alastair Beresford
Professor Garth Wells
Professor Alexander Routh

Professor Holger Babinsky
Professor Andrew Flewitt
Professor Michael Sutcliffe
Professor Simon Guest
Professor Tim Minshall
Professor Simon Godsill
Professor Richard Penty
Dr Patrick Barrie

Mr James Zhang (Undergraduate member)
Ms Melony Mahaarachchi (Postgraduate member)

Professor Mark Blamire (School observer)
Professor Garth Wells (School observer)

Dr Shui Lam (Secretary)
Mr Matt Burgess (School Finance Manager)
Dr Ann Thompson (Research Strategy Facilitator)

In Attendance: Professor Graham Virgo, Ms Tracy Brooks, Mr James Matheson, Ms Georgina Cannon, Ms Daphne Ioannidis, Ms Isobel Cohen

Apologies:

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1. Minutes

The unreserved minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2020 were approved.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising other than those minuted here.

Chair's Report

The Chair will provide a verbal report.

The reports from the Deputy Head of School and the Director of Education are as attached in Paper **T/20/53**.

2. Starred Items

The Council of the School approved the starred items.

3. Strategic Business

3.1 Academic Vision

The Council of the School approved the School's academic vision at the meeting on 28 October 2019. Since then, much has happened including the Covid 19 pandemic and the University has had to respond to the unprecedented situation. It may be timely to review the academic vision. Paper **T/20/54** is a shortened version of the academic vision with Covid overlay, which has been discussed by the Strategy and Planning Committee. The Council of the School is asked for additional comments.

Action: to discuss

4. Regular Business

4.1 Planning Process

The University has not yet issued any planning guidance; the focus remains on finalising budgets and Chest allocations for 2020-21. The University hopes that Chest budgets will be ready for upload by close of November's accounts but this depends on the budget paper being formally Graced. It is likely that traditional planning activity, aside from certain key inputs needed imminently

(student number planning and fees), will now take place in the Lent term 2021. As the focus is increasingly shifting to all encompassing (Chest and Non Chest) budgeting during the Easter term, it is possible that this will be a permanent change of timetable.

It is likely that Income Incentivisation Model sums will be awarded to Schools for 2020-21, in addition to proposed allocations presented at the last meeting. These will be the subject of a later and separate non-recurrent allocation and Departments will be informed as and when sums become available.

Action: to note

4.2 Postgraduate student numbers

The Director of Education has been consulting the deputy Heads of Department in charge of teaching over the planned postgraduate student numbers over the next five years. In addition, the Strategy and Planning Committee has made some changes to the proposed numbers. Paper **T/20/55 (to follow)** is the current draft of the planned student entrant numbers, and the consequential total student numbers planned for the School.

Action: to approve

4.3 Postgraduate education: course fees

The School is asked to recommend fees for full time PGT and PGR home and overseas students for 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Paper **T/20/56 (to follow)** are tables for home students and overseas students for those years.

Action: to approve

4.4 Planning: School Risk Register

The School's risk register is under revision currently. It is expected it will be finished in the near future. The intention is that it is circulated to the Council of the School for approval by circulation before submission to the University by 18 December 2020.

Action: to approve

4.5 CEB Strategic Research Review Update

The Strategic Research Review of CEB took place in 2018, and the Council of the School considered and endorsed the department's response to the Review in 2019. Paper **T/20/57** provides an update from the Department.

Action: to consider and discuss

5. Straightforward Business

5.1 Departmental Reserves

Paper **T/20/58** proposes a School approach for utilising modest portions of spendable Non-Chest reserves available to departments, to fund strategic investments in income generating opportunities. At the last meeting of the Strategy and Planning Committee, it was acknowledged that departments had significant funds in Non-Chest reserves but were unable to access these funds directly because they were proliferated across multiple pots, controlled by PIs and research groups. It was proposed that departments be allowed to run Chest overdrafts (literally overspend against Chest accounts) to a limit of 5% of spendable Non-Chest reserves, while ensuring that predictable income streams are identified for any investment made, so that overdrafts can be cleared in due course. The Committee was broadly supportive of an **optional** route for up-front investment in genuinely strategic, income-generating initiatives by accessing modest Chest overspends (where necessary) but highlighted that the ability to do this with confidence is dependent on access to local financial expertise.

The Paper suggests that departments invest in finance management accounting support, to ensure opportunities were properly costed and also to work with PIs and research groups across the department, to better understand Non-Chest funding flows, intended uses for reserves held locally and to find ways to unlock Non-Chest funds more directly, for strategic purposes. The Strategy and Planning Committee discussed a proposal to potentially share a financial planning post between CEB and CST. It was agreed to have more detailed discussion regarding the specific needs of each department, the type of appointment required and practicalities of sharing a post, including reporting lines.

Action: to note

5.2 Health and Safety Matters

No matters relevant to Health and Safety were raised.

5.3 Risk Assessment

The Council of the School is requested to assess the risks of any of the decisions made at this meeting.

Action: to assess risks

6. *Minutes of Other Committees**

Strategy and Planning Committee	17 November 2020	T/20/59
Postgraduate Education Committee	04 November 2020	T/20/60

Action: to note

7. Any Other Business

8. Dates of Future Meetings 2020-21

2.00 p.m. meeting online via Zoom:
Friday, 5 February 2021

2.00 p.m. meeting online via Zoom:
Friday, 12 March 2021

2.00 p.m. meeting online via Zoom:
Friday, 14 May 2021

2.00 p.m. meeting online via Zoom:
Friday, 18 June 2021

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