

School of Technology

Council of the School

2.00 p.m. on Friday, 4 February 2022

Meeting online via Zoom

UNRESERVED MINUTES

Present:	Professor John Dennis (Chair)
	Professor Richard Prager
	Professor Clemens Kaminski
	Professor Mauro Guillen
	Ms Clare Shine
	Professor Rodolphe Sepulchre
	Professor Alexei Lapkin
	Professor Tim Jones
	Professor Stelios Kavadias
	Professor Andrew Flewitt
	Professor Michael Sutcliffe
	Professor Tim Minshall
	Professor Simon Godsill
	Professor Richard Penty
	Dr Patrick Barrie
	Dr Shui Lam (Secretary)
	Mr Matt Burgess (School Finance Manager)
	Dr Ann Thompson (Research Strategy Facilitator)
In Attendance:	Dr Daphne Ioannidis, Ms Tracy Brooks, Ms Isobel Cohen
Apologies:	Professor Ann Copestake, Professor Holger Babinsky, Professor Simon Guest

Dr Tim Jones and Professor Stelios Kavadias were welcomed to the first meeting of the Council of the School.

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest made for the unreserved items.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2021 were approved.

1.1. Membership of the Council of the School

The Council of the School noted Paper **T/22/1**, the membership of the Council of the School with a correction: Dr Tim Jones has replaced Professor Alastair Beresford.

Matters arising

Following item 3.1.6. Chest Budgets, a meeting was held in January 2022 between the School (the Head of School, School Finance manager, Head of Computer Science and Technology, and Head of Engineering) and central representatives (Professor David Cardwell and Mr David Hughes) regarding the School of Technology Reserves. This meeting aimed to explain better the School's position regarding its excess reserve strategy and secure agreement for the £600k indicative allocation uplift, requested in the School's 2021 planning submission.

At the meeting it was agreed that reserves accumulated by individual investigators, restricted in terms of being held to spend for a particular purpose, or against which expenditure has been delayed, would not be subject to claims from the University. Essentially this meant that accumulated Chest funds, and perhaps research related sources, would become the focus for increased scrutiny by the University. It was noted that the next budgeting round would be challenging in the light of a range of significant expenditure requests from across the University.

Chair's report

The Chair provided the following verbal report:

CISL Entopia Building project

The Entopia Retrofit project was nearly complete and on time; despite being executed during a challenging couple of years. The Chair ascribed this success to the diligence of the CISL Project Board overseeing this project.

Academic Career Pathway

Academic Career Pathway (ACP) for research and teaching. Apart from some software issues, the ACP round went relatively smoothly. The School's approach to assessments of applications was in line with DORA. However, the School did encounter some issues for which more central guidance would be welcomed:

- The requirement to have three years of teaching experience in the University before applying for a promotion: could experience from teaching at comparable institutions like Oxford be counted as part of the 3 years?

- Senior researchers, such as SRA and PRA, who have joint appointments with other institutions: how should their contributions be counted?

Enhanced Financial Transparency project (EFT)

The PRC has agreed to set up a new group to determine the “contribution” strategy for the EFT project. This group would involve external members with experience of financial change management in other Russell Group universities and internal members, including two Heads of School: Professor Peake from School of the Physical Sciences and a representative from one of the Arts Schools.

The reports from the Deputy Head of School and the Director of Education are as attached in Paper **T/22/2**. The Director of Education gave the following additional updates to his report:

Pensions and “Four Fights” Dispute Industrial Action

The planned UCU Strike Action was likely to impact teaching over the next few weeks, although Departments would be able to mitigate this. This would be made more complicated by those going on strike not notifying their intentions in advance. Please contact Dr Barrie with any feedback on any disruption caused by the strike.

Teaching

Teaching this term would be predominantly in-person, and also streamed to enable students to have choice. There was a divide in attendance levels between STEM, with 40% of students attending in person, and the Arts and Humanities, with much a lower average in-person attendance.

Expansion of Part-Time Postgraduate degrees

The Director of Education has been campaigning for the Department of Engineering to be assigned Administrating Body Status, to provide more flexibility regarding course provision. Dr Barrie was thanked for his effort.

2. Starred Items

The Committee 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. It was agreed at the Strategy and Planning Committee meeting on 17 November 2020 that the academic vision be reviewed on a regular basis. The academic visions assist the central University in improving planning.

Paper **T/22/3** is an updated version of the academic vision, revised after discussion at the Strategy and Planning Committee. The Head of School shared the document at the meeting which would be circulated after the meeting.

Research Strategy:

- SRIs and IRCs should increase, particularly following the successes enjoyed by those co-led by the School.
- Strategy should better align with the recent UK Government “Levelling Up” White Paper to reduce regional economic disparities, in supporting target areas of the UK.
- AI/ML activities would continue to grow, alongside with Division F’s planned move into the Roger Needham Building
- To mitigate the reduction in EPSRC DTP funding allocation to the University, in collaboration with the School of the Physical Sciences.

Education and Training:

- Prof. Neil Lawrence from CST has drafted a proposal for a University wide approach for AI education and training.
- A potential MTech with teaching modules from across the University has been suggested, with the potential to reduce the administrative overhead of running multiple postgraduate courses.

Estate:

- In case the Whittle Laboratory BEIS bid is unsuccessful, a back-up plan has been developed.
- Relocating the School Office to the West Cambridge site could provide a better location to support agile working, closer to many School Departments. One option was to co-locate the School Office with Engineering in the Roger Needham building, once the UIS relocate and the building has been suitably updated. Ideally the Office would be co-located with the School of the Physical Sciences Office but this would be unlikely if co-location is with Engineering.
- The West Cambridge Sharing Project, co-led by the Schools of Technology and the Physical Sciences, pilot phase was now in full operation with a Technical and a Project Manager in place. Pilot projects have been identified in CEB, and potentially in Electrical Engineering.

4. Regular Business

4.1. Academic Career Pathway (Teaching and Scholarship) teaching relief

It was reported that, whilst Schools were not being asked to compile specific criteria for probation or the promotions schemes for Academic Staff (Teaching and Scholarship), they have been asked to agree principles to grant teaching relief to this group of staff.

“Teaching Relief” is available under the Teaching and Scholarship track pathway to enable staff to take time off from delivering teaching in order to develop course material. Within the set of principles under which leave requests could be considered and potentially granted in the School, it should be made clear that teaching relief is not a sabbatical, and will be used only in exceptional circumstances. Envisaged scenarios include granting of teaching relief to enable take up of a Royal Academy of Engineering Industrial Placement.

The Council of the School considered and approved the principles for granting teaching relief to the academics (teaching and scholarship) within the School, Paper **T/22/4**. It was noted that the paper has been considered by the HR Committee, and been adapted for the CJBS so that its teaching timetable could also be supported.

It was noted that the School of Technology principles for granting teaching relief on this ACP track would be published on the School website in due course.

5. Straightforward Business

5.1. *MBA additional option**

The full-time MBA course taught by CJBS currently has 3 options available for summer projects for its students. The Department was now proposing to add a 4th option that includes a one-week international business study trip. Paper **T/22/5** gives details of the “minor change”. The proposal required no change to the course regulations but required Council of School approval, and then approval by the University’s Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee (ASEC).

The Council of the School approved the CJBS proposal for an additional option for its MBA.

5.2. HR Briefing

An HR Briefing paper, prepared by the HR Business Manager, (**Paper: T/22/6**), was noted.

There was a reminder that the Consultation on the Professorial Pay Review was open, with a deadline for comments of the 28th February 2022. The School’s comments would be resubmitted by the HR Business Manager.

5.3. Health and Safety Matters

There were no Health and Safety matters to raise.

5.4. Risk Assessment

No decisions made at this meeting required any update to the Risk Register.

6. *Minutes of Other Committees**

Strategy and Planning Committee	25 January 2022	T/22/7
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7. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

8. Dates of Future Meetings 2021-22

2.00 p.m. Friday, 11 March 2022

2.00 p.m. Friday, 13 May 2022

2.00 p.m. Friday, 17 June 2022