

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 26 May 2022 at 4.00pm

N Savvas, CEO
R Hetherington, Co-opted

Present physically: C Chua
C Higgins, Chair
L Blackaby, HE Student Governor

Present virtually: J Gazzard, Vice Chair (part)

In attendance: E Lees, Executive Dean University Studies
F D'Costa, Registrar
L Moody, Principal Strategic Growth and Partnerships (part)
S Appleby, Director of HE Operations
S Gales, Governance Professional

Apologies: D Lee Harvey

Action

1. Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence

The Committee welcomed Conrad Chua, Daniel Lee Harvey and Louisa Blackaby to the Committee, and introduced themselves.

The Chair also summarised the changes to our HE provision over the last 18 months and the work of the Committee.

C Higgins and N Savvas declared their roles as Trustees of Suffolk Academies Trust. J Gazzard declared his role as a Member of Suffolk Academies Trust and as an employee of University of Cambridge's Institute of Continuing Education. C Chua declared his role as an employee of University of Cambridge's Judge Business School. No other conflicts of interest in relation to the items of the agenda were declared.

Apologies were received from D Lee Harvey.

2. Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 10 March 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2022 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising from the meeting on 10 March 2022

The matters arising from the previous meeting were either complete or included with the agenda.

MA4 E Lees to update the strategy and to circulate (via S Gales) to the Committee for the Committee to recommend to the Corporation.

E Lees

MA5 E Lees (via S Gales) to circulate the update on timescale to be Office for Students compliant.

E Lees

4. Summary Evaluation Document

The Committee received and considered the report provided which outlined the Strategic Review of University Studies (as undertaken in November 2021 for the 2020-21 academic year) in lieu of a Self-Evaluation Document (SED); provided an interim SED for 2021-22 and the updated University Studies Risk Register (post Assessment Boards in Semester 1 2021-22).

The Committee congratulated the team on the thoroughness of the report.

E Lees summarised the key information from the documents and the next steps for University Studies as result of the review including strategic curriculum planning and development, further development of data infrastructure, appoint additional staff to deliver strategic development of Learning, Teaching and Assessment in line with

professional competencies for Higher Education and QAA quality and compliance linked to staff development through PPD and scholarly activity, review our marketing and recruitment campaign, and to develop of course viability model and financial planning over a 5 year period (in-line with validation timelines).

The Committee queried if University Studies data collection is compliant with Office for Students regulations. F D'Costa confirmed that we are compliant, though further work is needed to improve live data reporting systems. N Savvas noted that despite national shortages in data information officers, we have been able to recruit a highly qualified Chief Information Officer who will help further enhance and improve data reporting.

The Committee discussed student voice feedback requesting more opportunities to attend lectures and noted that in the new academic year the Edmunds lecture series will be re-introduced which should address this.

The Committee queried what factors impact prospective students' decisions to apply and enrol at University Studies. E Lees summarised that, given most of our students have caring responsibilities, the main factors are the delivery schedule (how the timetable fits with their other commitments), cost and return on investment (how the qualification links directly to employability / career progression). The Committee noted that this aligns to sector research that employability, competencies, self-efficacy, self-actualisation are key factors for mature learners.

The Committee discussed the proposal to suspend two courses and how this decision was made and what the strategy is going forwards. S Appleby summarised the decision-making process; including reviewing the staffing and delivery methods to reinvigorate these courses, looking at the course design to create an attractive course with mapped progression routes and to respond to/incorporate student feedback and employer co-design.

The Committee noted the risk register and discussed why the extract is coming to this Committee. The Committee agreed to discuss this item in further detail at the next meeting.

5. **Student Outcomes**

The Committee received and considered the report provided which summarised the assessment board outcomes for direct funded students from Semester 1, 2021-22.

F D'Costa summarised the work of the registry team to report assessment data including for students with extenuating circumstances, intercalations and noting withdrawals, as required under relevant body academic regulations, and to analyse data to understand trends and to identify appropriate intervention and support.

E Lees summarised the next steps and how this data will be used to improve quality and student experience.

J Gazzard left the meeting at 5.25pm

6. **Student Voice**

The Committee received and considered the report provided.

L Blackaby summarised the work undertaken to date to establish a student council and to enhance the communication with the student representatives; to create a student voice framework / strategy to improve student engagement and inform students how their voice is responded to. L Blackaby also outlined the partnerships and projects being established to further support students.

L Moody left the meeting at 5.29pm

7. **Compliance Update**

The Committee received and considered the report provided.

F D'Costa and R Hetherington left the meeting at 5.34pm

The Committee discussed condition E1 compliance and asked to receive an update at the next meeting.

E Lees
S Gales

8. **Courses Running: Viability / Admissions**

The Committee received and considered the report provided.

The Committee noted that this analysis is really helpful, however asked for information about the length of course to further aid viability decisions.

E Lees

9. **Any Other Business**

- **Skillset needed by the Committee**

The Committee asked the CEO and Governance Professional to try to recruit additional members with in-depth knowledge of the requirements of Office for Students and QAA.

N Savvas
S Gales

- **Training for the Committee**

The Committee asked to receive specific training for FE college governors around the requirements of Office for Students and QAA.

E Lees
S Gales

- **Virtual Reality Lab**

The Committee asked if the new virtual reality lab is on track to be ready for students. N Savvas confirmed that it is.

- **Tour of University and Professional Development Studies Centre**

L Blackaby offered members of the Centre after the meeting.

The meeting closed at 5.44pm