

HE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 3 November 2022 at 4.00pm

Present physically:	C Chua C Higgins, Chair	N Savvas, CEO R Hetherington, Co-opted
Present virtually:	J Gazzard, Vice Chair	L Blackaby, HE Student Governor (part)
In attendance:	E Lees, Executive Dean University Studies F D'Costa, Registrar G Chittock-Nash, Group Vice Principal Students L Hunt, Head of Student Success S Appleby, Director of HE Operations S Gales, Governance Professional	

Apologies:

Absent: D Lee Harvey

Agenda item 6 was a presentation delivered after the other agenda items had been discussed.

- Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**
The Committee recognised C Higgins as the Chair and J Gazzard as the Vice Chair of the Higher Education Educational Excellence Committee for 2022/23, as appointed by the Corporation at their meeting on 13 July 2022.
- Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence**
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.

The absence of D Lee Harvey was noted.
- Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 26 May 2022**
The minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2022 were **agreed** as an accurate record.
- Matters Arising from the meeting on 26 May 2022**
The matters arising from the previous meeting were either complete or included with the agenda.
MA1 US's strategy continues to be developed.
MA5 If Governors know of any suitably qualified and/or Office for Students experienced HE colleagues who could join the Committee, to let the Governance Professional know.
- Committee Terms of Reference and Skillset**
Governors received, considered and **approved** the Terms of Reference and Committee Skillset provided.
- UPDC Strategy and Implementation Summary**
E Lees presented a PowerPoint outlining how US intends to deliver the ambitions of the ECG Strategic Plan 2022-25. Governors commend the strategy and recommended adding an additional slide at the start to clarify US's target market and unique selling points. The subsequent slides need to be simplified for presentation to the Corporation.

Action

HE EEC

E Lees

7. **Recruitment and student numbers for 2022/23**

Governors received and considered the paper provided, a F D'Costa summarised the report including the factors which affected the conversion of received applications to accepted offers and the lessons learned to improve the process for future years to improve student enrolment experience and conversion rates.

F D'Costa noted that we are also contacting students who applied but subsequently declines our offer, to understand both their reasons for this decision and the demographic data for these applicants to enable us to adjust our strategy accordingly. N Savvas asked if we can also automate a survey to capture feedback upon application of their reasons for choosing US.

F D'Costa

Louisa Blackaby joined the meeting at 4.29pm

Governors asked if we are able to track the data in a way to be able to accurately predict the likely enrolment forecast. F D'Costa noted that this is in development however we do not have enough historical data to make this analysis yet. N Savvas also summarised the way that we are marketing higher study to prospective applicants known to us via our Group operations e.g. current sixth form students, their families, business links, our staff, etc.

Governors commended F D'Costa and the team for the significant enhancement of data acquisition, recognising that there is currently not a good baseline for comparisons.

8. **Curriculum Development**

Governors received and considered the paper provided which outlined the degree programmes for 2023/24 including those validated by UEA, UoS and Pearson; as well as the new courses currently going through the validation process and any courses which are being suspended.

E Lees noted the work being done via the curriculum development executive board to develop the Group's curriculum strategy using progression, market intelligence and LSIP data, and to establish employer groups linked to each subject.

E Lees also noted there are significant opportunities for recruitment through progression within the Group which are being incorporated into future curriculum and marketing.

Governors commended the market-led approach and the establishment of the curriculum development board which will inform this approach.

9. **Student Voice inc. Student Conduct and Complaints**

Governors received and considered the paper provided and L Hunt summarised the report.

L Blackaby summarised the meetings of the student reps and student council this academic year, and L Hunt summarised the student experience strategy and the results of the student inductions surveys and student review panel meetings.

Governors queried the uptake on student rep vacancies. L Hunt noted that circa 65% student rep vacancies have been filled, and we are working with students on a course by course level to remove any barriers to application/uptake.

Governors queried how US is working with the Group leads for SEND and Student Support. L Hunt noted that US are working closely with the Group Assistant Principal for Inclusive Learning to support students who have additional needs and may require additional support or reasonable adjustments, and with the Group Vice Principal Students to join up the student welfare and wellbeing strategies across the Group.

E Lees noted that a significant proportion of US students receive some SEN support, and outlined how the team are working together to best deliver this support.

10. Risk Register Extract

Governors received an extract of the updated Risk Register, with the risks relating to financial matters highlighted. Of these risks, post-mitigation, there were 0 red, 2 amber and 2 yellow risks.

Governors reviewed the risks and **felt assured** by the mitigations proposed.

11. Access and Participation Plan and Investment Monitoring

Governors received and considered the paper provided, and E Lees summarised the report.

Governors queried whether US would submit a TEF application. E Lees noted that US will not this year as a stand-alone provider, however, we will contribute to UoS's TEF application.

12. 2021/22 Self-Evaluation Document

Governors received and considered the paper provided. It was commended for recognising fair strengths and areas for improvement.

Governors commended the improved NSS results overall and discussed the students' feedback about US's infrastructure, and the steps taken by the Executive to address the feedback.

Governors discussed student outcomes and noted that whilst good honours outcomes continue to increase, we are continuing to develop new methods to support students to lessen the number of students who withdraw due to academic failure.

13. Data, Registry and Compliance Sign-Off 2021-22

Governors received and considered the summary paper provided.

The team were commended on the hard and diligent work they had undertaken to ensure compliance and manage risks.

Governors queried the single red item and asked E Lees to provide the relevant information to S Gales who will consult with the Chair regarding any governance changes necessary evidence.

E Lees
S Gales

Governors discussed the need to review the full document, and asked this to be re-circulated. The Chair asked for Governors to return feedback within a week to enable the Chair and Accounting Officer to sign the document.

HE EEC

14. Any Other Business

None

The meeting closed at 6.09pm