

**REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD**  
**HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021 at 2.00pm**  
**Via MS Teams**

Present: Prof Chris Gaskell (independent, Chair) CG  
 Marcus Clinton (principal) MC  
 Gary Crowe (independent) GC  
 Ian Britton (co-opted) IB  
 Anne McKay (staff) AM

Attending: Yvette Foulds-Davis (HE academic registrar) YFD (*item 5.3 onwards*)  
 Sarah Hopkinson (assistant dean) SH  
 Matt Gower (vice principal curriculum and quality) MG  
 Peter Greenall (assistant principal and dean) PG  
 Jackie Schillinger (company secretary) JS

Part A unless stated

Item	Content
<b>1.</b>	<b>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>
1.1	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Chelsey Rowntree. The meeting was declared quorate.
<b>2.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
2.1	There were no interests declared as giving rise to a conflict of interest in relation to the agenda items for the meeting.
<b>3.</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE/FORWARD PLAN OF BUSINESS 2020-21</b>
3.1	The Terms of Reference were received for information.
3.2	The Forward Plan of Committee Business was received for information.
<b>4.</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>
4.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and the action log reviewed for assurance.

<p><b>5.</b></p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p><b>STRATEGIC UPDATE</b></p> <p>Dean’s Report: PG provided his report, including an update on Covid-19 and curriculum developments. He reported that despite the challenges presented by the disruption to learning, UCR had acted positively and proactively to safeguard the student experience to the greatest possible extent, with students now being supported in their return to campus as face-to-face delivery resumes from Monday 8th March 2021. He provided assurance that curriculum developments are being driven forward, with good progress in most areas. Discussion took place on the plans, communication and student support in place for the return to campus delivery. Members welcomed the clear report and the assurance gained from the discussion in the meeting.</p> <p>Strategic Plan Implementation Update Report: PG presented his report, highlighting that strong progress is evidenced across all aspects of the UCR strategy. Members noted that the report provides a summary of work under each priority, linked to the areas of work identified within the implementation plan and that the activity identified within this report links strongly to the actions identified within the UCR Quality Improvement Plan for 2020/21. He provided assurance that the UCR Senior Leadership Team has no current concerns regarding the progress of the implementation of the strategy. IB noted that it was good to see this kind of progress so soon and the committee congratulated the team for moving so quickly on the key strategic areas, especially when there is so much more going on this year. MC noted on the capacity point that the team had been strengthened and the progress shows the positive impact of this investment. GC asked if all roles were now filled and PG confirmed that all leadership team roles are filled but there is some natural movement in the lecturing team. He noted that the recent appointments of the data manager and the teaching and learning coach have had positive impact already. PG agreed to include a brief update on staffing for assurance in his next Dean’s report. CG sought assurance on the delivery and academic side as well as the support side and PG provided assurance that the teaching and learning coach is working with the advanced practitioners on developing scholarship and research and the team is looking at workload model on this for research projects. He noted that the food innovation project with the University of Chester has a project manager on board driving this and MC added information on the vertical farming and robotic milking projects. Members took assurance that management recognise that appropriate investment is needed to make some of these things happen.</p> <p>OFS Student Outcomes Condition Consultation Report: YFD presented her RAG-rated report showing the UCR position based on the data available, the potential impact and the actions needed. She highlighted the one amber rated point and the work to be done with students relating to the graduate outcomes in the student survey. She noted the land-based sector context in terms of graduate outcomes, but that there is an upcoming re-coding which could be helpful. She also provided assurance that the next Self-Evaluation Report will provide assurance data against this condition B3 and that the new data manager is working closely with MIS to before responsive to changes ahead. CG requested and received assurance that the internal audit planning programme can take such areas into account in its rolling assurance programme. PG noted that the sector is in a transition period with the OFS and the emerging quality system and so it is essential to keep up to date and responsive to this environment. IB confirmed that the outcomes secured by the University’s partners are shown in the University’s data and so there is an incentive to share data. He also noted that the response to the OFS consultation was broadly similar although it differed in respect of the proposed Quality Code. GC welcomed the assurance report and suggested that next time the data is presented it would be helpful to have some peer benchmarking as well.</p>
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<p><b>6.</b></p> <p>6.1</p>	<p><b>STUDENT EXPERIENCE FOCUS</b></p> <p>Student experience report: SH provided her report, providing an update on the management of Covid 19 and the student experience. She noted that UCR has been able to continue with vet nursing during the lockdown, with all other students moving to online delivery as per the autumn term. She noted that one of the critical aspects was practical sessions and where possible these have been provided online with live demonstrations so that these could continue. She explained the additional support available to staff to support the digital delivery. Students have breakout sessions on Teams to support engagement, with recognition that not all students engage as well remotely and so engagement is monitored and students at risk are identified and follow up actions taken with personal academic tutors. She noted that additional bursary funding has been very helpful such as access to digital resources to be able to engage. She explained the next phase is now inviting students back on site and predominately those that require practical and specialist facilities where block session have been planned to consolidate practical skills. IB queried how far UCR had got on planning what next year will look like. SH confirmed that the team is currently planning academic delivery for next year and it is likely that there will be some continuation of online learning, with the aim of reviewing the approach to teaching, learning and assessment as a whole to develop a more diverse student experience. CG requested and received assurance that UCR and the University are sharing ideas that can feed into next year.</p>
<p><b>7.</b></p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p><b>PERFORMANCE MONITORING</b></p> <p>UCR Self-Evaluation Report 2019-20 and UCR KPIs and Quality Improvement Plan 2020-21: PG presented the report produced as part of UCR’s self-assessment and continuous improvement process. He noted that the process is a cyclical and developmental process which operates throughout each academic year to address issues from the previous self-assessment process as well as identifying new strengths and areas for improvement or development to secure continued improvement in Higher Education activities and provides a holistic annual summary and evaluation of key performance indicators and informs the definition of the UCR Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Members received the report for assurance and noted the good progress reported but that internal progression required ongoing focus. GC noted that the document was comprehensive and substantial which could be quite a challenge for smaller institutions and he requested and received assurance that the timing of the report will be earlier in the academic year next year.</p> <p>Student data report: YFD reported stable retention data and a good picture on applications currently but with a note of caution in terms of vet nursing applications that are limited by the number of work placements available. Members received the report with assurance on a good position currently but with a degree of uncertainty on applications at this time in the year. MC noted the new courses in development with some internal students ready to move on to these and IB gave assurance that the University will support to enable these to go ahead. Members welcomed and appreciated the support from the University, recognising the tight timeframe and thanked IB.</p>
<p><b>8.</b></p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p>	<p><b>COLLEGE STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER AND KPIs</b></p> <p>Higher Education Risk Review Report: The report was received for assurance, with thanks.</p> <p>Prevent in HE Annual Overview Report: The report was received for assurance, with thanks and the work in the risk assessment noted with CG noting the need to balance prevent and freedom of speech factors.</p>

<b>9.</b>	<b>ITEMS FOR APPROVAL</b>
9.1	Higher Education Tuition Fees 2022-23: PG presented the proposed fee levels for 2022-23. The proposals were supported with discussion on the international fee level and the HND fee level before decision and it was decided to support the increase in the international fee level but keep the HND fee level the same. Members supported the APP expenditure and bursary approach to support internal progression.
<b>9.2</b>	<b>RESOLVED: UCR Higher Education Proposed Fees for 2022-23 are approved for recommendation to the Reaseheath College Board for approval.</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/ASSURANCE</b>
10.1	The following reports were received for information and assurance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access and Participation Plan Update Report</li> <li>• Scholarly Activity Update Report</li> <li>• HE Student Complaints Monitoring Report</li> <li>• HE Academic Board meeting minutes</li> <li>• HESES20 Report</li> </ul>
<b>11.</b>	<b>MATTERS TO ESCALATE TO RISK REGISTER/REPORT</b>
11.1	The tight timescale for the current curriculum development plans was noted as a risk to highlight.
<b>12.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>
12.1	There was no other business reported to the meeting.
<b>13.</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS</b>
13.1	The dates of the next meetings were confirmed as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 29 April 2021 at 2pm – joint meeting with Q&amp;S committee.</li> <li>• Thursday 17 June 2021 at 2pm</li> </ul>

The meeting closed at 4.30pm.

Confirmed as a correct record: 17 June 2021