

REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021 at 2.00pm
Via Microsoft 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
 Debra Swift (HE curriculum development manager) DS
 Peter Greenall (assistant principal and dean) PG
 Jackie Schillinger (company secretary) JS

Part A unless stated

| Item | Content |
|------------|---|
| 1. | WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE |
| 1.1 | The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Chelsey Rowntree. The meeting was declared quorate. |
| 2. | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST |
| 2.1 | There were no interests declared as giving rise to a conflict of interest in relation to the agenda items for the meeting. |
| 3. | TERMS OF REFERENCE AND FORWARD PLAN OF BUSINESS |
| 3.1 | Terms of Reference: The Terms of Reference were received for information and review. |
| 3.2 | The Forward Plan of Committee Business was received for information and review. |
| 3.3 | RESOLVED: To Approve the Terms of Reference and Forward Plan of Committee Business. |
| 4. | MINUTES |
| 4.1 | The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and the action log reviewed for assurance. |
| 4.2 | CG gave an update from the joint session with Quality and Standards Committee held on 29 April 2021. CG noted the meeting was very useful and the focus of that meeting was on internal progression |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>recruitment which was below the sector norm for like organisations and that this focus would be taken forwards by each committee in its oversight activities. He noted that the issue of branding and role models was also discussed and there has been some more work on this that can be shared later in the meeting. IB also added that the meeting had looked at geographical location as a promotional aspect of recruitment. PG noted that he had weaved this into discussions on the re-branding work. All confirmed that they found it useful and would welcome a joint meeting as a regular feature as required.</p> |
| <p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> | <p>STRATEGIC UPDATE</p> <p>Dean’s Report: The Dean presented his report, covering a Covid update and planning for September; a strategic plan update; a faculty staffing update for assurance; an OFS update including details of the additional hardship funding; a TEF update; the current re-branding project; and the Board of Studies proposal going to the University Senate next week, which he noted as a very positive development in the strategic partnership with the University. Questions and discussions followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CG asked whether the students know we have performed very well compared to other institutions on face to face delivery and Covid and PG noted that this seems to be the case based on word of mouth from the students’ own networks - CG noted that he and GC had provided input to the branding project and requested and received assurance that the branding project would also seek input from IB to ensure the University is sighted and able to provide input, and the Chair of the Board. GC endorsed the approach and the themes being explored and he emphasised the need to turn this into real deliverables at the required pace and quality. MC and PG provided assurance on the prioritising of the project internally and the outcomes and deliverables communicated to the external branding team. - CG welcomed the Board of Studies development and the Committee looked forward to hearing the outcome of the Senate next week. - GC welcomed the assurance on faculty staffing and asked further about how leaders are testing the temperature to monitor progress on staff culture and progress and PG and SH provided detail of the various ways in which this is carried out. - IB queried how UCR was managing the student deferrals and the tight timeframe for support. PG provided assurance that this support has been prioritised and UCR is doing all it can to provide the support needed. - CG noted that it is important to keep an eye on the freedom of speech debate. - GC welcomed the report and noted that there are many activities underway and wondered which was the key priority. Discussion followed and assurance was provided on confidence levels for the priority areas and the resourcing being in place to deliver. PG and IB noted that the amber rating of the report reflected the nature and timing of the validation process, but not significant issues were noted. - CMI L5 diploma – industry standard accreditations added to some of the programmes. Assurance was provided that this is considered a low-risk area. - Consideration of combined degrees was discussed with no current appetite to look at this but there is an appetite to look at module exchange with the University. - Discussion around zoology and zoo management provision, with the importance of advice and guidance highlighted. -The work on the Institute of Technology was also highlighted. <p>Curriculum Development Update: DS provided assurance on the pace and activities on curriculum development and went through the current new programmes for approval for 2021 start; re-validation of some programmes for 2021; the development of the new programmes for 2022 start; and amendments to existing programmes. MC welcomed the report and confirmed that this area has really come on positively since the previous meeting. CG on behalf of the meeting welcomed the strong assurance provided by this report and thanked DS, the team and the University for securing these positive developments.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> | <p>PERFORMANCE MONITORING</p> <p>Student data report: The report indicated that performance data reporting at this stage in the year shows a good position in general on retention and withdrawals. He noted however that the recruitment environment remains uncertain especially in terms of conversion rates, with internal progression remaining an area of focus for improvement. IB confirmed that retention appears to be up across the sector. The meeting discussed what actions are being taken to keep potential students in touch, even if they have UCR as an insurance offer and GC suggested that it would be useful if the reporting could show how far the numbers are away from target and what is being done to try and close the gap. IB requested and received an update on placements for vet nursing, with YFD confirming that they are being increased a little year on year and the final accreditation process will support this development.</p> <p>UCR Quality Improvement Plan: The reporting indicted that the majority of actions were RAG rated green, with the detail of those not green provided in the meeting. The committee took assurance from this detail that raised significant concern and overall good progress was being made. IB raised the issue of the pedagogy of facilitating virtual and physical attendance and if it can be effective and the discussion on the effectiveness of the technology and well as upskilling for staff and students.</p> |
| <p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p> | <p>COLLEGE STRATEGIC RISK REVIEW</p> <p>Higher Education Risk Review Report: The report was received for assurance, with thanks.</p> |
| <p>8.</p> <p>8.1</p> | <p>ITEMS FOR APPROVAL</p> <p>RESOLVED: The following items were received, considered and approved: Student Protection Plan and Refund and Compensation Policy HE Admissions Policy HE Student Complaints Policy HE Student Contract</p> |
| <p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p> | <p>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/ASSURANCE</p> <p>The following items were received for information and assurance: Access and Participation Plan Update Report HE Academic Board meeting minutes HE Student Complaints Monitoring Report</p> |
| <p>10.</p> <p>10.1</p> | <p>MATTERS TO ESCALATE TO RISK REGISTER/ REPORT TO THE BOARD</p> <p>The committee agreed to report the following to the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good levels of assurance received on how UCR has managed the return of students following the lockdown earlier in the year and the remainder of the year. • There are some positive signs so far in relation to the needed improvement in NSS scores this year, with a very strong response rate achieved this year and helpful indications from internal surveys. • Performance data reporting at this stage in the year shows a good position in general on |

| | |
|------------|---|
| | <p>retention and withdrawals. The recruitment environment remains uncertain especially in terms of conversion rates, with internal progression remaining an area of focus for improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assurance that good progress continues to be made on the implementation of the UCR strategic plan, with a re-branding exercise currently underway and the committee has had input into this project. • On curriculum development, strong assurance was gained on the excellent progress on curriculum development including the development of the Board of Studies and the meeting thanked the HE team and the University for securing these positive developments. • The joint development meeting with the Quality and Standards Committee was considered to be valuable and the committee would like to continue these, with Teams providing flexibility to meet to consider cross college issues as required. |
| 11. | ANY OTHER BUSINESS |
| 11.1 | GC thanked the management team for getting to grips with their remits quickly and evidencing through reporting to this meeting the excellent preparation and work that is ongoing and he urged them to keep up the momentum. |
| 12. | DATE OF NEXT MEETING |
| 12.1 | The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 25 November 2021 at 2.00pm, with any updates on key issues to be provided in the interim. |

The meeting closed at 4.10pm.

Confirmed as a correct record: 25 November 2021