

*the*  
**GOVERNING BODY**

**MINUTES of the meeting of the Governing Body held on Tuesday,  
22 February 2022 in Room 120, Queen Anne Court, Greenwich Campus, Park Row,  
Greenwich SE10 9LS / by Microsoft Teams commencing at 5:00 pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Ms B Hill CBE (in the Chair)	Mr C McWilliam
	Ms A Ayoub	Mrs A Mehta (via Teams)
	Professor J Harrington (Vice-Chancellor)	Mr M Orr
	Mr R Hicks	Ms S Ragab
	Mrs D Khanna	Mr S Saluja
	Mrs T King	Mr A Sharma (via Teams)
	Miss D Larnder	Mrs E Sideris (via Teams)
	Professor A Maragiannis	Professor A Westby

**In attendance :**

Professor J Bonet (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise))  
Mrs T Brighton (SEO Governing Body) (minutes)  
Mr P Garrod (University Secretary)  
Professor J Roscoe (Deputy Vice-Chancellor)  
Mr J Schless (Chief Executive: Greenwich Students' Union)(item 21/34.1)  
Mr P Taylor (Chief Operating Officer)  
Ms L Watson (Chief Financial Officer)

**GB 21/29      BRIEFING ON THE BUSINESS SCHOOL BY PROFESSOR LEIGH DOSTER, PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR**

The business meeting was preceded by a briefing on the Greenwich Business School from Professor Leigh Doster, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean of the School.

**GB 21/30      ITEMS FROM THE CHAIR**

**30.1 Retirement of Professor Javier Bonet, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise)**

The Chair reported that Professor Javier Bonet would be retiring from the University at the end of March 2022. Since his appointment in November 2015, Professor Bonet had done a remarkable job driving the University's work on research excellence and had been responsible for establishing the Research & Enterprise Training Institute which guided University researchers through their careers. On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chair thanked him for his

commitment and leadership during the past six and a half years and wished him all the best for the future.

GB 21/31      DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

GB 21/32      MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND ACTION LIST (GB 21/P48)

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 24 November 2021 were approved as a correct record. The actions list was received.

GB 21/33      VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT (GB 21/P49)

The Governing Body received a report from the Vice-Chancellor on recent developments:

- Following removal of the Government's 'Plan B' guidance, the University's Covid Safe guidance had been updated. In line with Government policy, the University continued to deliver face-to-face teaching. Positive Covid cases had gone up with the Omicron variant, but were now flattening out and safe behaviour continued to be promoted. Pop-up vaccination sites at the Avery Hill and Greenwich campuses had had a good uptake. Due to a change in government policy, universities would no longer be able to supply free DHSC-provided lateral flow tests to staff and students.
- Consultation with staff and students through focus groups was nearly concluded and a recommendation on whether to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism would be presented to the Governing Body at a future meeting.
- Noting that the results for the University's submission to Stonewall were currently embargoed, the Governing Body congratulated the Director of Human Resources and her team for the University's Gold rating and inclusion in Stonewall's index of the top 100 employers.
- The UCU had held three days of strike action in December 2021 when some picketing had taken place. Further strikes were planned in February and March 2022. Action Short of a Strike effective from 1 December 2021 was continuing. Regular messaging to students was in place and actions were being taken to address any disruption caused by the strike. Unison had not achieved the 50% turnout that it needed to take industrial action.
- Following discussion at the last meeting, KPI#6 relating to Staff Engagement had been reworded as "*I would recommend the University as a great place to work*".
- According to research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies, the University of Greenwich was currently ranked fourth in the UK for social mobility.
- The Office for Students had released a number of consultations and the University would be responding to them. In response to questions from Governors, the Vice-Chancellor reported that changes to universities' access and participation plans were not yet known but an emphasis on forging

greater links with local schools was anticipated. The Government's decision on the Augar Review was still awaited.

GB 21/34

STUDENTS' UNION

### **34.1 GSU Plan 2026: Become your Best at Greenwich and Beyond (GB 21/P50)**

John Schless, Chief Executive, Greenwich Students' Union (GSU), presented GSU's new five-year strategic plan to 2026: "Become your Best at Greenwich and Beyond". The plan had been created over a period of time because of the pandemic and its development had taken account of feedback from GSU officers, students and University stakeholders and the wider University strategy to 2030. Its principal aims and outcomes were around welcoming and supporting students, providing a high-quality education, making them life ready and helping students to become the best they could be.

GSU recognised that working as a strategic partner with the University was the best way to achieve the objectives and outcomes of its plan. Consistency of delivery while new student officer teams were appointed each year would be crucial, as was agile planning. A series of benchmarking measures and action plans to support the strategy were being prepared.

In discussing the strategy, the Governing Body noted that, following the transfer of responsibility for students' union services at Medway from Kent Students' Union to GSU in June 2021, there had been a major restructuring which had brought about cost efficiencies. The transfer provided an opportunity to ensure that the service provided across campuses was consistent and appropriate to the needs of students. In response to questioning about whether messaging around the strategy would reflect that resources were limited, Mr Schless stated that it was understood that, whilst the strategy needed to be aspirational, it would also need to be flexible and respond to changing circumstances.

The Governing Body thanked Mr Schless for his presentation. It was agreed that GSU's strategy was an excellent piece of work with some powerful themes and outcomes. The alignment with the University's strategy was evident, whilst ensuring that GSU's prime purpose of supporting students remained at the forefront of its strategy. While it was important that GSU retained autonomy in delivering its plan, its work should also dovetail with that of the University's to achieve the shared ambition of a diverse and inclusive education and student success.

### **34.2 Student Governor's Report (GB 21/P51)**

The Governing Body received a report from the Ms Aatika Ayoub, Student Governor summarising GSU's activities in Term 1 and Term 2 relating to student experience, Welcome and Refreshers 2022 and the Retention and Wellbeing Project. In response to Governors' interest in the reference to the Digital Day of Action, Ms Ayoub explained that this related to her work on the #EqualAccessToUni campaign which was a movement started by students at Leicester University which pushed for the Government to provide alternative and more ethical student financing arrangements. To avoid crowds gathering in view

of covid-19, the Digital Day of Action planned to mobilise students across the internet in aid of this.

GB 21/35

## GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW (GB 21/P52)

The Governing Body considered the final report of the governance effectiveness review conducted by Halpin Partnership and the draft action plan for implementing the review's recommendations.

Mr Peter Garrod, University Secretary reported that the Halpin Partnership had concluded that the University's governance was 'effective' and 'very good' with many areas of 'leading edge' practice. Halpin had also confirmed that the University was compliant with the CUC's Higher Education Code of Governance. As a result of its work, Halpin had made six 'priority' recommendations, 20 recommendations and 20 suggestions. The priority recommendations and recommendations were broadly grouped into the following themes:

- Academic governance
- Effective succession planning
- Stakeholder engagement
- Horizon scanning and the future university
- Effective risk management
- Effective student engagement
- Engagement with EDI
- Operational governance.

Mr Garrod reported that some of the recommendations related to issues which the University had highlighted to Halpin (eg the review of academic governance, development of a new strategic risk register and planning to hold meetings on all campuses); some related to operational governance and could be implemented quickly; and others were more strategic and would require a longer timeframe to implement. In response to the report, the Nominations, Staffing and Remuneration (NSR) Committee had established an implementation working group comprising the Chair of the Governing Body, Chair of the NSR Committee, Ms Tricia King, the Vice-Chancellor and the University Secretary to oversee the discharge of actions. The draft action plan, which had been reviewed by the implementation group, was still a 'work in progress' and the prioritisation of actions and further work on timelines and milestones would be incorporated.

The Chair stated that the outcome of the review was excellent. An external perspective on the governance arrangements was always an instructive exercise and she thanked Governors and the executive for their personal contributions to the process. The Governing Body needed to be the best it could be in order to support the executive in delivering the 'This is Our Time' strategy and the action plan would be a helpful tool in this regard.

In discussing the specific recommendations arising from the review, the following points were made:

- The chair of the Finance Committee noted his concerns about suggestion S9 (that a qualified accountant should be co-opted onto the Finance Committee) based on his experience of co-optees in his professional

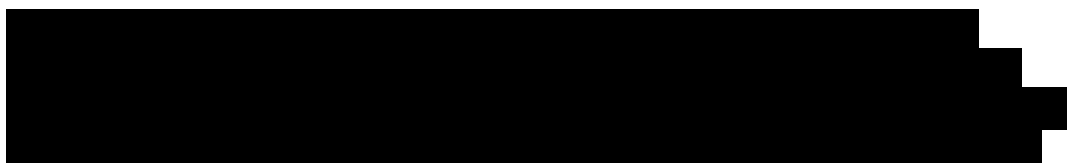
workplace. In particular he was concerned about the burden imposed on the executive in terms of briefing and inducting individuals into the role and the potential for a high turnover of co-optees. In response, it was noted that Halpin's proposal was only a suggestion and that a co-opted appointment for the Finance Committee would not be pursued if the chair did not consider that one was necessary.

- The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee supported the suggestion (S6) that a co-opted member should be recruited for the Audit & Risk Committee. The committee was smaller, because staff members were excluded, and taking into account its specific governance and regulatory remits, she believed co-option was a useful way of engaging someone with the skills necessary for the committee.
- During the discussion, there was general agreement that co-option onto committees was a useful mechanism for addressing specific needs, and that co-optee appointments should be considered on a case-by-case basis. It could also be a valuable method for recruiting individuals who had the potential to become Independent Governors and as part of succession planning for chairs of committees. However, whilst these possibilities might be referenced in the role description, it would also be made clear to candidates that there was no expectation that they would become a chair of a committee or a member of the Governing Body.
- In relation to priority recommendation PR1 on academic governance, the Vice-Chancellor reported that external consultants to take forward the review of academic governance had now been appointed. The review had been broadened to cover all executive governance and working groups.
- There was support for recommendation R3 (relating to an away day on horizon scanning and consideration of what the future University might look like) and for more opportunities for Governors to participate in sessions relevant to shaping the direction of strategy.

The Governing Body endorsed the earlier comments of the Chair and agreed that the review's outcome was excellent and that the results reflected the relationship and trust built up between the executive and Governors. The Governors commended Mr Garrod and executive team for establishing such a sound platform of governance on which to build and move to the next level. Governors were asked to feed any comments on the draft action plan direct to Mr Garrod.

#### GB 21/36 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE SURVEY (GB 21/P53)

Introducing a report on the 2021 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), Professor Bonet explained that the survey was not compulsory across the sector and only 89 institutions had participated in the latest exercise. The purpose was to provide feedback on the experience of postgraduate research (PGR) students as they worked toward their research degrees.



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GB 21/37

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GB 21/38      EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) STRATEGY UPDATE 2021/22  
(GB 21/P55)

The Governing Body considered an overview of progress in implementing the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) revised Strategy for 2019-2022 and wider EDI initiatives. It was noted that this would be the last update, as the EDI Strategy Action Plan and objectives would be subsumed into the new People sub-strategy from April 2022 and the key performance indicators would be updated. The Governing Body noted some positive progress in areas such as the revival of the staff networks and recognised that work to further EDI in the University continued.

GB 21/39      GENDER PAY REPORT 2021 INCLUDING COMPARATIVE POSITION ON GENDER PAY  
(GB 21/P56)

Ms Gail Brindley, Director of Human Resources, presented the draft Pay Gap Report for 2021 which had been prepared to meet legal requirements for higher education institutions with 250 or more employees to publish gender pay gap data annually. For the first time, some snapshot data on pay gaps for other protected characteristics had been included.

The data, representing the position at 31 March 2022, highlighted the progress that the University had made in relation to gender pay. The mean gender pay gap had fallen to 11.2%, a reduction of 1.7% from the previous year, while the median gender pay gap was 9.1%, a reduction of 4.8% from the previous year. [REDACTED]

The Governing Body noted that the University was committed to a zero pay gap for gender by 2030 and closing the other pay gaps. A third-party contractor had been appointed to undertake modelling for action plans to achieve these targets. It was noted that only a small percentage of staff had shared their information for the disability data and a future focus would be to improve this so that strategies were informed by a true picture. In response to a question about assurance over the data, it was reported that the gender pay data had been subjected to a series of checks including third party scrutiny.

The Governing Body **approved** the 2021 Pay Gap Report for Gender for publication on the University's webpages, noting that the snapshot data on the other protected characteristics would not be included in the published report.

GB 21/40      HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT (GB 21/P57)

The Governing Body considered a progress update on actions taken in response of the OfS's Statement of Expectations for Preventing and Addressing Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Affecting Students in Higher Education.

Mr Garrod reported that, since the update provided to the Governing Body last autumn, progress had been made in a number of areas:

- following a high-level review of policies, two important policies in this area had been amalgamated into the Student Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy as a single statement of institutional commitment;
- a review of the Student Disciplinary Procedure to ensure its fit with current processes was underway;
- a new support package ('Report and Support') for reporting concerns related to harassment, bullying and sexual misconduct had been purchased and was being implemented for staff and students, and additional resourcing put in place to manage the process;
- The Sexual Violence Liaison Officers and Listening Ears networks, which provided support for students in relation to sexual violence and harassment, were being expanded;
- A programme of training aimed at educating staff and students and changing culture was being put in place for Welcome Weeks in September 2022.

It was confirmed that, in response to a call from the Universities Minister for universities not to use non-disclosure agreements in cases of sexual misconduct, harassment and bullying, that these had not been used by Greenwich and a commitment to this effect would be incorporated into the Student Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy.

## FORMAL AGENDA

### GB 21/41 GOVERNING BODY COMMITTEES: MATTER REQUIRING APPROVAL (GB 21/P58)

The Governing Body received a summary of decisions by its committees requiring the Governing Body's approval. The following matters (all in the Information Pack) were approved:

- (i) *From the Nominations, Staffing & Remuneration Committee held on 1 February 2022:*
  - Amended Terms of Reference to clarify the Committee's role in the recruitment of co-opted members of committees.
  - Role Description and Person Specification for co-opted members of committees (including provisions related to a proposed co-opted member of the Audit & Risk Committee).
- (ii) *From the Finance Committee held on 7 February 2022:*
  - Financial Return and Commentary for submission to the Office for Students by the deadline date of 28 February 2022.
  - Resolution required by Barclays Bank to open an Investment Account.

### GB 21/42 INFORMATION PACK

The Governing Body received the following documents which had been circulated separately as an information pack:



*42.1 From the Nominations, Staffing & Remuneration Committee held on 26 October 2021*

42.1.1 Revised Committee Terms of Reference (GB 21/P59)

42.1.2 Role Description for Co-opted Members of Committees (GB 21/P60)

*42.2 From the Finance Committee held on 7 February 2022*

42.2.1 Financial Return and Commentary to the Office for Students (GB 21/P61)

42.2.2 Barclays Investment Account (GB 21/P62)

42.2.3 The following Estate Strategy Business Cases (GB 21/P63):

- Learning Spaces Rolling Programme (Appendix A)
- Critical Care Unit, Avery Hill Campus (Appendix B)
- Salix Decarbonisation Project, Avery Hill Campus (Appendix C)
- Cutty Sark Accommodation Refurbishment (Appendix D)

42.2.4 Management Accounts to 31 December 2021 (GB 21/P64)

42.2.5 Greenwich Students' Union Financial Statements 2020/21 (GB 21/P65)

*42.3 From the University Health & Safety Committee*

42.3.1 Health and Safety Annual Report 2020/21: Matter Arising - data showing a breakdown of 'unacceptable behaviour' reports indicating how much of the increase in incidents related to Covid (GB 21/P66).

*42.4 Governing Body Cycle of Business 2021/22 (GB 21/P67)*

*42.5 The minutes of the following Governing Body committees:*

- Nominations, Staffing & Remuneration Committee held on 26 October 2021 (GB 21/P69)
- Nominations, Staffing & Remuneration Committee held on 13 January 2022 (GB 21/P70)
- Nominations, Staffing & Remuneration Committee held on 1 February 2022 (GB 21/P71)
- University Health & Safety (H&S) Committee held on 3 November 2021 (GB 21/P74)
- University Health & Safety (H&S) Committee held on 7 December 2021 (GB 21/P75).

The meeting ended at 18:58.

T.A.Brighton / Peter Garrod  
18 March 2022