

Academic and Governance Services

Council

22/01 A meeting of the Council was held online on Tuesday 25 January 2022 at 2.15 pm.

The President	
The Vice-Presidents	(Mr T. Beardmore-Gray, Mrs H. Gordon, and Mrs K. Owen)
The Vice-Chancellor	
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor	
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor	(Professor M. Fellowes)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor	(Professor E.M. McCrum)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor	(Professor D. Zaum)

Professor J. Board	Mr J. Magee
Mr K. Corrigan	Ms S. Maple
Mrs P. Egan	Mr P. Milhofer
Professor R. Frazier	Ms L. Moses
Professor J. Gibbins	Mrs S. Plank
Professor U. Kambhampati	Mr S.C.C Pryce
Mr B. Knowles	Mr N. Richards
Miss G. Loweth	Dr C. Shaw

In attendance:

- The Chief Strategy Officer and University Secretary
- The Chief Financial Officer
- The Director of Quality Support and Development
- The Director of Human Resources (for Minute 22/05 only)
- Mr J. Russell, Campus Jobs Manager (for Minute 22/05 only)

Apologies were received from Mrs S. Butler.

22/02 The minutes (21/57-21/78) of the meeting held on 24

The Council received a list of documents sealed and to be sealed.

Resolved:

‘That the Council approve the action taken by the Officers and Members in affixing the University Seal to

and Warwick University had franchised its scheme to some other universities. Mr Brady indicated that Reading's scheme was highly regarded in the sector.

In response to further questions, Mr Russell spoke of the impacts of the pandemic and the recent gradual recovery in vacancies and recruitment. Mr Brady noted that students who had been regularly employed through the scheme had been able to benefit from the government's furlough scheme over the pandemic, which had alleviated financial hardship in many cases.

The Council thanked Mr Brady and Mr Russell for their presentation and commended the scheme for delivering significant benefits to both the University and its students.

22/06 The role of Senate (Item 6)

Professor Frazier gave a presentation on the role of Senate.

Professor Frazier reminded Council that Senate was currently in the process of reviewing its effectiveness and, as part of this work, had established, jointly with Council, a sub-group to review the effectiveness of the relationship between Council and Senate. The current discussion would usefully inform the work of the sub-group.

Professor Frazier outlined the membership and purpose of Senate, and how it fulfilled its role. Senate was established by Charter to oversee the education and research of the University

discussion on key issues for the governance of academic activities, such as academic freedom,

academic and professional staff and students. Transparency was fundamental to the process and success of the implementation. The implementation plan included support and development for academic teams to take forward the changes, aided by locally based change agents. Milestones were well defined and regular check points built in. Professor McCrum undertook to provide Council with a paper outlining the high-level implementation plan at its

needs of some disciplines, there would be more examinations held in person this year than last year. In the longer term, the Programme Expectations proposals would reduce the reliance on examinations, whether online or face-to-face, and make assessments more authentic to the discipline and workplace.

The Vice-Chancellor clarified that the Resolution endorsed the principles and proposals set out in the paper, but did not represent approval for associated expenditure. The implementation plan to be considered by Council at its next meeting would set out proposals on resource. He confirmed that a report providing an update on the costs and benefits of the Strategic Foundations Programme would be submitted to Council's first meeting in 2022/23.

The Council commended the proposals and thanked Professor McCrum and colleagues for their work.

Resolved:

'That:

1. that the overarching recommendations outlined in the Blended Learning and Programme Expectations proposals, now submitted, be approved;
2. the Report of the meeting of the Senate, held on 5 January 2022, now submitted, be approved.'

22/08 Report of the Vice-Chancellor (Item 8)

The Council received the Report of the Vice-Chancellor.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the Council of the European Centre for Medium-range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) had accepted the UK government's proposal to host its headquarters on the University's Whiteknights campus. The ECMWF headquarters would occupy the current site of TOB1, which includes the School of Art; the UK government had agreed to indemnify the costs of a new building for the School of Art in the case the move of the ECMWF HQ would not advance, which would allow the Art project to proceed without delay. The Vice-Chancellor explained that, whereas the bid approved by the Council of ECMWF had been wider in scope, including a plan for long-term investment in research, the UK government had advised that the bid should be confined to a land transaction. While the University had accepted this course, its commitment to make a substantial investment in collaborative research with ECMWF remained a requirement. This provided a welcome opportunity to rethink the research proposal and extend the collaboration to a wider group of partners.

The Vice-Chancellor drew Council's attention to the summary of international and domestic league tables and noted that there was some fluctuation in the University's rankings. The University's performance in international league tables was improving slowly and, with some small further improvement, the University could regain a ranking in the top 200. There were minor movements in the University's rankings in domestic league tables, both positive and negative depending on the weighting of the various measures in the different tables.

The Vice-Chancellor advised that the next all-staff talk would focus on the University's position in relation to Wokingham Borough Council's new Local Plan, which identified plans for growth in the years to 2038, and the future of Hall Farm. The Chief Financial Officer noted that the

The Council received the Report of the meeting of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 10 January 2022.

The President reported that the Committee had considered the Estate Strategy and the Digital Strategy, which were fundamental to the achievement of the College's strategic objectives.

Mrs Owen reported that the appraisal exercise was almost complete, and that the one-to-one meetings had generated a wealth of useful information and reflection. In particular, the exercise had identified further ideas to improve the effectiveness of Council, areas where more information or better understanding of the work of the University Council would enhance individual performance and motivation, and skills and experience among its members which Council could draw on. A final report including proposals for action would be submitted to the Council at its March meeting.

Resolved:

‘That the Interim report on appraisal discussions with Council members, now submitted, be approved.’

22/12 Recruitment of new President of the Council

Mrs Owen reported that an advertisement inviting expressions of interest in the role of President of the Council had now been published on the University website and would appear shortly in a number of other locations. She invited any members of Council who might be interested in the role to contact either herself or the University Secretary and Chief Strategy Officer.

22/13 Dates of further meetings of the Council in the Session 2021/22

Further meetings of the Council in this Session had been scheduled for: