

GOLDSMITHS

University of London

COUNCIL

20 November 2019

Present: Dinah Caine (Chair), Frances Corner, Elisabeth Hill, Althea Efunshile, Carol Rue, Suhail Malik, Monika Barnes, Rodger Kibble, Susan Dilly, Ben Fowler, Lynn Percy, Conrad Heyns, Joe Leam, Philip Stoltzfus, Ian Borman, Aaron Porter, Theodora Zemek, Mark d'Inverno, David Oswell

In attendance: Helen Watson (Secretary), Matthew Brooks, Nirmal Borkhataria, Carol Ford, Melanie Rimmer, Tom Morgan, Giorgia Cowan and Sally Priddle

OPEN BUSINESS

1 Apologies for Absence

Received:

- 1.1 Apologies received from David Reddaway, Helen MacNamara, Pam Raynor and Andrew Laurence
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2 Identification of Items for Discussion

No items were raised.

3 Chair's Report and Action

Received:

A verbal update on the work the Chair undertaken on behalf of Goldsmiths College since last meeting and any actions taken by the Chair since the last meeting.

Noted:

- 3.1 The Chair's report was a new agenda item which would outline the work the Chair had undertaken on behalf of the College since the last meeting. It aimed to update the Council on priorities and support and challenge in turn.
- 3.2 The Chair had worked with the Secretary and Warden to devise the agenda for the upcoming Away Day which would be pivotal in the next steps for the organisation. There was a mutual desire to work together to deliver strategy and establish a positive culture with aligning values.
- 3.3 There was an appetite within the College for Council to be more transparent and provide clarity on decision making. The Chair intended to organise an open meeting for students and staff where Council would report on their work, aims and progress.
- 3.4 The College were learning more about the Office for Students and their expectations for Higher Education Institutions and how they would hold them to account. It was important that the College's autonomy was maintained and the Council were clear on their appetite for risk and how/when the institution reported to the OfS.
- 3.5 The draft CUC code had been shared with members but had not been published. It was reported that it was values based.
- 3.6 The Chair had attended the main party conferences on behalf of Goldsmiths'. Across all parties there was a commitment to adult education and lifelong learning, identifying the need to upskill and retrain people.

4 Minutes

Received:

The minutes of the Council meeting No.118 held on 12 September 2019.

Resolved:

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

5 Actions

Received:

Updates against actions agreed at previous meetings

Noted:

- 5.1 A verbal update was provided from the Students' Union President on the Students' Union survey. It identified that there were some significant areas for improvement within the student experience.
- 5.2 Key College events would be shared with members via the various teams who are responsible for managing events.

6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Any additional matters arising not otherwise on the Agenda.

7 WARDEN'S REPORT

Received:

a report from the Warden (19-12)

Noted:

- 7.1 The political climate meant that it was hard to be certain about the future of Higher Education and fees.
- 7.2 The Office for Students were continuing to publish additional guidance and consultations which were demonstrating a step change in regulation and expectations for HEIs.
- 7.3 As part of the regulation the Institution is required to submit reportable events to the Office for Students. Since the last Council meeting Goldsmiths had submitted two: one in relation to the significant reduction in student numbers and one in relation to the upcoming strikes. It was likely that following the submission of the financial return the College would receive enhanced monitoring in relation to its finances.
- 7.4 Significant work had been undertaken to further develop the Green New Deal. Council would receive regular reports about the work and progress against the objectives.

- 7.5 UCU strikes were taking place across the next two weeks over pay and pensions. A number of issues had been raised during the meetings with UCU, Unison and Students' Union. SMT were considering the representations that were made and would take the issues forward. Loss of wages would be reallocated into student facing activities and the student hardship fund.
- 7.6 It was agreed that colleagues would be hit hard by the strike and it was important that all felt part of the vision for the future, which required positive working relationships.
- 7.7 It was agreed that communications with students needed to be clear and consistent so that they understood the implications of the strike and any changes in their provision.
- 7.8 The College's responsibility for telling students if lectures were cancelled sat with each Department. It had been confirmed that missed attendance would not count towards student visa conditions. Central teams were working with Departments to identify whether teaching would proceed.
- 7.9 The report highlighted progress against each strategic priority, what work was underway and how the institution would know if it was not going to achieve targets.
- 7.10 Departmental strategy reviews had been progressed and Departments were now looking at how things would be moved forwards. Key factors that needed to be considered included employability and technology.
- 7.11 The Institution was investing in a new management system to improve research and knowledge exchange practice.
- 7.12 Positive community links were essential for the civic engagement strand. The Enterprise Hub and rethinking around Deptford Town Hall would involve community consultation to ensure that developments met the local community's needs.
- 7.13 The Equality and Human Rights Commission report outlined the size of the problem in relation to racism within Higher Education was discussed. It was important that the outcomes of this report were integrated into the College's race justice work. This work needed to be reflective and honest about what the Institution needed to do to facilitate change.
- 7.14 The Athena Swan submission had been made, there was a lot of essential work that needed to be undertaken to ensure the College demonstrated and learnt from best practice.
- 7.15 Work on the development of the financial strategy was underway, this included gathering and analysing a significant amount of data to identify the College's position and the changes required to secure its future.

- 7.16 A fit for purpose estates plan was being developed to ensure the estate was being used to the maximum benefit of the Institution and its students.
- 7.17 The College was two years into its strategy and now was felt to be an opportunity to reflect on how fit for purpose the strategy was; what work needed to continue and what needed to be refined.
- 7.18 It was important to strike the right balance of what information needed to be brought to the attention of Council and what was management's responsibility. Where there a risk of compliance or breach of conditions then it would be escalated to Council.
- 7.19 A full scale curriculum review would be undertaken, looking into students' expectations. The Student's Union supported the review and wanted to ensure that the unique selling point of Goldsmiths' radical and progressive curriculum was maintained. Academic Board would be essential in the development of the curriculum and ensure it aligned with the wider principles.
- 7.20 It was important that whatever was developed and agreed academically was backed up by the administrative support and infrastructure. This would include a reallocation of resources including staffing, estates and the activities undertaken.
- 7.21 With the current age of the marketization of education and the College's recent decline in league tables, the College needed to retain its values whilst addressing its problems.
- 7.22 Members welcomed the rigour and transparency of the report and agreed it would be beneficial to share with the wider community.
- 7.23 The needs and expectations of students needed to be further clarified to establish whether the current offer is fit for purpose. It was important that Council understood its role and how it would feed into discussions around this.
- 7.24 The Access and Participation plan was essential for the progress of the College and it needed to align with the wider work on racial justice.

Action:

- 7.25 Share a version of the report with the wider community.
- 7.26 Ensure that the KPI report was starred at each meeting.
- 7.27 Provide a regular report on the regulatory conditions of Office for Students.

8 KPI Report

Received:

KPI report

Noted:

- 8.1 Council noted the updated KPI report.

9 Student's Union Report

Received:

Update on the Students' Union's priorities for 2019-20

Noted:

- 9.1 The report provided updates on the Student's Union priorities and work undertaken within the academic year.
- 9.2 Council agreed it was positive to receive the report and hear about work that Council did not usually monitor closely.
- 9.3 The report outlined that the Students' Union were concerned about the support in place for the Against Sexual Violence project. There was no longer a College lead on the work and it was important that the project was treated with the appropriate seriousness.
- 9.4 SMT were meeting with Student's Union representatives to unpick a number of the issues that had been highlighted.
- 9.5 Shortlisting was underway to recruit external trustees, the Union were aiming to recruit between 2 and 4 trustees. This would then lead to the appointment process of a permanent CEO.
- 9.6 It was agreed that it was useful to understand the trend data and share information on advice services.
- 9.7 Members discussed how academic community socials were used to make connections with the Departments.
- 9.8 It was reported that the Racial Justice Group had not yet met and the Student's Union were keen to know that this Group would be scheduled soon.

- 9.9 It was reported that the racial justice audit was underway and this would feed into the strategy which the Group would then monitor the implementation of.
- 9.10 The three top Student's Union priorities were; mental health, racial justice and the quality of accommodation.
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10 Human Resources and Equalities Report

Received:

Report from Human Resources and Equalities Committee

Noted:

- 10.1 The main items were excellent updates and provided assurance on progress of the College's objectives.
- 10.2 The Committee had discussed the effectiveness of the Committee, what its priorities were and how it addressed concerns. It was important that the Committee focused on strategic issues and not on operational issues.
- 10.3 The Committee felt like a reporting committee for work that had already been done rather than a monitor of strategic plans and this needed to change to improve its function and governance role.
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11 Action Plan in Response to Occupation Demands

Received:

Update on the progress against action plan

Noted:

- 11.1 Council noted the progress against the action plan.
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12 Academic Board Report

Received:

Report from Academic Board

Noted:

- 12.1 This was first formal report received from the Academic Board, intended to re-establish the relationship between the Board and Council.
- 12.2 There needed to be alignment between the priorities and progression against objectives.
- 12.3 Academic Board were looking at the future of the College's curriculum and what needed to change to meet the expectations of future students.
- 12.4 The report summarised what issues had been scrutinised and intended to give Council confidence that the academic standards and governance focus was right and provided due assurance.
- 12.5 Inputs into the future of the curriculum were being collated and it was important that all stakeholders were consulted. The Institution needed to work with schools to understand the interests and expectations their pupils had of becoming a student. The Institution needed to talk to existing students and alumni to open up the discussion on the future of Goldsmiths' curriculum. These conversations would lead to an understanding of what structures and infrastructure were required.
- 12.6 The College needed to be clear on what it wanted to stand for and deliver in terms of community support and employability.
- 12.7 Initial consultation of the Digital Strategy had finished, further work would be developed and consultation would continue throughout the spring term to establish exactly what Goldsmiths' strategy looked like. It needed to be integrated and meaningful to ensure development of learning and teaching.
- 12.8 Creativity across the curriculum was essential but the curriculum also needed to integrate skills that employers were looking for.
- 12.9 There were pressures between student demands, personalisation and a marketable product.

13 International Strategy Report and Risk Registers

Received:

Report on development of the International Strategy

Noted:

- 13.1 Carol Rue had acted as the Council link on international work. Members were able to engage in different areas of the College in different ways and learn about how work was developing.

- 13.2 A third of the College's fee income came from international students so it was important that the support and provision aligned.
- 13.3 International revenue and reputation was critical in a global world and Goldsmiths had not yet effectively integrated this work into its business.
- 13.4 Academic Board were challenged on what more could be done in this area.
- 13.5 The Computing Department were utilised as an example of how Goldsmiths' values and curriculum could be taken and developed into an international project in their discipline.
- 13.6 Tara Page had been seconded from the Educational Department to support the International Team to look at projects to bring about social change.
- 13.7 Programme development, commercial partnerships and recruitment were priorities for the internal team. Bursaries would be explored to support international students' access to Goldsmiths.
- 13.8 The team were working with the Student Experience Directorate, looking at the whole journey of international students from recruitment and admissions through to careers. It would provide a holistic view of the student experience.
- 13.9 Education remained the UK's biggest external output.
- 13.10 The College provided MOOC for free, but courses could be upgraded to get a certificate and qualification.
- 13.11 Council agreed they were pleased to hear about the progress on the international work and wanted to understand more about the academic experience of international students.

14 External Relations Report

Received:

Report from External Relations Committee

Noted:

- 14.1 The Committee had monitored progress and impact against all work streams in this area.
- 14.2 Employability was a key priority for the Committee.
- 14.3 It was important the Committee reflected on its role and how it provided scrutiny and assurance on behalf of Council.

15 Finance and Resources Report

Received:

Report from Finance and Resources Committee

Noted:

15.1 Council noted the report.

16 Health and Safety Report

Received:

Report from Health and Safety Committee

Noted:

16.1 Council noted the report.

17 Estates and Infrastructure Report

Received:

Report from Estates and Infrastructure Committee

Noted:

17.1 The Committee had reviewed concerns about the estate, issues appeared to predominantly relate to polices, record keeping and following up on actions and recommendations.

17.2 Steps were being taken to develop a positive integrated strategy.

18 Risk Management Policy

Received:

Revised Risk Management Policy

Noted:

- 18.1 The College had taken significant steps to revise the approach to risk management, ensuring all stakeholders understood their role in risk management and responsibilities for recording and mitigating risk.
- 18.2 Risk management had previously not been dynamic and the changes recognised a change in culture to actively manage risk through everything the College did.
- 18.3 Work would continue to develop, embed and enhance processes and ensure that risks were being shared and escalated.
- 18.4 The approach enabled lots of different levels of risk discussions enabling the priority risks to be escalated and addressed.
- 18.5 Council agreed that they wanted to understand the top risks concerning SMT and how information was currently shared.

Action:

- 18.6 Develop a SMT risk snapshot.
- 18.7 Develop risk diagram to show how risks were escalated and reported.

Resolved:

- 18.8 The revised Risk Management Policy was approved.

19 Revised Health and Safety Policy

Received:

Revised Health and Safety Policy as recommended by the Health and Safety Committee

Resolved:

- 19.1 The revised Health and Safety Policy was approved.

20 Audit and Risk Report and Incident Management Reports

Received:

Report from Audit and Risk Committee

Noted:

- 20.1 The Committee had undertaken in-depth scrutiny of the regulatory returns. The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee had attended to provide assurance on the finances and scrutiny of the returns from a financial perspective.
- 20.2 The Committee had reviewed the revised approach to oversight of risk. It had been agreed that it was a sophisticated and mature approach. The changing external environment meant that there was more volatile change in risk and risks should not be considered in isolation; many things could happen in combination. The College was looking at scenario planning for a number of possibilities.

21 Public Interest Governance Principles

Received:

A report on Public Interest Governance Principles

Noted:

- 21.1 Council were responsible for ensuring that the College met and practiced the public interest governance principles. There were steps to be taken to improve practice and references to the principles within the governance instruments.

22 Update on Office for Students Guidance

Received:

An update on the latest guidance from the Office for Students

Noted:

- 22.1 The report provided an update on the latest guidance from the Office for Students and gave Council an understand of the increased expectations and potential risks for the institution.

23 Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Received:

Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Noted:

- 23.1 The statement had been reviewed to ensure it was fit for purpose, compliant and accurately represented the organisation.

Resolved:

Council approved the revised statement.

24 Any Other Business (Open)

No business was raised.