REGENT'S UNIVERSITY LONDON

Academic Committee Agenda
22 March 2023, 14:00 – 15:10, MS Teams

Ex-Officio Members	
Professor Geoff Smith	Vice-Chancellor & CEO (Chair)
Professor Castulus Kolo	President, Macromedia University & Non-exec Director
Professor Maria Charalambous	Director of Learning & Teaching
Samantha Grady	Director of Student Experience
Professor Gill Stark	Associate Provost
Steph Talliss-Foster	Head of Registry
Carl Teigh	Chief Finance Officer
Dan Lanigan	Chief Commercial Officer
Valérie de Saegher	Director of Human Resources
Annie McNamara	Director of Academic Services
Stine Ostergaard Kaus	Student Union President
Abigaëlle Perrault	Student Union Vice-President – Student Experience
Elected	
Prof Zubin Sethna	Academic Representative - Director level
Oliver Sterland	Academic Representative - Ass Prof/Sen Lecturer level

In Attendance	
Jessica Vine	Head of Governance (minutes)

Opening Items

1. 1.1.	**Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest** New colleagues were welcomed to the meeting. It was **noted** that the roles of Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor and of Professional Services Representative were currently vacant.
1.2	Apologies for absence were **noted** from: Professor Lawrence Phillips (Associate Provost) Stephanie Murphy (Head of Student Experience and Welfare), Dylan Wolff (Student Union Vice-President – Academic Affairs) and Amparo Lallana (Academic Representative - Director level).
1.3	A standing declaration of interest was **noted** from Professor Castulus Kolo, as President of Macromedia University.
2. 2.1	**Minutes and actions of the previous meetings** The minutes of the following meetings were received and **approved** as a correct record: - Ordinary meeting held on 30 November 2022 - Extraordinary meeting held on 19 January 2023
2.2	It was **noted** that the finalised Academic Assurance Annual Report 2021-22 was circulated to the Committee on 8 March 2023 via email (prior to the submission to the Board).
2.3	There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Part A: Items for Discussion and / or Approval

3.	**Chair's Report and Chair's Actions**
3.1	**Taught Student Attendance Policy** It was **noted** that the Quality Committee had approved minor amendments to the Student Attendance Policy (approval via email in February 2023). These amendments had subsequently been approved on behalf of the Academic Committee by Chair's Action, as set out at agenda item 3.1. The amendments incorporated learning from the autumn term.
3.2	**Verbal update on New Portfolio Developments, preparations for iDAPs, GGE Strategic Refresh.** The Vice-Chancellor and CEO provided an update on the following matters:
3.3	*New Portfolio Developments* • The Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team (VCET) was considering proposals for new courses to launch in 2024-25. • The new areas under consideration included: luxury hospitality management, technology, and the business of sport. • These portfolio areas were deemed to be a good fit with Regent's existing offering and reflected industry need in areas such as hospitality. Regent's was working with industry partners and advisers to develop these proposals.
3.4	Committee Members were supportive of the proposed new developments. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the courses would go to market in the summer at which point the detailed course design would begin. It was noted that the new curriculum model meant that some courses such as the business of sport could share modules with existing business courses, i.e. there was a good level of adaptability.
3.5	*Indefinite Degree Awarding Powers (IDAPs)* • Regent's second tranche of time-limited degree awarding powers was due to expire at the end of August 2024. Preparations were therefore underway to move to 'Indefinite DAPs'. • An external adviser had been engaged to review and report on the University's preparedness. The new Provost and DVC would lead on this when in post.
3.6	The Committee discussed the recent change of Designated Quality Body and commented that, whilst the QAA was still providing guidance and resources on quality matters for its members, it would be beneficial to remain an active member.
3.7	*Strategic Refresh* • Galileo had asked all its institutions to carry out a 'strategic refresh' process, using a common format. • Areas of focus for Regent's had been identified by VCET. These were: new portfolio development, embedding the new curriculum model, developing the Regent's brand, and continuing to improve its financial sustainability.
3.8	The Committee **noted** the updates, subject to the comments on portfolio development (3.4) and on QAA membership (3.6) set out above.
4.	**Student Voice Update** *Student Union*
4.1	The SU President advised that there were now student representatives in place for all course levels and all programmes at Regent's. Overall, feedback from students on the SU was either positive or neutral and there were few negative comments. One issue was a

		lack of awareness of the role of the SU, which was something that the Union was working to address.
	4.2	In response to a question, the SU President provided an overview of the activities and social events that the Union had been organising, to promote a sense of community amongst students and to raise awareness. A Tiktok account and a podcast were also being launched. In addition, the SU was holding a monthly information-sharing event at the main Regent's reception area. The Student Union was in the process of recruiting a new President. Nominations were being sought in the advance of an election. There would be a handover at the end of May.
	4.3	The Committee congratulated the SU President and the team on the work to date, and on recent campaigns, such as the campaign to reduce plastic waste.
	4.4	*Course Panels* The Director of Student Experience updated the Committee on the relaunched Course Panels. The overall feedback was that these were working well and that there was a good level of student engagement in the process. A SharePoint site was being developed so that the Student Experience Team and the SU could both have access to the Panel minutes and could create a 'live log' of the issues being raised at meetings. This would allow for better analysis of data, and the issues raised could also be compared with the findings of student surveys.
	4.5	The Committee thanked the SU President and the Director of Student Experience and **noted** the updates.

Part B: Items for Noting / Endorsement		
5. 5.1		**The Regent's Model** The Committee was asked to note that minor changes had been made to the Undergraduate Curriculum Model ('The Regent's Model') document since it was initially approved. The Director of Learning and Teaching explained that reference to an optional sandwich year had been removed, as Regent's was not yet ready to offer this. The amended document also reflected the fact that, following a number of discussions, there would now be an integrated foundation year structure, and students who joined in January could now be fast-tracked.
5.2		The Committee **received and noted** the final version of The Regent's Model.
6. 6.1		**NSS Response Rates Update** The Director of Student Experience explained that work was underway to increase the NSS response rates, given that this had peaked at 59% in 2022. A working group had been established with the aim of increasing student engagement in 2023. The response rate currently stood at 60% and was expected to improve further. The Communications team and the SU had helped to increase engagement with the survey process. There was now an NSS champion for each course. The survey results were expected in the summer.
6.2		The Committee **noted** this update and welcomed the progress being made.
7. 7.1		**Report from the Quality Committee** The Head of Registry introduced this report, which (in conjunction with the minutes) provided assurance on how the Quality Committee was discharging its duties. The report also asked the Academic Committee to agree that:

	i. The membership of Quality Committee be broadened to reflect current organisational structure with immediate effect (e.g. the Director of Learning and Teaching, the Director of Student Experience and both Associate Provosts to be added to the list of ex officio members) ii. For 'Appointed Senior Academic members', the practice of one-year appointments be reviewed before the end of the academic year, with a view to extending the set terms of office. iii. A Task and Finish Group be established for the Annual Monitoring process, to review and enhance ongoing monitoring, in a way that made more effective and robust use of available data.
7.2	It was noted that the issue of appointed committee members affected several different academic sub committees, and that this could be looked at holistically once the new Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor was in post. Academic Committee members commented that one year did not seem sufficient and agreed that a term of two or three years would allow members to develop a richer understanding of the relevant committee's work and thereby strengthen their contributions.
7.3	The Quality Committee report included the 'Overview of Annual Monitoring Reports 2021-22' as an annex. The Head of Registry explained that the proposed Task and Finish Group would examine how to ensure a consistent and effective approach to AMRs across the University. The Committee discussed how it would also be useful to include learning from the TEF process as part of this work. Given there were recently appointed academic colleagues, it would also be helpful to promote an awareness of the AMR process and its value, as well as sharing good practice across teams. It was suggested that different review approaches could also be considered, such as in-person discussions, rather than relying solely on paper-based evaluation.
7.4	The Quality Committee was also highlighting the following, in terms of risks: a. The number of External Examiner vacancies for provision currently being delivered: this was considered to represent a risk; however, assurances had given regarding the action to appoint in the near future. b. The level of staffing in the Quality Team was seen to be a temporary risk. c. Teach Out cohort sizes were deemed to be a risk, however, the risk to Quality was seen to be effectively managed.
7.5	It was noted that the staff recruitment market, in particular for experienced quality officer roles, was challenging at present. The Director of HR explained what measures (such as the use of specialist agencies) were being taken to recruit to these vacancies.
7.6	The Academic Committee was also asked to note: • That the Quality Committee had approved a one-year extension to the current validation period for MA Management (subject to light touch review) • That a situation had arisen whereby the Vice-Chancellor may be asked to rescind the academic credit for two students. • Action taken in relation to an ongoing legal matter, and the potential variation of the Academic Regulations in this case.
7.7	Further details of these matters and other issues considered by the Quality Committee were set out within the report.
7.8	The Academic Committee agreed: • To **approve** the suggestions set out at i, ii and iii above. • To **note** the risks set out at a, b and c above.

	• To **note** the updates set out in the report and summarised above.
8.	**Draft Sub Committee Meeting Minutes**
8.1	The Committee **received and noted** the minutes of the following meetings: a. Research Ethics Panel – 25 January 2023 b. Collaborative Provision Committee – 1 February 2023 c. Research Committee – 8 February 2023 d. Learning Teaching & Student Experience Committee – 22 February 2023 e. Quality Committee – 9 March 2023
8.2	It was **noted** that the Admissions Panel meeting had been postponed due to further work taking place to develop the Admissions Manual.
9. 9.1	**Conferment list (paper)** The Committee **received and noted** the Conferment list for the awards dated 19 January 2023.
10. 10.1	**Strategic Risk Register** The Chief Finance Officer presented the Strategic Risk Register, which had last been reviewed by the Executive and the Audit and Risk Committee in January. The register would be reviewed again in April. Issues to consider included whether 'degree awarding powers' should be separated from 'UKVI compliance', as these were complex and distinct risk areas.
10.2	The Committee discussed other possible amendments to the register. It was noted that retention was likely to become an increasingly important issue. Once the internal audit on this issue was complete, further details could be added to the register in relation to this risk area. The Committee also suggested that 'collaborative provision' could be added as a separate risk, given the new partnerships in train.
10.3	The Committee agreed to **note** the Risk Register, subject to the suggestions set out above.
Closing Items	
11.	**Confidentiality** Confidentiality of discussions was noted.
12.	**Communication from the Committee** None
13.	**Any Other Business** None
14.	**Next meeting:** 5 July 2023