



Minutes of an electronic meeting of the Council held at 1630hrs on 10 June 2021.

Present	Sameena Aziz	Claire Bowes	Mathew Bradbury (55/20 on)	Dr Alison Davies
	David Dixon	Sir Les Ebdon	Shakira Martin	Richard Greensmith
In Attendance	Rachell Nicholls (Principal)(PC)	Peter Walker	Mark Woods (57/20 on)	
	Ralph Devereux (Sec)	Emma Graham (GDF)	Liz Knight (AD)	Louise Perry (CFO)
Apologies	James Larnar (Deputy Director)	Dan Lee (HE Head)(SC)		
	Mathew Bradbury (late arrival)	Dr Mary Kiernan	Mark Woods (late arrival)	

52/20 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The apologies were accepted. No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there were no unregistered interests declared; the register was available for scrutiny.

The information was received and noted.

53/20 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The Chair thanked and welcomed all to the meeting.
- b. The Minutes of the last meeting held on 25 March 2021 were confirmed for electronic signature. **(Action 1)**
- c. Matters arising. It was suggested that the previous minutes should be circulated as soon as possible after the meeting and that was agreed. **(Action 2)**
- d. Outstanding Actions. Actions from the last meeting were considered.

See referenced minute for full detail.		Status
Action 1	39/20b. Last Minutes (21.01.21) confirmed for signature.	Complete
Action 2	40/20a. Update on ARU negotiations to next meeting.	
Action 3	40/20a. Congrats recorded to all re OU validation.	
Action 4	40/20b. AS to next meeting for consideration.	
Action 5	40/20c(i). APP to next meeting for consideration.	
Action 6	43/20. PID Policy recommended to the IEG Corporation.	
Action 7	44/20. Amended Articles recommended to the IEG Corporation.	
Action 8	47/20. Cyber-attack reportable incident, necessary action taken.	

- e. Governance and Nominations Committee (G&N). The confirmed minutes of the G&N meeting held on 6 January 2021, (previously considered by the Council on 21 January 2021) were noted;
- f. Audit Committee (AC) Minutes. re 14/20. The unconfirmed minutes of the AC meeting held on 18 May 2021 were noted.

The information was received and noted.
Actions had been identified. (See Register at 64/20 below)

54/20 ACADEMIC DIRECTOR'S (AD) REPORT

The AD Report and Annexes considered areas of interest which were not covered elsewhere on the Agenda and the detail was discussed;

- a. Office for Students (OfS) Registration. A recent review meeting with the OfS had verbally confirmed that no registration conditions were necessary for UCP and de-registration of the IEG was in the final stages; this process would enable rationalisation of external registrations and refund for associated fees. Progress with necessary OfS approvals was discussed.
 - (i) "Prevent". It was necessary publish an OFS approved Prevent Plan; the Plan was based largely on the IEG version but clearly detailed UCP internal practices such as "Freedom of Speech", ethics training and support. The approvals process, which had been progressing since before initial registration (2019) had finally completed; the formal notification of the OfS compliance judgement, reflecting the highest category of 3 possible outcomes, was at Appendix 1. Items requiring further consideration had been identified in the letter and Members would be advised of progress. **(Action 3)**
 - (ii) "Harassment". A sector-wide review of systems policies and procedures for prevention of, and response to, harassment and sexual misconduct had been initiated; accordingly, the UCP Policy "Coping with Unacceptable Behaviour", which addressed these issues was under close review by the AD and IEG Executive.
 - (iii) Financial Return. The 2020 Financial Return had been accepted by the OfS after resolution of associated merger based queries.
- b. Secretary of State (SoS)
 - (i) UCP had adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Appendix 2 reiterated measures to address anti-Semitic behaviour, consideration was also being given to introduction of a mandatory requirement to report such behaviour; there had been no incidents at UCP.
 - (ii) Spending Review. Governmental discussions re Higher Education (HE) funding in the context of the "lifetime skills guarantee and access to adult loans" were considered; possible options were detailed in the paper and were discussed.
- c. Staff Development. Details of the staff training and developmental programme for the w/c 28 June were considered. Preparation for the September 2021 intake, policy and procedural reviews, refresher sessions for Canvas (course management system) would be included; w/c 4 July would focus on training for external partners.
- d. Open University (OU) Validation. The OU validation process was now approaching completion; the draft contract and the expected positive outcome of the submitted evidence would facilitate termination of the Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) agreement enabling all such accredited provision to transfer to the OU w/c 2022/23. Individual Programme progress tables were attached; they detailed all necessary action and timings. Members were reminded of previous recommendations and comments.

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (See Register at 64/20 below)

Mathew Bradbury joined the meeting.

55/20 POSITIONING & STRATEGY

The recent sequence of strategic planning meetings, which had considered how best to maximise the growth in student numbers was then examined; the meeting outcomes had informed development of the draft strategy consideration paper. Detail including the result of an associated "SWOT" analysis which was also considered and discussed. Wide ranging and interactive discussions had led to determination of influencing factors for the way forward and these were then individually discussed. It was agreed as necessary at the appropriate point in the transition process, to move from the present prudent and to some degree, reactive local marketing position, take the initiative, outreach and promote UCP widely across the local area

including the use of “outreach ambassadors”. The “local” area was essentially a 40 mile radius centred on UCP. There were tremendous post-Covid opportunities as employers recovered and moved on, the enthusiasm with which that had already started was apparent. There was a huge demand, anecdotally 3/5 adults seeking upskilling, employers looking for Level 2 (L2) to L6 opportunities and UCAS expecting a 20k surge in applications. A strongly emerging national trend is preference for “HE at home”. Provision of specialist courses could be widely publicised including through UCAS and social media. All these contributors, in parallel with the present and planned high levels of investment into Peterborough City combined to present a positive future. The issue would be further considered during the forthcoming strategy day. The full UCP “Strategic Plan 2020-23” and the interim “Access and Participation Plan (APP)” were both available through the link contained in the Report; the latter would inform considerations at 57/20.

The information was received and noted.

56/20 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)

A comprehensive KPI report comprised a narrative supplemented by a data dashboard and graphical detail and was explained. The total student population, including those registered with sub-contractors stood at a healthy 794, both campuses were now reconciled on Pro-Solution. Other detail:

- a. applications for 2021.22 (target 750) were currently at 490 for direct entry and 564 for sub-contracted combined;
- b. progression (PC red rated, SC amber rated):
 - (i) between levels (Target 92%); and
 - (ii) from PC & SC (Target 37% of new applicants), currently 32% (declared previous agency); and
- c. retention for 2020.21 (target 91%), UCP Peterborough 94% and UCP Stamford 93%.

The information was noted. Discussions on the RAG Rated Performance Dashboard prompted the view that all was proceeding well despite transient challenges and that was cautiously welcomed. As “stop press” information UCAS had 100 pending applications and 70 outcomes were expected today. The report and data tables were received and noted.

The information was received and noted.

Mark Woods joined the meeting.

57/20 APP

The OfS maintained key focus on achievement of the APP targets for widening participation. Accordingly the Report updated on current achievements, areas for further action and revised post-merger targets.

- a. 2019.20. As part of the OfS registration process a full review of 2019.20 monitoring report, which included information from both PC & SC, the RAG rated review of all relevant APP targets was attached at Appendix A. Following feedback, 3 targets had been identified and details were included in the paper.
- b. 2021.22 and 2024.25. The interim 2020.21 APP had been approved by the OfS and was available for members as explained. The new APP for 2024.25 (Attached) had now been submitted and feedback (from the Director of Fair Access) was awaited, their focus was achievement of these targets alongside UCP financial sustainability. The Plan had been based on amalgamated data and commentary relating to both PC and SC, together with students with partner agencies (ESPA & ADDICT). The Plan priorities were clearly listed in the accompanying paper and were noted.
- c. Employability Hub. In order to support the graduate outcomes and Employability Hub, UCP was part of the OfS Challenge Fund and the associated work fed into the APP. An overview of associated activity was included in the Paper.

The information was received and noted.

58/20 FINANCE REPORT

- a. Management Accounts. The updated management accounts were explained, recharging rates for services provided from PC (should be IEG) had been adjusted as experience since merger had facilitated a more equitable arrangement. The accurate year-to-date surplus stood at £345k, well above budget; income was also significantly above, mostly in sub-contracted provision with an associated cost increase, other validation costs were also above target. The end of year position would be met; the Income and Expenditure (I&E) report was at Appendix 1 and a detailed income table was at Appendix 2.
- b. Budget 2021.22. The draft budget for 2021.22 reflected year one of the 5-year Plan considered by the Council on 21 January (min 31/20) with some improvements; the forecast surplus was now £216k compared with the original at £49k. The full Budget was detailed at Appendix 1 and the main assumptions were at Appendix 2. The budget was agreed as soundly based and appropriate and was unanimously recommended to the IEG Corporation for approval. **(Action 4)**

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (See Register at 64/20 below)

59/20 GOVERNANCE

Governance related matters were considered:

- a. Training. There had been unavoidable, cyber-attack related delays with mandatory training, these were now largely resolved and Members were reminded that bookings could be made with the governance administrator (Georgie.freeman@peterborough.ac.uk). A dedicated face-to-face training session had been arranged for the afternoon/evening on either Monday 6 or Wednesday 8 September, members were asked to confirm availability.
- b. Link Governors' Scheme. The link scheme, based on the IEG model was now being established, the current allocations were at Appendix 1, Members who had not yet responded were reminded to indicate their preference to the Secretary. **(Action 5)**
- c. Skills Audit. Members were reminded to complete the circulated skills audit proforma as a matter of urgency, the detail to inform training requirements.

All were noted and approved.

- d. Articles. The amended Articles had been passed to Eversheds for action and they had now been submitted to the Charity Commission for action.
- e. Membership. Daljit Pye had resigned from the Council because of business Commitments. A replacement student officer (vice Richard Greensmith whose term completed), the nomination process was underway for interviews on 14 June. Richard was thanked for his service; he had been an outstanding student representative and was wished well by all Members. **(Action 6)**

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (See Register at 64/20 below)

60/20 RISK REGISTER (RR)

RR had been considered by the Audit Committee (AC) at their meeting held on 18 May; the full Register was attached to the Report. The register items were clearly listed in the accompanying papers, each was individually considered. The register had been updated to include the latest Covid information and was discussed:

- a. Primary Risk. (number 26) "Failure to meet HE student numbers and income targets" The combination of Covid, unhelpful media and the growing impact of the proposed Anglia

Ruskin University (ARU) Peterborough influenced this risk; the PC Principal and the UCP Chair were both liaising with that organisation. As had been discussed earlier in the meeting the need for the current UCP media “low profile” would shortly be diluted and some parity of exposure should be achieved;

- a. Primary Risk (number 262) “Covid-19” Guidance was being scrupulously followed but, as this was frequently modified, a reactive response was often necessary. Practical students had returned to studies wef 8 March 20121. Weekly meetings of the Covid Response Group continued;
- b. Primary Risk (number 264) “Student Accommodation/Halls of Residence“ Risk had been increased since the fees issue remained unresolved. In June 2020 UCP had made an offer of “£20k prompted by the poor performance of the former agent; on 14 April, an invoice for c£113k had been received. A firm reply had indicated that the offer of £20k remained appropriate and if not accepted, the issue would be referred to UCP lawyers. Necessary and prudent financial measures had been taken. It was confirmed that there was no mounting liability.
- c. Contingency Risks. Contingency Risks were monitored each term; the associated scoring and activity was fully explained in the RM Policy; the 2 highest risks related to sub-contract provision (261) which was included in the IAS Annual Plan (20/20b refers) and financial health (265). Graduate outcomes (262) had been revised following the last Council meeting.

During general discussions it was confirmed that training with RM issues continued and were full discussed at the regular meetings of the IEG RM Management Group.

The information was received and noted.

61/20 MEETING SCHEDULE

Development of the 2021.22 meeting schedule was complete and would be presented at the next meeting of the IEG Corporation.

The information was received and noted.

62/20 URGENT BUSINESS

There had been no urgent business requested.

63/20 NEXT MEETING

Details of the next meeting would be circulated.

64/20 ACTION TABLE

See referenced minute for full detail.		Resp	Date
Action 1	53/20b. Last Minutes (25.03.21) confirmed for signature.	Sec	wie
Action 2	53/20c. Minutes circulation asap after meetings.		
Action 3	54/20a(i). Progress with OfS recommendations to Members.	AD	
Action 4	58/20b. Budget 2021.11 recommended to IEG Corporation.	Chair	05.07.21
Action 5	59/20b. Link preferences to Secretary.	All	
Action 6	59/20. RG thanked and commended for service to the Council.	Chair	wie