

Council

21 October 2014

Minutes

Present: Professor M Spyer (Chair)
Mr A Bicknell
Professor D Bowman
Professor A Clark
Mr M Draper
Professor B Gusterson
Mr D Kennedy
Professor A Kent
Professor P Kopelman
Mr C North
Mr D Patel
Mrs S Rimmer
Mr M Stevens
Professor D Strachan
Ms C Swarbrick
Mr G Turner
Professor J Weinberg
Professor Sir Nicholas Wright

In attendance: Mrs S Bowen, Secretary & Academic Registrar
Mr A Dyer, Financial Improvement Programme Manager
Ms S Trubshaw, Clerk to Council & Head of GLAS
Mr J Unsworth, Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Mr T White, Director of Strategic Planning

Professor J Lindsay (for Minute 6)

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr M Amer, Ms K Horvers, and Mr C Smallwood.

A seminar on the Student Experience had been conducted prior to the meeting of Council.

1. Remarks from the Chair

Reported:

- (a) That the Chair congratulated Professor Andy Kent on his appointment as the Dean of the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education.
- (b) That the Chair had attended the HEFCE Annual Conference, and the CUC Autumn Plenary.

HEFCE Annual Conference

The Chair noted the following issues arising from the HEFCE Annual Conference:

- (i) That HEFCE did not expect any further changes to funding before the election in 2015.
- (ii) That HEFCE were proposing a fund of £50 million to support postgraduate students. This would not be confirmed until the Autumn Statement which would be made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 3 December 2014.

- (iii) That HEFCE would be focussing on Equality and Diversity in relation to quality outcomes for students.

Agreed:

That Equality and Diversity would become a standing item on the Council agenda.

CUC Annual Plenary

Reported:

That a further draft of the Higher Education Code of Governance had been circulated for discussion at the CUC meeting. The Chair reported that there would be some further minor amendments, but that there would be no further changes to the substance of the Code.

Agreed:

That a copy of the draft Higher Education Code of Governance would be circulated to members of Council.

- (c) Research Excellence Framework 2014

Reported:

That the results of the Research Excellence Framework 2014 would be published on 18 December 2014.

2. Minutes

Considered and approved:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2014.

Paper Council/1/A

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

- (a) Minute 95 (1): BRF

Reported:

That a report on the BRF would be made to the meeting of Council to be held on 24 November 2014.

- (b) Minute 95 (2): Equality and Diversity Questionnaire

Reported:

The Equality and Diversity Questionnaire had been reissued to all members of Council (enclosed with the Council Papers).

- (c) Minute 96: Report from the Principal - Financial Improvement Programme

Reported:

That the appeal to HEFCE had been unsuccessful.

4. Report from the Principal

Reported:

Recent Successes

That a number of recent successes for SGUL were noted. This included the improvement of the NSS results for 2014, where there had been an increase of 7% in overall

satisfaction. Additional work was being undertaken, as noted in the seminar on the Student Experience prior to Council, to further improve the Student Experience. Student Recruitment had been strong for entry in 2015 with most targets being met and exceeded in some cases. Recruitment to the INTO programmes had improved on 2014. It was also noted that Research Awards to SGUL since 1 August 2014 had been in excess of £6 million. This was positive progress from the three Research Institutes.

SGUL had also been ranked in the top 200 of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. It was felt that this reflected the growing reputation of SGUL in the international field. The Evening Standard had commented that SGUL was one of seven universities in London that had made the top 300. Phil Baty, the Editor of the Times Higher Education rankings had said '*Rising for the first time into the prestigious top 200 list of universities worldwide is a real achievement for St George's, University of London.*

SGUL had also been short listed for the Times Higher Awards. The nomination was for an e-learning project called **ePBLnet** which was a European Commission funded collaborative programme developed by SGUL in order to modernise the medical curriculum in key institutions across eastern Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus.

Joint Medical Director Appointment

That Dr Simon Mackenzie had been appointed as joint medical director of St George's Healthcare NHS Trust (SGHT) and SGUL. Dr Mackenzie was recognised nationally and internationally for his expertise in all aspects of quality improvement and patient safety. Dr Mackenzie would work closely with SGUL on patient safety, quality of care, professionalism and fitness to practise issues. The post was fully funded by SGHT.

International Partnerships

That a legal agreement had been signed with the Joan C Edward School of Medicine, Marshall University, West Virginia, for the provision of clinical placements. All other academic aspects of the relationship were governed by a Memorandum of Understanding.

Paper Council/1/B

5. Students' Union Report

Reported:

Reported:

That Freshers' Week had gone well, including a Freshers' Week for postgraduate students. An aim of the Students' Union (SU) was to encourage greater integration between students on different programmes, and to ensure that international students were also included in SU activities.

The sports teams were doing well in their individual leagues, notably the netball, hockey and rugby teams. Additionally it was noted that the Review Show which had been taken to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and had sold out during its run.

The SU was also working closely with Dr Jo Brown, Academic Lead for the Student Experience. Students were members of all of the working groups that had been established to look at the various areas of improvement that had been highlighted by the NSS and the internal Student Experience Survey.

The SU were also putting cost saving measures in place. The new Office Manager was in post and was assisting with marketing, and longer term would provide a point of continuity for future sabbatical officers. It was noted that the SU also worked closely with the Commercial Manager, particularly in relation to the School Shop located in the foyer. Currently plans were underway to further improve the return from the shop with the introduction of new product lines.

Health and Safety

6. Health and Safety Issues

Received:

A report from the Safety Management Committee, and any issues that have arisen since the meeting of Council held on 1 July 2014.

Reported:

(1) Joint Fire Strategy with St George's Healthcare NHS Trust

That the London Fire Brigade (LFB) had inspected the premises at the end of September. LFB viewed the premises as a single campus, and a joint fire safety strategy with SGHT was planned. This would draw together a single system for fire security and teams. The Joint Director of Estates and Facilities (SGUL and SGHT) would lead on the new strategy.

(2) Liquid Nitrogen Facility

That the project was going to tender in mid-October and it was hoped that works would commence prior to Christmas 2014.

(3) Green League Survey 2014

That the criteria for the Green League Survey 2014 had recently been published. It was felt by many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that the criteria were unrealistic and many HEIs, including SGUL would not be making a return this year. Professor Julius Weinberg, Vice-Chancellor, Kingston University (KU), confirmed that KU would not be making a return to the Green League in 2014.

Paper Council/1/C

Supporting the Strategic Plan

7. Strategic Plan Monitoring (Key Performance Indicators)

Received:

The Key Performance Indicators.

Reported:

That the paper provided a summary on the 13 high level key performance indicators for monitoring university performance. It was noted that one new indicator had been introduced for cash flow and investments. The primary changes since the last report to Council on 1 July 2014, were improvements in the indicators for the National Student Survey, which rose 7% to 85% in 2014, and for international student recruitment, which met the overall recruitment target for 2014 for the international medicine programmes offered via the INTO Joint Venture.

Paper Council/1/D

Financial Matters

8. Financial Improvement Programme

Received:

A report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs and the Financial Improvement Programme Manager.

Reported:

That following the agreement by Council of a target budget surplus of £0.5 million for 2014 - 2015, SGUL had developed the Financial Improvement Programme in order to address the underlying deficit and to find budget improvements of £4.4 million in 2014-2015, a target of £2.6 million in 2015-2016 and a further £2 million in 2016-2017.

The programme work streams were focussed on:

- Growth in educational activities
- Reductions in staffing costs, particularly in research activities and professional services
- Developing shared services through closer working with current partners, especially Kingston University and SGHT
- Recovering property-related costs for occupied space from SGHT

The current estimate of improvements identified as high and medium confidence items amounted to £3.5 million against the target of £4.4 million noted above. Currently the improvements were divided equally between achieving additional income and making cost savings.

The overall cost improvement from the programme over three years was £8 million and detailed modelling for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 was being undertaken.

The following points were noted:

- (a) That the biggest asset that SGUL had was its space. It was felt that SGUL should be robust in its negotiations with SGHT to ensure that appropriate property related charges were obtained. It was noted that a formal proposal had been made to SGHT and a response was expected shortly.
- (c) That SGHT had overcharged SGUL for its steam consumption following the installation of meters which had been wrongly configured. It was not clear if SGHT had repaid this overcharge. It was noted that a formal request for the repayment of the overcharge had been made to SGHT.
- (d) That the two posts had been identified for possible redundancy were noted. These potential redundancies would be undertaken under the new Scheme and Statutes which had been formally launched on 30 September 2014 following the Trade Unions' agreement of the Change Management Policy, which now governed the redundancy process.
- (e) That further cost improvements of £0.9 million were required to meet the target of £4.4 million. It was noted that the Financial Improvement Group would seek to achieve the target of £4.4 million. It was also noted that a number of factors would come into play during the year and these would also need to be taken into account within the FIP. Scenario modelling was being undertaken and this would be considered by the Finance Committee at a future meeting.

Agreed:

That SGUL remained committed to achieving cost improvements of £4.4 million in 2014-2015.

Paper Council/1/E

9. Financial Report

Received:

A report from the Chair of the Finance Committee.

Reported:

(i) Investments

That the Finance Committee had received a presentation by Cazenove on the performance of SGUL's investments. The performance of the investments had been strong in 2013-2014, and it had been agreed that the current investment strategy in terms of asset management and benchmarks should be continued.

(ii) INTO Joint Venture

That the Finance Committee continued to monitor the INTO Joint Venture.

[REDACTED]

. The Finance Committee had agreed that early in 2015, Council should conduct a comprehensive review of the strategies that underpinned the Joint Venture with INTO and SGUL's related international partnerships (including the franchise agreement with the University of Nicosia). Finance Committee agreed that the review should look carefully at the financial implications of the strategy.

(iii) Research Grants and Contracts

That a detailed report on research grants and contracts for the year ended 31 July 2014 had been considered. It had felt to be a useful step forward in reporting. It had been requested that future reports should also include a commentary of the trends identified. SGUL would report to HEFCE that income from research grants and contracts had reduced in 2013-2014, and that the number of new projects starting in 2013-2014 had also reduced to 65 compared to 79 the previous year. However, the value of the new projects had increased markedly from £6.5 million to £10.2 million.

Agreed:

That Council would conduct a comprehensive review of the strategy that underpinned the Joint Venture with INTO and SGUL's related international partnerships (including the franchise agreement with the University of Nicosia). The review would consider the financial implications of the strategy.

Paper Council/1/F

Partnerships

10. International Report

Received:

A report on INTO.

Reported:

GMC Visit

That the GMC had visited SGUL in May 2014 and there had been a follow up meeting in late August. The follow-up meeting had provided an opportunity to discuss the draft report which had raised a number of issues in relation to the INTO programmes.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Since then SGUL had signed a legal agreement with Marshall University (see [Minute 4](#) above) for the provision of placements. It was also expected that an agreement in principle with Thomas Jefferson University would be in place by the end of November. Discussions with Cooper Medical School in Camden, New Jersey were also well advanced.

The GMC had also expressed concern that the support for preparation for the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USLME) was not well developed, and action was being taken to remedy this situation.

The GMC had also felt that they had not been provided with assurance that the senior governance committees within SGUL had recognised (or challenged) the educational or management risks to the quality of the INTO programmes as opposed to the financial risks to SGUL. The profile of these risks would need to be raised within the governance structure with clear documentation to demonstrate that appropriate management of risk was in place.

It was noted that in relation to the clinical placements, this activity had originally been the responsibility of INTO. It had become clear that INTO were not able to appropriately assess the quality of clinical placement provision and this activity had belatedly been taken over by SGUL. Since then there had been more success with a legal agreement in place with Marshall University, West Virginia, and advanced discussions with Thomas Jefferson University and Cooper Medical School.

It was also noted that the GMC's concern about the monitoring of educational and management risks was based on the receipt of the Council minutes. The GMC had not understood that there were other senior governance committees concerned with these issues.

The following points were noted:

- (a) That the Chair of the Audit Committee noted that the Audit Committee had received an in-depth report on INTO during 2013-2014, and had also received the INTO risk register for consideration. In addition, as part of the Internal Audit Programme, a review of the two key international partnerships had recently been undertaken including the governance arrangements. Following the exit meeting it had been indicated that SGUL was likely to receive 'Substantial Assurance' for this review reflecting the considerable work on governance and management controls around the INTO project.
- (b) That consideration would need to be given to the costs of placements in the US particularly if the costs were outside the budget for this activity. It was explained that Ross had outbid UNic for placements at Mount Sinai, and consideration of reputation versus costs would need to be kept in mind when bidding for placements. [REDACTED]
- (c) That it was noted that only eight foundation students out of 25 had progressed to the International Medicine and Biomedical Sciences programmes. It was noted that the foundation students had not performed well in the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs), The MMIs had been reviewed to ensure that there was no cultural bias. The students also had to pass the UKCAT which was not administered by SGUL, and they had also performed less well in this examination. It was noted that medicine was a demanding programme to study and it was unlikely that all of the students would meet the grades required to study medicine. Many of the students continued their studies at other UK universities. It was also noted that SGUL had to apply the same standard of admission for International Students as it did for home students in order to meet GMC requirements. Students were not guaranteed a place on the MBBS programme.

- (d) That Council noted the financial position as set out in Section 5 of Paper G. Based on the current elements of the financial arrangements with INTO, and a number of budget assumptions, it was expected that SGUL would realise a small surplus in 2014-2015.

University of Nicosia

That agreement of the contract extension with the University of Nicosia was nearing completion.

Paper Council/1/G

11. St George's Healthcare NHS Trust

Received:

- (i) The DRAFT minutes of the joint SGHT Trust Board/SGUL Council meeting held on 18 September 2014.

Paper Council/1/H

- (ii) Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Implementation Board (SGJIB) held on 24 June 2014 and 9 September 2014.

Reported:

- (iii) That a further meeting had been held on 9 October 2014 and the main focus of this meeting had been on joint branding and the reorganisation of the Joint Research and Enterprise Office (JREO). The development of the joint endorsement brand was now well advanced. There was a final issue to be agreed and that was the name for the joint endorsement brand, with SGHT favouring 'St George's Health Partners', and with SGUL favouring 'St George's Health System'. SGUL had proposed the use of the word 'System' as it appeared more inclusive to a range of organisations that might wish to be involved including other healthcare organisations and HEIs. It was also a term that was well understood in the US and internationally. Further input had been requested from a range of stakeholders.

The following points were noted:

- (a) That the use of the word 'System' was supported, as it avoided the use of the word 'Partners' which had inherent risks if not backed by some form of legal agreement. It was noted that Kings Health Partners was a 'Company Limited by Guarantee' and as a result there was limited liability between the partners.
- (b) That the use of the word 'System' would also provide differentiation from other 'partnerships', and would also allow for future expansion and inclusion as noted above.

Agreed:

That Council supported the proposal for 'St George's Health System' as the name for the joint endorsement brand for the reasons set out in the foregoing report.

Paper Council/1/I

Audit and Risk Management

12. Audit Committee

- (i) Internal Audit Report

Received:

A report from the Chair of the Audit Committee (meeting held on 7 October 2014).

Reported:

That attention was drawn to Paragraph 7 of the Audit Committee report where it was noted that the Internal Auditors had included a qualifying statement in their Annual Report to HEFCE referencing the lack of engagement by senior management in the Internal Audit process during the 2013-2014. At the meeting it had been noted that the management time had been taken up with the institutional re-structuring and latterly an ambitious cost saving programme. In the light of the discussion the Internal Auditors had agreed to modify the statement, but not to remove it from the report. A review of the Strategic Futures project was due to commence shortly, and it was expected that as part of this review consideration would be given to the affect of the project on management controls.

It was noted that the Internal Audit Annual Report was submitted to HEFCE as part of the Annual Accountability Return.

In relation to Paragraph 2, it was noted that the report on ASI had not yet been received, but that it would be submitted to both the Finance Committee and the Audit Committee for consideration.

Paper Council/1/J

(i) Risk Management and Efficiency

Received:

- (i) A report on the review of the Strategic Risk Register.

Reported:

That a review of the Strategic Risk Register and associated processes had been undertaken by a small working group. The review had been instigated for a number of reasons including:

- The complexity of the current Strategic Risk Register
- The impact of the strategy refresh on the current Strategic Risk Register
- Lack of clarity around risk management processes and the relationship between the Strategic Risk Register and local and project risk registers
- The need to further embed risk management within the Institution

The new approach would focus on thee to four key risks within the identified themes. Details of all assurance providers would be provided both internal and external, and where possible risks would be linked to KPIs. At the same time it was proposed that relevant committees should include an item on Risk Management as a standing item on the agenda. It was noted that each key risk would have a named risk owner, who would be responsible for the proper consideration of their risk(s) supported by the appropriate committee.

The proposals had been presented to the Audit Committee who had been supportive of the new approach and a more detailed version of the Strategic Risk Monitoring and Reporting table would be presented to a future meeting of the Audit Committee.

Paper Council/1/K

Received:

- (ii) The minutes of the last meeting of the Risk Management and Efficiency Committee and the Strategic Risk Register.

Paper Council/1/L

Matters for Approval and Report

13. Academic Promotions

Received:

A report on the conferment of titles.

Agreed:

That the criteria for promotions would be included for future reports.

Paper Council/1/M

14. Nominations – Council and Committees

Approved:

The reappointment of the following members of the Audit Committee with effect from 1 October 2014:

- Ms Catherine Swarbrick (1 October 2014 – 30 September 2017)
- Ms Anne Fillis (1 October 2014 – 30 November 2014)

15. Common Seal

Approved:

Minor amendments to the Policy on the Use of the Common Seal.

Paper Council/1/N

16. Terms of Reference for Council Committees

Approved:

The Terms of Reference for the following Committees of Council (as designated in the CUC Code of Practice):

Audit Committee
Nominations and Honorary Awards Committee
Remuneration Committee

Paper Council/1/O

17. Minutes of Meetings

Committee	Date of Meeting	Available from:
Audit Committee	7 October 2014	By email from s.trubshaw@sgul.ac.uk
Risk Management & Efficiency Committee	15 September 2014	By email from s.durkin@sgul.ac.uk
Finance Committee	2 October 2014	Paper/Council/1/P
SPARC	8 September 2014 17 September 2014	By email from s.trubshaw@sgul.ac.uk
Senate	9 June 2014	By email from d.baldwinson@sgul.ac.uk
Human Resources Committee	TBC	By email from mbentley@sgul.ac.uk

HEFCE and other External Matters

18. HEFCE Letters and Consultations and other External Consultations for Information

Received:

A report on HEFCE letters and consultations and other external consultations, with responses to date.

Paper Council/1/Q

19. Any other business

20. Dates of meetings 2014-2016

Tuesday 25 November 2014
Tuesday 16 December 2014

January/February 2014 – Extra Date to be arranged.

Tuesday 17 March 2015
Friday 24 April 2015 – Away Day

May/June 2014 – Extra Date to be arranged

Tuesday 7 July 2015
Tuesday 20 October 2015
Tuesday 24 November 2015
Tuesday 15 December 2015
Tuesday 15 March 2016
Friday 22 April 2016 – Away Day
Tuesday 5 July 2016
Tuesday 18 October 2016
Tuesday 22 November 2016
Tuesday 13 December 2016

ST/25 October 2014