**Minutes of the School Policy and Resources Committee (SPRC) meeting**

**Wednesday 16 March 2022**

**12:00 – 14:00 [via Zoom]**

**Present:** Mark Baker, Laura Black, James Evans, Martin Evans (Chair), Kay Hodgson, Jonny Huck, Laura Ingleby, Steve Jones, Lizzy Langton, Khalid Nadvi, Tania Smith, Juup Stelma, Sarah Lindley, Stephen Walker, Isabella Machin (minutes)

1. **Apologies:** Kerry McCann, Martin Banks, Edita Pymm, Kelly Osgood & Kevin Woods (from 12:45)
2. **Minutes of SPRC Meeting held on 02 February 2021**

The minutes were approved.

1. **Head of School Report (ME)**

It was confirmed that PREP is being progressed for all academic colleagues. HoDs were asked to prioritise colleagues who have been identified as needing support and who had PDR undertaken by HoDs last summer. This approach has been reported to faculty and will be reported by them to the board of governors.

Volunteers for the upcoming graduation ceremonies were thanked. The generic graduation speech will be circulated in due course, for those who will be speaking at these events.

It was noted that a scheduled graduation ceremony clashes with a scheduled strike day therefore, Kay Hodgson (KH) has organised PS colleagues to cover if necessary.

Laura Ingleby (LI) has circulated information on graduation ceremonies and their staff allocations.

Jonathan Huck (JH) flagged a request from the Geography department to receive a message from the School thanking them for continuing fieldwork during the strike.

James Evans (JE) has collated those individuals however, there may be issues around the influence this may have on staff and it was agreed that thanks should be given after decisions have been made so as not to put any pressure on staff. ME advised that JH could informally report this back to staff.

JE reported that students were anxious that fieldtrips were not going ahead. It was his understanding that all trips will still be happening.

There have been no issues with PEM fieldtrips to date.

The departure dates for the first trips occurs before the strike therefore, the Committee took the view that these should have no attendance problems; this may prove more problematic with the second set. It was noted that those fieldtrips that take place on a strike day may establish the strike as an agenda item.

SL raised the issue that second year students would prefer to not attend the fieldtrips if staff were absent. It was advised that a plan was to be established for those staff at risk of leaving the trip early to prevent further concern. This conversation is to remain ongoing.

The budget and 5 year plan has been signed off by the faculty. This will then mean that a significant amount of budgeted posts will need to be filled over the next 3 or 4 years. An away day with SLT later in the year will expand these discussions.

1. **Head of School Operations Report (KH) (written report)**

Please refer to paper circulated.

SEP Cohort 2 has involved the assignment of Grade 6 and 7 staff into TLSE structures.

The new Student Support and Development Manager, Paul Rowbotham, was introduced to the Committee. PR and his team will play a key role in the integration of the Student Hub.

HoDs were reminded that if they were also budget holders, expense claims that include flights or accommodation should not be approved. When rejecting the claim HoDs to include notes in rejection message directing the individual to contact KH.

HoDs were reminded that all travel **must** be booked through Key Travel. If this is not viable, a request must be sent by the individual to HoS or HoSo for booking outside of the system. KH will discuss with Hannah Rundle to determine what level of tolerance is acceptable for travel leakage

Mark Baker (MB) was assured that travel for external claimants could be submitted via a PR7 form and expensed.

School Office is awaiting clarity on available facilities on campus due to the recommendation that events were to be kept on campus. Once received, this will be circulated to the School with emphasis on a cautious approach to using external outlets but with the recognition that remaining on campus is impractical for many external events.

Khalid Nadvi (KN) queried protocol around a proposed GDI away day during summer 2022. KH advised that all on campus facilities should be explored before requesting an offsite event. It was advised that a venue in Manchester city centre would not receive approval unless all on campus recommendations has been exhausted. The Hyatt hotel remains an on-campus option.

Information on proposed events that may need to be off campus should be reported to KH on to seek approval. This issue will continue to be escalated to PSLT, Hannah Rundle and Philippa Woods.

**Risk and Compliance / Health & Safety / Information Governance (FP)**

A flowchart regarding travel booking through Key Travel has been drafted and is awaiting feedback from KH and ME. Once approved, this will be circulated to SEED.

**Finance (EL)**

Management Accounts for February show a year-to-date variance of £7.3m better than budget, against a full year forecast of £7.1m better than Budget.  Income and pay costs are as expected based on the Q2 forecast but Other Operating Expenditure is low compared to forecast.  The main areas where expenditure is low is Fieldwork, due to the delay in activity, and Research Support Funds.

It was suggested that a reminder should be sent after Easter to those who had requested funds to ensure these were processed by the end of July 2022. The deadline for School Office submission is available via the intranet.

**ACTION: School office to send regular reminders to school (IM to pass this action to Kerry and Melissa to ensure actioned)**

1. **Employability and Professional Learning Update (SJ)**

Please refer to presentation circulated.

SL raised the issue around the retention of student emails and communications with Alumni. It was confirmed that permission should be sought for this from the Alumni office however, they require 3 to 5 weeks’ notice to find an alumni for an employability event.

1. **Key Travel update (MS / PB / MG)**

Please refer to presentation circulated.

From a contractual perspective, it is recommended that all travel continues to filter through Key travel despite the issues with staffing, as Key Travel have risk management protocols in place.

Apart from Jet2 and WhizzAir, all options available via alternative booking systems can be sought through Key Travel and familiarisation with the tool will aid this. Any queries should be sent to PB as like for like bookings can be honoured.

The travel helpdesk within UoM receive 50 queries a day on average both via email and telephone, with 30% being user issues and 20% being complaints around call times. It was noted that this helpdesk is staffed by UoM members of staff which limits the information they can access via Key Travel.

The Committee were advised that bookings under £250 would not require formal approval, with the exception of UK flights, to ensure that users can make use of instant ticketing when booking train travel. These bookings are circulated monthly to budget holders and should be monitored for overspend.

Any major queries should be forwarded to KH.

It was agreed that issues with responses from requisitioners regarding payment of supplier invoices should be sent to the SEED School Office.

**Action: KH to send Mark Gilmore further information on preferred procedures for supplier invoice holds.**

1. **Admissions update (TS/EP)**

UG:

H: Apps 20%, Offers 17%, Accepts -39%

O: Apps 31%, Offers 42%, Accepts 0%.

Expecting to meet overall target, provided accepts pick up to the LY levels.

Admissions main focus continue to be the offer holder days and the processing of applications for the BA Architecture.

PG

FT H: Apps -30%, Offers -41%, Accepts -48%

FT O: Apps 17%, Offers -25%, Accepts -46%

Stage 2 offers have been finalised bringing the majority of staged admissions courses to 70-80% of capacity and some GDI to a full capacity, with many applications pending in the pool. The focus of the remainder stages will be on maximising diversification. Non-staged courses will be investigated with the aim to bring them closer to capacity of offers required.

Further information can be sought via Edita Pymm’s Admissions update on 17th March 2022.

SJ raised the issue around approximately 2000 students remaining on hold for extended periods of time and the decreasing possibility that they will secure a place at the end of this. There will be a discussion on algorithms to avoid this going forward and KH reassured TS that the School were in support of proposals going forward.

For the 2023 cycle, it was recommended that different ranking lists would need to be used, especially for China. There may also be an application fee pilot starting August/September, which will be discussed during programme meetings due to differing rates.

A new Admissions Coordinator started in January 2022 from AMBS to aid the UGT applications process and building staff morale. Andy Milne (AM) was thanked for the development of the SEED tracker; HoDs and Programme directors were thanked for their positive feedback during admissions meetings.

1. **Parental Leave Returners (JH)**

JH advised the Committee that SEED are not fulfilling the required responsibilities for those going on maternity leave. Meetings should be organised before and after leave to establish personal needs. HoDs were requested to familiarise themselves with the information on Teams as it is vital part of UoM’s Athena Swann submission. To aid this, a document will be flagged in eNews.

1. **Kantorowich/HBS Quad/Foyer – latest designs and comms plan (KH)**

KH spoke with Kate McNamee (KM) regarding Estates and the communication strategy in relation to the works commencing on the HBS Quad and Foyer. Timelines are still to be defined however, KM and Lorna Ponefract (LP) are continuing to develop the correct approach for alerting students/staff to the disruptions that may come with these changes.

Positive messaging will emphasise the purpose for these modifications including references to Size and Shape, supporting SEP and consideration to the history of the Kantorowich library. Discussions will be needed regarding the new name for the library, particularly with MB and Stephen Walker (SW) as well as where to house the Kantorowich collection. Programme Committees will be informed of the plans, ensuring they are aware that this will create a better support for students and a more ideal study space.

Queries on HBS room bookings over the summer are to be flagged with KH/FP.

It was advised that disruption dates fall after exams, with work commencing on the Quad and foyer from the middle of June until late August. Work on the Kantorowich is expected to begin mid-June and continue into January, fitting with SEP Cohort 3 and start of Semester 2.

1. **Any Other Business**

No other business was noted.