UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM QUALITY AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Hertfordshire Higher Education Consortium Quality and Management Committee held on 24 June 2021.

PRESENT: Scott Isaacs (Chair)

Dr Jo Cahill  Michele Harding  Jon Easter
Nigel Thomas  Charlotte Gale  Dr Stefanie Schmeer
Katie Kennedy  Helen Hall  Laura Lo Coco
Rifaat Foufa  Kate Voss  Christopher Dunks
Viren Amin  Azita Pourghasem  Dominic Bygate
Prof. Sean Ryan  Dr Marvelle Brown

IN ATTENDANCE:

Katie Parkash

114  APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Dr Barbara Henry, Prof. Frank Haddleton, Julie Kelly, Dr Karen Leong, Dr Megan Knight.

115  CHAIR’S OPENING REMARKS, IF ANY

It was noted that Dr Jo Cahill will attend these meetings going forward to represent the Centre for Academic Quality Assurance.

Scott Isaacs noted that it had been a challenging year due to the pandemic and recent cyber-attack. He thanked and congratulated everyone for the collaborative way the Consortium has continued to operate. The student experience and success rates have not been affected and everyone has handled the situation very well.

Scott Isaacs reported that UH in collaboration with the colleges had submitted a bid for an Institute of Technology. Meetings had also taken place between the Consortium and Hertfordshire Business School in order to refresh the FD Business Management offer.

Revalidations are underway for Extended Degree Science and the Initial Year Engineering. HRC are also exploring new top-up courses with the School of Creative Arts.

116  NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY -

None to report.

117  MINUTES - 4 MARCH 2021

Minutes confirmed.

118  MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minute</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Update</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>To receive an update on face masks being sent to colleges.</td>
<td>Update due at the end of June 2021 (Chris Dunks to follow up). Any further queries to be directed to Shelby Loasby (<a href="mailto:internalcomms@herts.ac.uk">internalcomms@herts.ac.uk</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Circulate programme handbook templates to HE Managers.</td>
<td>Helen Hall confirmed that the list of required contents for the handbook had been circulated to colleges and CPLs. There is no specific template.</td>
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</table>
To arrange training for colleges about UH online library resources and the BAME Action Plan.

Links have been sent to colleges to support training with online resources. A meeting has been scheduled between Helen Hall and Helen Barefoot on the 4th August to discuss BAME support for college staff.

EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE (ESEC) AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE (ASAC)

Scott Isaacs reported that there had been one ESEC meeting since the last HHECQMC. This meeting included a presentation on the BAME action plan, and the University are pleased to report that there has been a reduction in the BAME awarding gap. The meeting also discussed the NSS completion rates at School level. An OfS review on the NSS is underway. The hardship fund was discussed, and Scott Isaacs circulated this information to the colleges.

Dr Jo Cahill reported that ASAC had received a presentation on the audit of Inclusive Curriculum and Guided Learner Journey content. Paper 6 provided an overview of the audit which looked at a range of Canvas sites using a checklist. It was recommended that HE Managers have sight of the checklist and work with Programme Managers to review content as well as suggesting module leaders audit each other’s sites. This piece of work will be promoted across UH and the colleges are encouraged to do the same with the support of their CPLs. This activity can also be reported on in AMERs. Katie Kennedy noted that the Programme Manager for Early Years at HRC was involved and fed back that the activity was tough but useful and highlighted important areas that needed attention. Laura Lo Coco agreed that this had been a good exercise and it had started conversation within the School about making the interface for each module the same as well as using consistent content. This approach will be taken forward with WHC also for Law. It was noted that it’s difficult for students to navigate modules if they all look different.

Dr Jo Cahill noted that good practices found during the audit included module leaders creating a short video introducing themselves and uploading it to Canvas.

Rifaat Foufa noted that there used to be a minimum usage requirement for Canvas and that it would be useful to have something similar in order to have a structured approach across the Consortium.

Scott Isaacs also reported that ASAC had discussed the new AMER process which UH will be adopting this year. It was confirmed that the Consortium will continue with the current AMER for one more year to allow UH to trial the new Continuing Enhancement Process in the first instance. This will also allow for time to train colleges on the use of Tableau.

The colleges were also made aware of a number of OfS consultations taking place. These include a review of TEF (institutions have been asked to cease using TEF promotional material from September 2021), Quality and Standard in HE and Assessing the Assessment Process. Updates are available on the OfS and Wonkhe websites. Colleges were also reminded that the college public information audit takes place each year and to ensure HE Managers are involved with CPL support.

It was noted that the University is moving away from physical handbooks and that information for students will be provided via Canvas. Dr Jo Cahill noted that an audit was done in relation to grade descriptors and how to engage students with these – this could be something to be included in the Canvas module site checklist. Dr Stef Schmeer suggested the descriptors could be prepopulated on Canvas as they are university-wide – Karen Barton or Phil Porter to advise.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF REVALIDATIONS FOR EDS AND INITIAL YEAR ENGINEERING

EDS – Dr Stef Schmeer reported that the development team had had their second
meeting yesterday which had been useful and good progress had been made with the new modules. Currently the team are looking to introduce new modules for sport, psychology, healthcare and digital skills/programming. SPECS are interested in maintaining the current maths and physics progression pathways. Discussions had taken place about entry tariffs as well as ensuring the programme is attractive to applicants and students. Further discussions need to take place in relation to HECoS codes. The next meeting is booked for the 18th August 2021. Rifaaq Foufa welcomed the fact that UH had paid for marketing support from the Insight Team. Scott Isaacs highlighted the importance of this revalidation and it was pleasing to hear the progress.

EIEF – Prof. Sean Ryan reported that the Engineering revalidation was underway. It was unlikely to receive any major changes and the team have been focussing on low pass rates on the high maths content modules. This has involved reviewing the maths preparation on the course and mapping it to the UH progression routes. There will be a small number of module changes.

The team have also been reviewing how 2017 and 2018 students performed on the initial year as well as on the BSc. It is clear that students will need full mathematical preparation in order to become an engineer and work will take place to match students and courses better through the admissions process, as well as removing some of the harder topics in the initial year to allow time to ensure students fully understand what they are being taught. Viren Amin noted that this revalidation is going well, and the Programme Managers have been heavily involved.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE LATEST APPLICATION FIGURES FOR UH AND THE CONSORTIUM

Scott Isaacs presented the latest application figures to the meeting. There had been movement between the U and C offers into UF and CF decisions or declines – the numbers were standard for this time of the year. It was noted that UH are currently 5% below on applications compared to the same point last year.

HE Managers are not able to access applicant reporting yet due to access being set up and testing of Pulse Secure in the colleges.

It was noted that there were issues with the timing of Clearing training and college staff being on annual leave. Scott Isaacs and Helen Hall would discuss this with Jilly Crosby and the HE Managers outside of the meeting. A discussion also needed to take place to decide the last date that colleges would be willing to accept new students without the students being disadvantaged by missing teaching and assessments.

TO REMIND COLLEAGUES ABOUT THE PROCESS OF WITHDRAWING AND SUSPENDING COURSES WITHIN THE CONSORTIUM PORTFOLIO

Scott Isaacs highlighted the importance of colleges reviewing their portfolio of courses early in the academic year. If applicants have been made an offer the college and university are entering into a contract and it becomes complicated if the correct process is not followed. If courses are to be withdrawn or suspended the colleges should notify the School, Scott and Helen in the first instance.

TO REPORT ON THE NSS RESPONSE RATE

Scott Isaacs reported that the college NSS response rate was similar to that of UH and exceeded the minimum response rate. NSS data will be released on the 15th July 2021.

TO RECEIVE FEEDBACK FROM THE KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER ON ENGAGEMENT WITH HSU 20/21 AND HE MANAGERS TO INDICATE THEIR FUTURE INTENTIONS FOR COLLEGE ENGAGEMENT WITH HSU

It was noted that college engagement with HSU had been limited this year. Viren Amin reported that OAK received some information at the beginning of the year. Due to Covid this had not been top priority, but it would be useful to have a Consortium based plan going forward.
Rifaat Foufa agreed. NHC were pleased with the engagement at the start of the academic year. HRC also had limited engagement and it would be useful to have an HSU introduction via MS teams at the beginning of the academic year. WHC also agreed with this approach. The colleges routinely record low scores for the Students' Union question within the NSS.

It was agreed that HE Managers would discuss outside of the meeting what they would like to see included in an HSU calendar and take this forward with Scott Isaacs and Helen Hall at a follow up meeting.

125 TO RECEIVE FEEDBACK FROM THE COLLEGES ON STUDENT FEEDBACK, ENGAGEMENT AND UH IDENTITY

It was noted that feedback had been received about college students feeling a lack of UH identity. HE Managers were asked to also review this for discussion at a follow up meeting with Scott Isaacs and Helen Hall.

126 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM LTIC

Dominic Bygate reported that staff development with the colleges had taken place at the end of May as well as a session on Talis with LCS. A further session is booked in with HRC in July. The colleges thanked Dominic for his support.

Colleges were reminded to attend the annual Learning and Teaching Conference taking place this month.

127 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRAMME LEADER'S SYMPOSIUM

Dr Jo Cahill reported that the day went well and received good feedback. 138 people attending including a couple of Programme leaders from the colleges – any further feedback from these Programme Managers would be welcomed.

The HE Managers were asked to notify Jo of any Programme Leaders who would like to join the Programme Leader Development Programme in the upcoming academic year. The programme is run over 18 months and the first session is on the 6th October 2021.

128 TO RECEIVE AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT

Dr Marvelle Brown gave a presentation on the Culturally Inclusive Assessment Toolkit. Colleges were encouraged to contact Marvelle directly to discuss further.

129 TO SHARE ANY ITEMS OF GOOD PRACTICE OR ISSUES OF CONCERN

Laura Lo Coco reported that she had worked well with WHC this year. The Law students have been apprehensive about progressing into UH and online events have been organised to help with this.

Azita Pourghasem reported that the year had gone well, and the college teams had recently taken part in the module planning event. The use of SharePoint has been helpful in sharing resources and Programme Managers have kept in regular contact.

Kate Voss confirmed that Early Years recruitment was strong at the colleges, especially OAK and WHC. There will be good progression rates to UH and the feedback from students has been positive and they have received good support from the colleges.

130 TO RECEIVE VERBAL REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THEIR CONSORTIUM PROVISION

Nothing further to report.
TO RECEIVE VERBAL REPORTS FROM EACH COLLEGE ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEES AND AN UPDATE ON EACH COLLEGE’S ONGOING RESPONSE TO COVID-19

WHC - The strategic and operational HE Committee Meetings will be held in July with a focus on recruitment, quality monitoring and Office for Students conditions of registration. The college has complied with government guidance with a mixture of on-campus and blended delivery throughout the academic year in response to the latest guidelines.

NHC – Standing items discussed at meetings with the Programme Managers for EDS and Computing are;

• Update on the OfS
• Update on applications (based on the numbers received regularly through UH admissions)
• Semester B progress
• Students at risk

Exams and assessments- processes in place and support provided.

All Semester B assignments were completed online via Studynet. Student work was marked online and students had access to their work and feedback online.

EDS - Exams for Chemistry, Mammalian Physiology, Physics, AEB, Statistics and Advanced Maths took place as online open book assessments. Students had 24 hours to complete and upload their work. The closed book assessment in Mathematics was replaced by an online open book test. Students had 5 hours to complete and could not return to the questions.

The Individual Project was delivered online for 8 weeks, this impacted the quantity of practical work undertaken by students. Tutors provided online and face to face revision sessions for all classes in addition to revision resources and past papers online.

In computing, a similar approach was adopted. It is to be noted that the External Examiner attended the end of year project presentations. The team provided additional success workshops of those students at risk.

How Teams are closing the academic year.

Students have completed their exams and are no longer in college.

EDS - PMs have contacted students with details on end of year processes for progression to the university.

Computing - Progression events were organised with the CPL to arrange progression at Level 5 or 6.

Several students are being actively supported to complete referred or deferred for both Semester A and B.

Student feedback.

Informal feedback from students has been positive. They have preferred the face to face teaching sessions rather than online Teams sessions. Students felt that a lack on practical sessions in the Individual Project impacted on their motivation.

Student progress rates.

EDS – there has been concern about students with Ref/Def and mental health issues.

In Computing, Level 4 students are all due to complete. In Level 5, 2 students out of 14 are at risk of not completing.
**Plans for next year.**

NHC will take the approach of blended learning and maximise face to face teaching wherever possible. There is also consideration with partner colleges to review assessment schedules if classes are delivered using a blended learning approach.

HRC - HE colleagues are looking forward to working with Dominic Bygate again, in supporting their development. Timetables are being planned for next year, with elements of blended delivery, to ensure the students develop the skills needed in case of any further lockdown, but more importantly developing skills needed for the future.

OAK - at the recent HE Committee there was a focus on predicted programme achievement and continuation, current applications and resource planning for next academic year.

**TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON UH MARKETING INITIATIVES**

Chris Dunks provided the following updates:

It was confirmed that UH face masks would not be sent to the colleges however, students will receive an email regarding collecting UH hoodies at the beginning of July. An update on hoodies and face masks for the next academic year will be provided nearer the time.

The consortium courses have been made more prominent and easier to navigate on the website.

UCAS also has the college logos on their website now.

UH Marketing are removing TEF from marketing material.

The next open day will be online and UH are hoping for face to face open days on the 23rd October and 20th November 2021. The team will be in touch for college support on those dates.

**TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON COLLEGE MARKETING INITIATIVES**

WHC - College marketing teams continue to promote college HE courses and there is an open event taking place on 8 July.

NHC - College open events organised monthly - poor attendance noted. UH college event also had poor attendance. Two school assembly talks were organised in May to promote HE as well as consortium courses. £4k spent in developing the HE video. Link sent to all partners, UH and local schools.

HRC - Another virtual Open Day has taken place with a specific HE session. Level 5 Creative students displayed their work for a couple of weeks in a shop space in The Pavilion Waltham Cross. It was a great opportunity for students to showcase their talents, but also to promote the courses at the college. The Art & Design department have been offering evening tours (for both FE & HE), as well as organising an Applicant Day to take place in July where all potential students have been invited.

OAK – the college are continuing with online marketing of HE programmes.

**TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT FROM THE RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS SUBCOMMITTEE THAT TOOK PLACE ON 17 JUNE 2021**

Nothing additional to report after discussion taken place earlier in the meeting.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

None to report.
136 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Colleges were reminded to access the latest OfS Consultations.

137 CLERK’S REPORT

Clerk’s report noted.

138 EMERGENCY BUSINESS

None to report.

139 RISK

None to report.

140 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6th October 2021.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minute</th>
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<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Confirm final date for accepting new applicants to courses for 2021/22</td>
<td>Scott Isaacs / HE Managers</td>
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