

**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 21 June 2023.

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**PRESENT:** Scott Isaacs (Chair)

Dr Jo Cahill  
Nigel Thomas  
Katie Kennedy  
Ewan Mendez

Viren Amin  
Michele Harding  
Charlotte Gale  
Nancy Small

Wilson Hylton  
Dr Stefanie Schmeer  
Dominic Bygate  
Laura Lo Coco

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Christian Lavelle (Clerk)

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98 **APOLOGIES**

Megan Knight, Associate Dean, School of Creative Arts, UH.

Jon Easter, Development Director, Hertfordshire Business School, UH.

Barbara Henry, Associate Dean, Academic Quality, Hertfordshire Law School, UH.

Chris Dunks, Marketing Manager, UH.

**ABSENT:**

Mariana Lilley, Associate Dean, Academic Quality, School of Physics, Engineering and Computer Science, UH.

99 **CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS**

99.1 The Chair welcomed Wilson Hylton to the meeting as the new Collaborative Partnership Leader (CPL) for the Foundation Degree Business programme.

99.2 Dr Laura Lo Coco was also welcomed back as the Collaborative Partnership Leader for the Extended Degree Law programme.

100 **NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

101 **TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP**

It was noted that the membership would be updated ahead of the new academic year.

102 **MINUTES - 29 MARCH 2023**

The minutes were **confirmed** as an accurate record of the meeting.

103 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Update</b>
78.6 - Scott Isaacs to investigate possibility of a workshop on the use of artificial intelligence in higher education.	Complete.
82.5 – Scott Isaacs to follow up with Jan Bowyer to ensure that colleges have access to all the data they require as well as to provide refresher courses for the colleges on the CEP process.	Complete.
83 – Scott Isaacs to update members regarding the Key Account Manager’s report.	Report is still being written.
84.2 – Karen Leong to contact Sarah Kolthammer regarding the old pathways for Foundation Business Management. Have students been contacted? If so, have students responded?	Complete.
84.3 – Megan Knight to share application data with the colleges.	Complete.

104 **BUSINESS DISCHARGED FROM ASAC AND ESEC**

104.1 The last meeting of the Education and Student Experience Committee was held in May.

104.2 A report was discussed regarding non-continuation data of which there were four recommendations:

1. All students understand the financial implications of studying at university.
2. Wellbeing and guidance information is clearly signposted.
3. Academic skills support is available freely to students.
4. Assessment processes are such that students can get back on track following failure.

104.3 The Academic Standards and Audit Committee (ASAC) discussed the latest publication from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) which aims to protect students as consumers.

104.4 Scott recommended college staff familiarise themselves and their staff with this guidance.

Colleges

105 **UPDATE ON THE CONTINUOUS ENHANCEMENT PLANNING PROCESS (CEP)**

105.1 It was noted that there has been a positive response so far. Initial challenges have been overcome.

105.2 Katie Kennedy noted that 2 out of 4 programme managers at Hertford Regional College have changed and therefore they will be reviewing what previous programme managers have written. This could prove challenging, therefore.

105.3 Katie Kennedy also asked members for further clarification on what constitutes an enhancement event as part of the CEP process.

105.4 Viren Amin stated that Oaklands College are in the same position as Hertford Regional with regards to new programme management staff. Viren stressed that it is important to keep in touch with staff and that they feel they can ask for support.

- 105.5 Ewan Mendez noted that North Herts College have found the CEP process useful. Ewan declared that he has been meeting monthly with programme managers to review items from the CEP. Ewan also noted that there has been confusion at North Herts regarding the enhancement event.
- 105.6 Michele Harding stated that the CEP process has been useful. Programme managers have been sharing best practices. Further support from the University would be welcomed.
- 105.7 Stefanie Schmeer declared that the purpose of the enhancement event is to identify good practice. Programme managers could prepare a short presentation on aspects of good practice from their programme which could be adopted for other programmes.
- 105.8 Jo Cahill explained that Schools are responsible for running enhancement events based on the CEPs that they review. School programme managers should attend where possible. The Consortium Conference would be an ideal setting for a Consortium enhancement event in which programme managers could come together to share best practices which could be adopted by other programme managers for their programmes. Following the event, an information document on best practice should be produced which can be distributed to the colleges.
- 105.9 Dominic Bygate stated that this was an excellent idea and that it is important that colleges share best practices and overcome issues together.
- 105.10 Scott Isaacs declared that he would contact all ADOS/AQAs at the University to explore School based enhancement activities and confirm that an enhancement event at the Consortium Conference is organised.

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#### 106 **UPDATE ON THE HHEC QUALITY HANDBOOK**

The handbook will be refreshed before the start of Clearing and will be officially ready before the start of the new academic year.

#### 107 **UPDATE ON THE LATEST APPLICATION FIGURES FOR THE CONSORTIUM**

- 107.1 The latest data was shared with members.
- 107.2 The majority of programmes had seen decreasing numbers. For example, there has been a Consortium wide 12% decrease in applications compared to this time last year. Unconditional firm offers were also down 13% compared to last year.
- 107.3 However, applications for the Extended Degree Engineering programme at Oaklands College had increased dramatically due to the closure of the programme at Barnet & Southgate College.
- 107.4 Scott Isaacs noted that the data mirrored the picture seen at the University. Clearing would therefore be as important as always.
- 107.5 It was mentioned that Clearing would once again take place in the Science Building on the College Lange campus. This year College staff would be in physical attendance for the first few days of Clearing. Staff would be unable to access the Clearing online platform without first having completed the training.
- 107.6 Michele Harding queried which data source is best when looking at applications. For example, data can be downloaded from UCAS, Tableau or Hobsons.
- 107.7 Viren Amin echoed the comments made by Michele Harding. Viren noted that staff at Oaklands have been trying to hit application targets and have been finalising plans to accommodate students for next year.

- 107.8 Katie Kennedy stated that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) at Hertford Regional College are updated weekly regarding the data. The College has also been reviewing the number of offers declined. Katie echoed Scott's comments regarding the importance of Clearing.
- 107.9 Ewan Mendez noted that staff at North Herts College have been reviewing the number of applicants that convert into students. Activities at the College are also underway such as open days and tours to entice prospective students to apply and accept offers.
- 107.10 Viren also noted that staff at Oaklands have been talking to level 3 students to encourage them to apply for Higher Education courses.
- 107.11 Wilson Hylton stressed the importance of ensuring acceptable numbers of students on programmes at the colleges. Specifically, regarding the Foundation Business programme, Wilson declared that the teaching team at the University have been reviewing the programme curriculum and online content offered with a view to making the programme more appealing. Engagement methods with students have also been reviewed. Suggestions will be offered to college teaching staff.

## 108 **CONSORTIUM PORTFOLIO FOR 2023/2024**

- 108.1 The Consortium portfolio for 2023/2024 was reviewed.
- 108.2 Ewan Mendez mentioned that he has met with the programme manager for Computing Technologies and a date has been confirmed for the Herts Learning workshop. There are no issues currently regarding the revalidation of the programme.
- 108.3 Michele Harding noted that the submission of documentation for the revalidation of the Law programme is Friday 23 June 2023. The final development meeting was held on Monday 19 June 2023.

## 109 **UPDATE ON THE SEMESTER B SVQ RESULTS**

- 109.1 Semester B Student Voice Questionnaire (SVQ) results were reviewed.
- 109.2 It was noted that response rates at the colleges were higher than at the University of Hertfordshire.
- 109.3 Colleges were advised to aim for a minimum target of 30%, improvements have been made from the previous year.
- 109.4 Ewan Mendez stated that North Herts College have set their target as 50%. College staff are always striving to improve and have been helping students to understand how to complete the questionnaire.

## 110 **UPDATE ON UNISTATS 2023**

Scott Isaacs to liaise with Academic Services at the University to see what is required for the colleges regarding this agenda item.

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## 111 **UPDATE ON THE NSS RESULTS**

It was noted that currently, the National Student Survey (NSS) results have not yet been released. Once results are available, results can be reviewed and action plans put in place.

## 112 **UPDATE FROM LTIC AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ANNUAL CONSORTIUM CONFERENCE**

- 112.1 Dominic Bygate reminded members that the Consortium Conference will take place on Thursday 29 June 2023.

112.2 Dominic shared the agenda for the conference with members highlighting that this year there are three sessions on artificial intelligence, given its rapidly growing importance in higher education settings.

112.3 Dominic encouraged members to network at the conference, stressing that it is an opportunity to liaise with colleagues that they may not see regularly.

112.4 Members thanked Dominic for his work in organising the conference.

### 113 **AI TEXT DETECTION AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

113.1 Scott Isaacs informed members that this agenda item would be reviewed in-depth at the Consortium Conference.

113.2 Stefanie Schmeer declared that the University is currently working on producing extensive guidance on this issue.

### 114 **ITEMS OF GOOD PRACTICE, ISSUES OF CONCERN AND UPDATES FROM SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

114.1 Stefanie Schmeer informed members that the Semester B Module Board of Examiners for the Extended Degree Science programme had to be rescheduled due to the marketing and assessment boycott that was taking place across the University. Given this, moderators at the University of Hertfordshire were unable to complete their moderation in time for the board meeting.

114.2 Laura Lo Coco echoed Michelle's earlier comments regarding the LLB Extended Degree Law programme. There were currently no major issues. Definitive Module Document (DMD) codes still needed to be ordered, however everything was in order for the submission of revalidation documentation on Friday 23 June 2023.

### 115 **VERBAL REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THEIR CONSORTIUM PROVISION**

Wilson Hylton reminded staff of the importance of turning up to events such as module planning and cross college moderation.

### 116 **VERBAL REPORTS FROM EACH COLLEGE ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THEIR HE COMMITTEES AND AN UPDATE ON THEIR ENGAGEMENT WITH HSU**

116.1 Ewan Mendez commented that new staff at North Herts College have started to settle into their roles. Ewan hopes that a stable staff base will lead to improvements moving forward.

116.2 Viren Amin noted that staff at Oaklands College have been reviewing application data as well as data on where students end up following completion of their studies. Such data should help provide a clearer picture of which courses are most in demand and therefore can be considered when reviewing the College's higher education provision. Viren also commented that it is important to consider strategies for students on modules with high failure rates.

116.3 Wilson Hylton declared that one of the reasons for high failure rates on modules is often due to over-assessment of a module.

### 117 **UPDATE ON MARKETING**

117.1 Although not present at the meeting, Chris Dunks left the following comments for members:

117.2 "Clearing campaign went live at the start of May. As usual we are surfacing subject level across the campaign, and the Consortium offering is listed on the subject landing pages so visible to Clearing campaign traffic. I have also asked that the Consortium pages are removed from behind a drop down to increase their visibility."

**118 UPDATE ON THE STUDENT SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE - 22 MARCH 2023**

The information was shared with members.

(Agenda Paper 21, refers.)

**119 UPDATE ON THE RECRUITMENT & ADMISSIONS SUBCOMMITTEE - 14 JUNE 2023**

The report was shared with members.

(Agenda Paper 22, refers.)

**120 STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

120.1 Jo Cahill informed members that the Programme Leader Symposium will take place on 26 July at 09:30 hours at the Fielder Centre.

120.2 Jo also mentioned that the Programme Leader Development programme starts in October and anyone interested should contact Jo in the first instance.

**121 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS**

None to note.

**122 CLERK'S REPORT**

This item was noted.

(Agenda Paper 25, refers.)

**123 EMERGENCY BUSINESS**

123.1 Scott Isaacs informed members that Charlotte Gale would be leaving West Herts College to take up a position as Deputy Head of Academic Partnerships at the University of Hertfordshire.

123.2 Members congratulated Charlotte and wished her well in the new role.

**124 RISK**

None to note.

**125 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

4 October 2023 at 09:30 hours via Microsoft Teams.

**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

Minute No.	Action	Deadline
104.4	Colleges to familiarise themselves with the latest guidance from the CMA.	ASAP
105.10	Scott Isaacs to contact ADOS/AQA staff at the University to propose that the enhancement event as part of the CEP process takes place at the Consortium Conference.	Urgently
110	Scott Isaacs to liaise with Academic Services to see what is required for the colleges regarding Unistats 2023.	ASAP