

Summary Report of Council 4

The University Council held a meeting on 11 May 2022. The meeting was preceded by a site visit to the University Eye Clinic, led by the Head of the School of Optometry and Vision Science.

This paper provides a high-level summary of the business considered by Council, which will be published on the University website. This is not a formal record of the Council meeting but presents an update on matters discussed by the University's governing body.

Mr Karl Bates

Pro Chancellor (Chaired the meeting on behalf of Baroness Taylor)

1 Chair's Report

On behalf of Council, the Chair extended his thanks to the outgoing Sabbatical Officers, Inshaal Ahmad and Abdulraouf Abdussalam for their valuable contributions and engagement in the business of Council and the Committees of Council. The incoming Sabbatical Officers, Ahmed Malik (Student Affairs Officer) and Iqra Tabbasum (Education Officer) were welcomed to the meeting, noting that they would join the Council as full members from July 2022.

The Chair also welcomed and introduced Zoe Burns-Shore, new lay member of Council from 1 August 2022, as an observer. Ms Burns-Shore would attend as a full member from the next meeting.

2 Vice-Chancellor's Report

The Vice-Chancellor provided an update on key matters affecting the University since the last meeting of Council and reported on developments against each of the University's sub-strategies.

Attention was drawn to the publication of HESA data on graduate employment on 31 May, noting that the provisional data indicated a further enhancement in graduate outcomes; the University's Sanctuary Scholarship Scheme which was designed to make it easier for asylum seekers and refugees to enter higher education; the University's continued commitment to social mobility, being ranked first in the Social Mobility Index for the second successive year; and the launch of the Renduchintala Centre for Space AI with its inaugural MSc Satellite Systems Engineering programme. Staff changes were also highlighted, noting that the appointment process for the new Chief Finance Officer and Director of Infrastructure were near completion and that Professor Chris Gaffney had been appointed as Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation. The Vice-Chancellor also extended her personal thanks to the outgoing UBU Sabbatical Officers.

Council noted that the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 results would be published on 12 May. A more detailed briefing on the REF would be presented to the Council via an informal briefing session.

3 Report from University of Bradford Union of Students (UBU)

Council considered a comprehensive report from the UBU on recent activities and current issues relating to the student experience, including student engagement and support, the Kickstart programme, and implications associated with the cost-of-living crisis. Reflections from the Student Affairs Officer on his term of office as a Sabbatical Officer were also provided.

The University would continue to work in partnership with the UBU to effect change and enhance the student experience, and to address the issues raised, noting that strategy delivery was key to enhancing the student journey and student experience, with the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy being the primary means of achieving positive changes in this area.

Council noted the University's commitment to, and responsibility for, providing a consistent and high-quality student experience, and **agreed** that a further briefing on this would be presented to a future meeting.

4 KPI Dashboard and Delivery Plans

Council received an update on the University's KPI dashboard and delivery plans, noting that as the University entered its final quarter of the 2021/22 academic year, it was confident of being able to show a strong performance in its annual reporting cycle in line with its strategic objectives; this was welcomed by the Council.

5 Mid-Year Financial Forecast 2021/22 and Budget Assumptions 2022/23-2025/26

Council considered a report on the University's 2021/22 financial position, noting that it had been subject to review by the Finance Committee in late March. The mid-year financial forecast predicted a surplus in the management accounts which was ahead of the original budget; this reflected strong student recruitment and continued firm cost control. Council **approved** the budget assumptions for 2022/23 noting that these would inform operational planning.

6 Student Recruitment Update

Council considered a report on student recruitment numbers across all markets for September 2022. The significant growth in international postgraduate taught applications was discussed with Council noting that interventions were in place to mitigate the risks associated with the high level of demand from international students.

Council also noted that the results from the International Student Barometer, a global benchmark for the international student experience, were extremely positive which indicated high levels of satisfaction from current international students and aligned to the positive steps that were taken by the University during COVID to provide an on-campus experience for students.

7 Mandatory Gender Pay Gap Reporting 2021

Council considered a report on the University's gender pay gap, noting that the overall mean and median gender pay gaps for 2021 had improved. Whilst this was welcomed by the Council, it was acknowledged there was more work to do to equalise representation in all pay bands and to secure meaningful change.

Council noted that the University was committed to inclusion and the promotion of gender equality and would continue to make progress to close the gender pay gap in order to ensure there was a balanced representation of different genders with the workforce and across all roles through its People Strategy and EDI Strategy delivery plans.

Council also noted that whilst not a mandatory reporting requirement, the University had also produced ethnicity pay gap data in line with its key performance indicators.

8 Report from the University Secretary

Council received a report from the University Secretary on the ongoing work related to areas of governance pertinent to Council and the University. Following consideration of the report, Council **approved**:

- revised Council Committee Terms of Reference for 2022/23.
- recommendations for the award of Honorary Degrees.
- the formal resolution to change the named officers within the Dubai Regional Hub and the China Wholly-Owned Foreign Enterprise (WOFE) – the formal resolution for the WOFE which gave effect to this change was signed by Members at the meeting.

Council also noted the changes to Council and Committee membership, as agreed by the Governance and Nominations Committee; the Department for Education letter on strategic priorities for higher education in 2022/23; the submission of the TRAC return to the Office for Students; the recent UBU elections that were conducted in accordance with applicable rules and regulations; and the Committee Year Planner for 2022/23.

9 Business from Committees of Council, and Senate

Council noted summary reports from Audit Committee, Finance Committee, University Ethics Committee, Governance and Nominations Committee, Honorary Awards Committee, Remuneration Committee and Senate on issues discussed since the last meeting of the Council.

10 Council received the following reports, for information:

- Minutes from the Council meetings held on 16 February and 22 March and action tracker.
- Register of interests.
- Workforce dashboard.
- Health and safety dashboard.
- Draft Council 5 agenda and Council schedule of business for 2021/22
- Council terms of reference and membership 2021/22.

11 Meeting dates for 2021/22

Council 5: 6 July 2022

Jacqui Holgate, Assistant Head (Governance)
May 2022