



HARTPURY

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE HARTPURY UNIVERSITY

Minutes of a Meeting 2:00pm Tuesday 30th June 2020 Via Videoconferencing – Microsoft Teams

Present: Prof. Ian Robinson (IR) - Chair
 Ms Jenny Arroud (JA) – University Board Staff Governor
 Mr Russell Marchant (RM) – Vice-Chancellor/Principal
 Dr John Selby (JS) University Governor
 Mr Chris Moody (CM) University and College Governor

In Attendance: Ms Rosie Scott-Ward – Pro-Vice-Chancellor
 Ms Lucy Dumbell (LD)- Academic Registrar
 Ms Gillian Steels – Clerk to the Governors

Apologies: Ms Emily Hancock (EH) – University Student Governor

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
QuESTHE 01/06/20	Apologies Apologies were received as detailed above.	
QuESTHE 02/06/20	Quoracy It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.	
QuESTHE 03/06/20	Declaration of Interest The Clerk advised that members’ interests would be taken as those disclosed in the Register of Members Interests. It was noted that the Vice Chancellor and Principal and Mr Chris Moody were members of the University and College Boards. There were no declarations of members’ interests for agenda items.	
QuESTHE 04/06/20	Minutes of the Last Meeting The Minutes of the meeting held on the 13 th February 2020 were agreed to be a true and accurate record.	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
<p>QuEstHE 05/06/20</p>	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>It was confirmed these had either been covered on the agenda or carried forward in line with the agreed timescales.</p> <p>Knowledge Exchange Framework – this was now required to be submitted by the end of October 2020 – this was being progressed, although it was noted that our top priority in light of COVID-19 was on students and the Research Excellence Framework which will be submitted in 2021.</p>	
<p>QuEstHE 06/06/20</p>	<p>Covid – 19: Our approach to supporting the academic progression and achievement of our students</p>	
	<p>The Meeting had been provided with the paper considered by the May Academic Board considering the academic response to COVID-19 at Hartpury University. The paper built on the initial paper presented to governors in April. Academic Board had been supportive, although suggested further reflection should be given to the alignment of our actions to associated regulatory requirements and sector guidance.</p> <p>A presentation on these areas was therefore provided at the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sector requirements, advice and guidance during COVID-19 and its impact on Hartpury <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Department for Education o Office for Students o Quality Assurance Agency o GuildHE, AdvanceHE etc. - Impact on 2019-20: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Delivery o Assessment o Regulatory o Vulnerable groups - Planning for 2020-21: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Pre-arrival communications o Enrolment and induction o Delivery o Assessment 	
	<p>Governors noted that IT and support services had been effectively mobilised to support students. There had also been a 25% increase in accessing of ICE (Innovation, Career and Enterprise Service) 1:1 support. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised that in the consideration of revised assessment processes the aim had been to keep them in formats familiar to students and to ensure no students were disadvantaged. She advised that for Veterinary Nursing remote invigilation required by the Awarding</p>	

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	<p>Body had been used. It was confirmed that any changes required in the assessment regime for professionally accredited programmes had been approved by the relevant accrediting body. Governors queried whether there had been positive engagement with assessments. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised that there had been higher engagement than usual with a reduction in non-submissions. It was flagged that in a small number of programmes there had been some issues but that the reasons for these were understood and resits were to be undertaken in July without students being capped in performance. These largely revolved around mental health / personal circumstances of individual students.</p>	
	<p>The Committee noted that Regulatory changes had been considered against the need to support all students including those shielding, international, care leavers, disabilities, low socio-economic groups and to avoid disadvantaging any groups. It was confirmed changes were considered informed by OFS guidance and discussions, QAA seminars, GuildHE and other sector support and guidance. Discussions had also been held with UWE. Any changes made to the Regulatory Framework maintained the academic integrity whilst recognising the challenges of Covid-19. A no detriment policy had been put in place after thorough consideration and review to ensure quality and the integrity of qualifications was maintained. It was noted these aspects had been considered in conjunction with the Chair of QuEST to ensure challenge. It was confirmed that the impact of Covid-19 had been built into the records students for ongoing as well as completing students.</p>	
	<p>It was highlighted that on thorough review of the No Detriment Assessment, using the February Exam Board as a reference point, it was confirmed this would be required for less than 1% of final year students. Governors were assured by the rigor which had been used, and particularly the use of the February Exam Board data. It was confirmed QuEST would continue to keep a watching brief against grade inflation. It was noted this would be an ongoing process.</p>	Quest Nov 20.
	<p>The support provided to students through the hardship fund was highlighted. 22 Awards had been made with an overall value of £40k which had enabled students to continue.</p>	
	<p>It was confirmed actions taken were monitored for successful impact and that engagement in assessment, accessing of Moodle and feedback from the SU and other representative groups had been positive. Good practice was also being taken forward, for example student preference for live</p>	

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	teams sessions rather than pre-recorded classes. It was recognised that student expectations would have increased for the next year.	
	<p>The principles for the University for 20/21 were highlighted :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain student safety • Recognise the vulnerability of those unable to attend • Have in place versatile plans • Maintain quality & standards <p>It was noted that the current focus was on timetabling. Consideration had been given to what was special to a Hartpury Degree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicals • Placements • Trips • Visiting speakers <p>And processes to protect these where possible put in place.</p>	
	<p>The Committee reflected on the impact on staff. It was advised that Hartpury was looking at ways to create capacity. The workload on some lecturers was recognised. Governors welcomed the consideration of staff needs and highlighted the need to ensure staff felt able to raise difficulties with delivering in new ways. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised that less confident staff who had been challenged by the digital delivery would be provided with support over the summer. The Vice-Chancellor advised that all staff were to be risk assessed individually prior to returning onsite to ensure individual requirements or issues were identified. Governors commented that the University seemed to have coped well but that it was important to continue to provide a safety net for staff. Jenny Arroud, Staff Governor fed back positively on the support being provided, including the briefings from the Vice-Chancellor and the staff virtual BBQ.</p>	
	<p>Governors queried any lessons learnt for the future. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised that it had reconfirmed that technology could support different learning styles. Examples of different engagement and focus at assessment time would be highlighted.</p>	
	<p>The Committee NOTED and ENDORSED the COVID-19 Response.</p>	
<p>QuEstHE 07/06/20</p>	<p>Students' Union Report The Chair of the Committee provided the feedback from the HE Student Governor:</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>“In terms of feedback, I haven’t too much as being in my last year, my cohort has gone AWOL in these last months! Nonetheless, I have received brilliant feedback for the way that Hartpury has handled the pandemic, both with academic regulations and support. It has made the process as a student with exams much smoother, and I am sure will absolutely reflect in the subsequent results of students this academic year. In particular, Rosie’s Microsoft Team presentations have been of great use - especially as a way of informing other students, via student representatives such as myself.”</p> <p>Governors welcomed this feedback plus the assurance from the report on how students were being engaged with.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the SU Report and the feedback from the HE Student Governor.</p>	
QuEstHE 08/06/20	Performance Against KPIs	
	<p>The Committee had been provided with an update on KPI Performance. This highlighted:</p> <p><i>In-Year retention:</i> The in-year has fallen below the target set for the year (table 1), but it was expected that the end of year figure would be improved on last year. The new first year cohort continues to be the group which is most likely to withdraw, making up 38 of the 62 students who had withdrawn as of the 1st of June. Reasons for withdrawal focused around ‘personal or other’ for 23 of the 38, with mental health being a factor mentioned in many withdrawal forms. It was confirmed the characteristics of the withdrawing students were being monitored; considering gender, POLAR4 status, disability etc.</p> <p>Hartpury continued to develop its systems and approaches to support the first year cohort, appreciating that 2020-21 will bring additional challenges to this group. A bespoke plan had been developed in terms of induction and delivery for the cohort, prioritising physical interaction for this group initially.</p> <p><i>Open Access:</i> This is in line with target, although two papers were not appropriately managed as previously mentioned.</p> <p><i>Graduate outcomes:</i> At the time of writing this paper, Hartpury had received initial data which is currently being checked and analysed.</p>	
	It was confirmed that the table was wrong and would be amended and reissued.	Pro-Vice-Chancellor July 2020

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>Governors questioned whether they should be concerned about retention/and or continuation. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised she was pleased with the improvement against the previous year and was above the OfS continuation requirement. She confirmed that actions were in place to prevent further drop out in September. It was noted that Hartpury was at 96.9% against a target of 97% and last year's performance of 93.6% so improvement was recognised.</p>	
	<p>The KPI Update was NOTED.</p>	
<p>QuEStHE 09/06/20</p>	<p>Degree Outcomes Statement</p>	
	<p>The Committee was reminded that the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment's (UKSCQA) statement of intent (May 2019) had proposed that HE providers with taught degree awarding powers should publish a 'degree outcomes statement'. Institutions were urged to publish this during the 2019-20 academic year, outlining their 'institutional degree classification profile and articulating the results of any internal institutional review'. This was in response to media and political statements about possible grade inflation in undergraduate honours degree classifications.</p> <p>The UKSCQA requested awarding providers with more than five years of awarding data (up to the 2018-19 HESA cohort) produce statements and other providers considered engaging. Hartpury University wished to publish a statement in support of transparency and sector autonomy. The Covid-19 pandemic reduced the capacity available to invest in this statement until the boards of examiners had been completed (19th June 2020) and as such a draft Degree Outcomes Statement had been provided with a presentation of sections 1 and 3 given within the committee meeting. It was noted that the guidance was for a 1-2 page statement, however the requirements are extensive and 3 pages is felt to be more realistic. Other providers' examples have been published up to 9 pages in length. The UKSCQA have formally recognised that statements may be delayed through approval.</p> <p>The Committee considered the proposed sections provided both within the paper and the presentation. The Committee confirmed that it supported the provision of such a statement, whilst recognising that Hartpury only had one year of data to include.</p> <p>The Registrar highlighted the proposed graph to be used and a suggested statement which confirmed that Hartpury was aware of the points highlighted by the data in relation to numbers of first and 2:1s and the differences in Male: Female performance. The Committee were supportive of this approach but suggested the use of a pie chart.</p>	<p>Registrar July /Aug 2020</p>

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	In section 2 it was suggested greater clarity on what was meant by assessors was required. It was agreed that Section 3 described academic governance succinctly and clearly. The Committee were comfortable that it was not planned to use a separate external assessor for the statement.	
	Governors expressed concern that the document would be challenging for students and parents to use, if they were the intended audience. The Registrar agreed to do an accessibility check with students from the SU. It was suggested that Section four – the algorithms – was very complex and confusing.	Registrar July/Aug 2020
	The Committee agreed to consider the final draft for approval electronically after it had been considered by the Academic Board in August and John Selby had undertaken a review. It was agreed to target getting it up for September 2020 if possible. It was agreed this approach would be updated to the Board for their endorsement in July. The Committee ENDORSED the work to date with the caveats above and agreed the approval approach detailed.	Comm Chair July 2020
QuESTHE 10/06/20	Academic Partnerships	
	An update on the management of the activity around academic partnerships had been provided. This was an area rated as amber (of concern) in the Annual Quality Report from 2018-19. This rating reflecting that this was a new area of operation for Hartpury University. Since that report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first year of a validation partnership is progressing satisfactorily, with systems supporting the provision, communication between staff and students and profiles being considered at recent boards of examiners. • We submitted our first completion report about an Erasmus Plus staff exchange. • Our first outgoing students went on an Erasmus Plus student exchange. • We completed a second year of exchange (incoming and outgoing) through a non-Erasmus Plus exchange agreement. • We have increased recognition of the work of the Collaborative Academic Partnerships' Management Committee within Hartpury, and are now being referred expressions of interest. <p>The Committee was advised it was expected that this academic year will end successfully for this area of Hartpury and Hartpury University. This is recognised as a higher risk area of the University sector's business</p>	

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	<p>however we have made a good start at mitigating to ensure our risks do not exceed those of other institutions in the sector.</p> <p>Governors commented positively on the assurance provided by the paper. It was confirmed signed agreements were in place for all our articulation relationships. Governors questioned whether our partners were meeting the standards we expected in terms of outcome profile and were advised this information was provided in the achievement report under partnerships.</p>	
	<p>The Update on Academic Partnerships was NOTED.</p>	
<p>QuESTHE 11/06/20</p>	<p>Overview of Hartpury's approach to Quality Assurance</p>	
	<p>Governors were provided with a presentation on the Overview of Hartpury's approach to Quality Assurance. This set out the external requirements and conditions set by OfS, QAA and how these were taken forward through the Academic Board and the Academic Regulations (policies and procedures). The processes used to operationalise these for staff through induction, training, peer review and internal verification were set out. The processes used by OfS to monitor and the triggers for intervention (complaints, NSS survey, continuation) were highlighted. It was recognised that these were all issues Hartpury monitored. It was noted that QAA reviews – the intervention assessors used by OfS were currently suspended but Hartpury was working to use the rigour it would apply through reference to the Head of Inclusivity and the Chair of QuEST who were trained reviewers. It was agreed it was a very helpful presentation.</p>	
	<p>It was agreed that in future, to support the monitoring that Complaints should be looked at on a termly basis by QuEST to avoid surprises. It was noted the Internal Audit report on the agenda later in the papers provided assurance on the complaints and appeals process.</p>	<p>QuEST</p>
	<p>It was confirmed that for 20/21 students would be clear on the quality of academic provision, consent forms would be required to be signed to demonstrate acceptance of any Covid-related changes in line with OfS requirements under the Competition and Markets Authority requirements. It was confirmed legal advice would be obtained to draft the required consent. It was confirmed students had already been updated on the position. It was confirmed that there was no intention to provide tuition fee refunds and the aim was to ensure there was clarity on this for students.</p>	
	<p>The Committee NOTED and ENDORSED the approach to Quality Assurance.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
QuEstHE 12/06/20	Annual Inclusivity Report 2019/20 (& update on APP Access and Participation Plan Activity)	
	The Committee considered the report which summarised key activity and future priorities linked to Inclusivity at Hartpury, including a section reflecting on activity linked to Covid-19 and future considerations and the updates on APP activity included as an appendix. It was confirmed the questions set had been considered elsewhere and the report was provided to support assurance. The Committee noted the assurance. It was agreed the Pro-Vice-Chancellor would review reporting for this area given that it was currently being reported on a monthly basis at a range of forums.	Pro-Vice-Chancellor Nov 2020
	The Committee NOTED the inclusivity and APP Update.	
QuEstHE 13/06/20	Academic Board Minutes – June 2020	
	The Committee noted the minutes.	
QuEstHE 14/06/20	Update on the Annual Quality Report	
	The Committee had been provided with an update on progress towards the action plan from the Annual Quality Report 2019-20. This outlined that of the 15 actions due before end of June 2020, 7 of these were now complete. Three actions had had their activity postponed to enable effective prioritisation of resources to support 2020-21, which had changed in response to the sector and national environment. The ongoing actions were confirmed as all in progress. The Committee agreed that commendable progress had been made given the circumstances. The Committee NOTED the Update on the Annual Quality Report.	
QuEstHE 15/06/20	Industry Engagement and Employability Report	
	The Committee had been provided with a comprehensive report which gave a broad overview of industry engagement activity undertaken during 2019-2020, together with a selection of notable examples. Industry engagement is pivotal for ensuring currency in curriculum development thus supporting student experience and graduate outcomes. Having an overview of Hartpury's sector industry engagement is increasingly required to add weight to funding bids across a range of applications.	

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	<p>The Committee reflected on the progress that had been made in this area and the value of the investment that had been made in careers and business development. It was agreed it was now a much more strategic and cohesive offer. It was agreed it was a very helpful, transparent and clear report demonstrating the effective team now in place.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the Industry, Engagement & Employability Report.</p>	
QuESTHE 16/06/20	Internal Audit – Complaints and Appeals	
	The Committee NOTED the assurance provided.	
QuESTHE 17/06/20	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Committee formally commended the University’s response to Covid-19 and the way it had balanced the demands of the usual business as well as meeting the exceptional and changing circumstances.</p> <p>The governors also commented on the quality of the papers and the benefit of the presentations.</p> <p>Teaching Excellence Framework – the Committee was updated that OfS was reviewing this and an update would be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>Assessments - it was highlighted that two more assessment periods were in place. It was recognised this might delay the Quality Report</p> <p>Graduation Date – it was noted students were being consulted on the date.</p>	
QuEST 18/06/20	<p>Dates of future meetings-all commence at 2.00pm: 4th November 2020 – new date</p> <p>The meeting closed at 4.15pm</p>	