

The London Interdisciplinary SchoolAcademic CouncilMinutes of the Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 14.00 via Teams**Attendees**

Dr James Carney (Faculty)	Hayley Dawson (Faculty Manager)
Dr Michael Englard (Registrar)	Ed Fidoe (Chief Executive Officer)
Dr Mattia Gallotti (Faculty)	Prof Carl Gombrich (DoTL and Chair)
Jet Hayden (Student Representative)	Jaspar Joyce, Director of New Products
Hannah Kohler (Director of Strategy and People)	Dr Priya Lall (Faculty)
Dr Tom Mcleish (external member)	María Angélica Madero (Faculty)
Dr Ebrahim Patel (Faculty)	Imogen Pemberton (Head of Admissions and Widening Participation)
Dr Amelia Peterson (Faculty)	Christopher Sarjantson (Student Representative)
Dr Andrew Redford (Head of Quality)	Marielle van der Meer (Director of Student Experience, Careers and Partnerships)
Professor Diana Spencer (external member)	

*By invitation:*

Kestral Gaian (Head of Digital)

START: 14.01

**Papers submitted in advance.**

1. Minutes Academic Council meeting held on 17/09/2021
2. DAPS Update
3. Annual Report to Academic Council on Student Engagement
4. Admissions thematic review terms of reference
5. Academic Appeals and Academic Misconduct Panel staff list
6. Annual Report on Learning Resources
7. Admissions and Induction Survey results report
8. Annual Report on Scholarship and pedagogic effectiveness
9. Regulatory Working Group minutes 27/10/2021
10. Regulatory Working Group minutes 30/11/2021
11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee minutes 20/10/2021
12. Learning Resources and Property Working Group minutes 24/11/2021
13. Student Voice Committee minutes 17/11/2021
14. Report on Access and Access and Participation Plan
15. Memorandum on Reserved Items

**MINUTES****1. Welcome and Apologies.**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and welcomed the student Representatives attending their first meeting. Apologies were received from Ash Brockwell, Bronwyn Tarr, Isaiah Wellington-Lynn, Ebrahim Patel and Plum Turner. The Council noted that Dr Laila Halani was attending as a QAA Observer.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

2.1 The Council received and **approved** the minutes (paper 1) from the previous meeting held on 17/09/2021.

### 3. Matters Arising and Updates

3.1 **Matters Arising.** The Council received the progress of actions from the last meeting (paper 1, page 5) noting that 3 are on-going and all others have been completed.

3.2 **DAPS update.** The Council received the update (paper 2) noting that the report would be amended following feedback from the QAA and would then be submitted to the QAA as the Quarterly Report. It was stated that progress against milestones and the criteria is as expected and on track.

3.3 **Site update.** It was reported that since opening, teaching and learning space has been in heavy use though there has been some hybrid teaching. The School has responded well to feedback obtaining additional screens, microphones etc for teaching spaces. The spaces are generally working well and the School is looking at how students can experience different spaces. The School intended the campus to be seen as a shared space and open to everybody and had expected more mixing than actually has been the case. It was reported that the Common Room space, designed by the architects and students will be kitted out from term two following further design consultation with students. It was noted that COVID-19 had been an issue with monitoring at the front door and that sometimes issues had arisen e.g., with electrics but the School now has a role advertised for a dedicated 'Campus Manager' who will resolve arising issues more quickly once in post.

#### 3.4 BAsC update

3.4.1 It was reported that it had been a positive first term and had productive with the first cohort which will be unique experience for them and for LIS. Students had exceeded staff expectations in many respects but in particular in terms of their formal and informal feedback. It was stated that peer observation of teaching and formative assessment and feedback was occurring with summative assessments imminent.

3.4.2 It was queried as to the views of student members on the first term and how well the interdisciplinary approach is working and whether they found it harder than expected. The Student Representatives stated that it had been really interesting with a broad range covered in a short period of time which was both really interesting and a challenge, feeling intense and fast paced, this was to be expected but still had been a challenge. They stated that as a student rep they hear a lot of views across the board with some people loving one aspect and then others who don't like it, therefore achieving a balance is going to be difficult, but it has been done reasonably well so far by the School. It was stated that the biggest surprise was the learning curve on interdisciplinary education as it is different from many other organisations.

3.4.3 The Student Representatives stated that there is a need to get the same base line level of knowledge in order to get the most out of teaching as some students have a maths backgrounds and others don't, with the latter needing potentially more assistance. They stated that visual explanations were being provided and 'extension' classes provided movement on the issues that have arisen.

3.4.4 It was queried as to whether the first assessments and feedback were timely and constructive. Student representatives confirmed that it was constructive although some students received different amounts of feedback which was raised and subsequently dealt with very quickly by LIS. It was stated that students were yet to receive their feedback on their second qualitative formative assessment. It was confirmed that the feedback was due at 4pm on 16/12/2021 and would be provided after the class where general comments to the cohort would also be provided. It was noted that the policy on the return of feedback is two weeks after the submission deadline.

### 3.5 MASC update

3.5.1 It was reported that the School is planning to launch its new MASC programme in September 2022 (pending approval) with its second pathway (collective intelligence) launching in 2023. A framework for master's degrees has been developed along with a programme specification which takes what happens at the BASc and extends it into level 7 looking at cultural technologies and coordination, complex systems and bonds of cultural technology. There will be 4 modules running across both MASC pathways looking at methods and data. – e.g., numerical, word-based and image data. It was stated that in early 2022 staff will be developing the individual module forms.

3.5.2 It was reported that marketing activity had now started and there had been 270 expressions of interest; 111 had signed up for the next Q&A event and 54 people had attend the first Q&A event. Marketing is therefore positive at this stage with plans to increase activity further in the New Year.

3.5.3 The difference between resourcing libraries for PG versus UG and the associated planning process was queried. It was stated that the School has taken feedback onboard from the last meeting and the MASC Resources Plan increases the base for PG students following the same tenets as at UG – e.g., Perlego on-line access, journal access through JSTOR collections 1 & 7 (arts & social sciences) and adding in more science collections (Web of Sciences expanded citation index), the latter of which will also benefit UG students. In addition, all PG students will have a dedicated resources budget to access additional articles not included. *[Action: ME to circulate Learning Resource Plan].*

3.6 **EDIC Staff elections/membership.** It was reported that following the EDIC meeting on 20/10/2021, staff were able to put themselves forward for membership of the Committee and that following the process Isaiah Wellington-Lynn, Kestral Gaian and Kiran Momi were confirmed as members of the Committee for the forthcoming year.

### 3.7 VLE update.

3.7.1 The Head of Digital reported that 3 weeks ago the School was informed by Aula that they would not be able to survive the economic effects of Covid-19 and were closing their product at the end of the calendar year. The School undertook due diligence to establish what was available and analyse the market with Eduflow coming out on top in terms of functionality as well as the company being more financially robust but on a similar budget to Aula. The School has subsequently migrated to the new VLE within 3 weeks whilst maintaining all functionality. It also allowed students to suggest and vote on names for the product with 'Cortex' being picked by students. The new VLE went live during the week of 13/12/2021 with all staff and the majority of students now trained on how to use it. It was stated that LIS has not lost out financially in terms of this process and the old platform will be decommissioned on 24/12/2021 but all content has been replaced on Cortex or archived; some community conversations may be lost but these can be archived if required.

3.7.2 It was stated that this had provided the School with a test of its robustness and an opportunity to demonstrate how it can respond, archive and back up as well as enable account provisioning in a centralised and focussed way. This has helped to road test the School's digital infrastructure that would not have been possible previously. It is very good in terms of resilience if needed to transfer platforms again in the future. It was noted that 8 students had been involved as part of the testing team.

### MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL

## 4. Annual Report to Academic Council on Student Engagement

- 4.1 The Council received and **approved** the report (paper 3) noting that it was a short report given that it was the first term of the first year of delivery. However next year's report would benefit from a full year reflection on all student voice mechanisms as well as other indicators of student engagement such as assessment submission and attendance. It was noted that having highlighted the student voice mechanisms during Founder's Week, there were successful elections for student representatives who have all received an induction and student rep guide. It was stated that the Student Voice Committee had met which had included discussions of the School's first survey results.
- 5. Academic Appeals and Academic Misconduct Panel staff list**
- 5.1 The Council received and **approved** the list of staff for Appeals and Misconduct Panels (paper 4)
- 6. Annual Report on Learning Resources**
- 6.1 The Council received the report (paper 5) noting that whilst the School provided a robust offering in terms of learning resources, the number of students using Perlego was fewer than had been predicted but it was expected that this would increase in the New Year. The Student Representatives stated that Perlego had not been as integrated with learning and assessments as it could have been, and that uptake had been affected by a disparity between the on-line and desktop version due to Microsoft 365 which had now been successfully resolved.
- 6.2 It was queried, given that most resources will be primarily virtual, how a person will be enabled to feel like a student when a community and physical context is often the most powerful in enabling that perception. It was stated that the School has reviewed the Estates Plan and is aiming to create a master's area where they have their own space and own community learning spaces. The School is also creating a library styled space on the first floor. **[Action: ME to circulate Estates Plan]**. It was also stated that there are options on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors for PG only spaces going forward.
- 7. Admissions and Induction Survey results report.**
- 7.1 The Council received and discussed the survey results (paper 6), noting that the overall response rate was 43% and that 93% of respondents were satisfied with their experience and 82% stated that the School had met or exceeded their expectations. It was noted that actions had been identified from the survey results and that it would also form part of the evidence for the rolling internal audit of Admissions later in the academic year.
- 8. Annual Report on Scholarship and pedagogic effectiveness**
- 8.1 The Council received the report (paper 7) which included a list of activities that had occurred or were planned. It was stated that there was a diverse range of activities planned for the first year and that discussions in terms of how to manage research time and transitioning to a phase of active forms of research were on-going amongst staff. It was noted that there has already been staff training on assessment and a training session on end of year projects supervision is planned for early March 2022. It was stated that the School had joined AdvanceHE in August 2021 and that staff are about to submit a proposal for the ID conference in Birmingham for 2022. The Council noted how pleasing it was that this area was being developed such as the fortnightly seminar series but in particular the clarity established on the FTE for scholarship and research.
- 8.2 It was queried whether the School will be involved in collaborative research given that interdisciplinary research is typically collaborative and whether the School would potentially explore external collaborations. It was stated that some internal collaborative research between staff is already occurring albeit informally; however, discussions so far had focussed on establishing the internal research infrastructure but in the coming months the School will aim to begin reaching out to other institutions in terms of research collaboration.

## 9. Terms of reference for Admissions Thematic Review

- 9.1 The Council received and **approved** the Terms of Reference for the forthcoming Thematic Review in Admissions (paper 8). It was noted that this forms part of the School's rolling internal audit process and that the review will include student and external membership on the Panel who will receive a self-evaluation on admissions and accompanying evidence in advance of a Panel meeting with relevant staff.

### MATTERS TO RECEIVE OR TO NOTE ONLY

## 10. Regulatory Working Group (RWG) minutes

- 10.1 The Council received the RWG minutes (papers 9 & 10) from the meetings held on 27/10/2021 and 30/11/2021.

## 11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) minutes

- 11.1 The Council received the EDIC minutes from the meeting held on 20/10/2021 (paper 11).

## 12. Learning Resources and Property Working Group (LR&PWG) minutes

- 12.1 The Council received the LR&PWG minutes of the meeting held on 24/11/2021 (paper 12)

## 13. Student Voice Committee (SVC) minutes

- 13.1 The Council received the SVC minutes of the meeting held on 17/11/2021 (paper 13).

- 13.2 It was queried as to the Student Representative views of the SVC. It was stated that the first meeting had gone well with excellent chairing by Lucy Magri-Overend (Board of Directors Student Rep) and that the 'Town Hall' two-way feedback events had worked well and that the MEF would be integrated next term to provide research and evaluation on behalf of the SVC.

## 14. Report on Access and Access & Participation Plan

- 14.1 The Council received the report on Access and Participation (paper 14)

## 15. Any Other Business

- 15.1 The Council noted the Memorandum of Reserved Items (paper 15) outlining how reserved items will be managed.

- 15.2 Masters PMRAP Panel. It was stated that there will be a Panel to validate/approve the new Masters programme next term and ME will be in communication with External Members of the Academic Council regarding chairing the Panel meetings. ***[Action: ME to liaise with TM and DS on PMRAP].***

## 16. Next Meeting and Future Meetings

- 16.1 The Council noted that the next and future meetings will be held on:

- Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022; 14.00-16.00
- Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022; 14.00-16.00

### RESERVED BUSINESS

- None

CLOSE: 15.40

**COMPLETED ACTIONS**

Meeting/minute	Action	By Whom	Deadline	Outcome
17/09/2021; minute 9.1	External Learning: to draft process document for quality assuring externally provided delivery	Head of Quality	Next meeting	On-going as part of wider framework for project and initiative development.
17/09/2021; minute 12.1	Student Support Policy: to include gender diversity training (including sourcing and tendering discussion with AB)	MVDM	Next meeting	Changes to be sent to Regulatory Working Group
17/09/2021; minute 13.1	Governance chart: to provide additional documentation /slide on management lines in relation to governance	Registrar	Next meeting	Pending revisions from restructuring.
17/09/2021; minute 14.1	Reserved items: to draft memorandum on student representation and reserved items for next Academic Council	Registrar		Complete
16/12/2021; minute 3.5.3	MASC: to circulate Learning Resource Plan	ME	Next meeting	Completed
16/12/2021; minute 6.2	Space: to circulate Estates Plan	ME	Next meeting	Completed
16/12/2021; minute 15.2	MASC: to liaise with TM and DS on PMRAP	ME	Next meeting	Completed