

COUNCIL
Thursday 28 March 2024

CONFIRMED MINUTES

Present:

Lord Clement-Jones CBE	Serena-Amani Al-Jabbar	Professor Colin Bailey CBE
Gil Baldwin	Ken Batty	Professor Kavita Datta
Professor Yang Hao	Indy Hothi	Isabelle Jenkins
Maryanne Matthews	Dr Natalie McCloskey	Professor Mangala Patel
Dr Anthony Phillips	Dr Alix Pryde	Melissa Tatton CBE
Peter Thompson		

In attendance:

Dr Sharon Ellis	Karen Kröger	Dr Nadine Lewycky
Jonathan Morgan	Aisha Qadi	

For m. 2023.043 only: Judith Baines and Chris Shelley

For m. 2023.044 only: Dr Maggie Leggett and Chris Shelley

For m. 2023.051 only: Louise Lester

Apologies:

Patricia Gallan QPM	Celia Gough
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Welcome, apologies and declaration of interests

2023.039 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no declarations of interests.

Chair's update

2023.040 Council **received** a list of the Chair's recent activities. The Chair said that the Barts 900th anniversary reception and the annual education dinner at the Drapers' Company had showcased the various aspects of the University.

President and Principal's Report (QM2023/34)

2023.041 Council **considered** the President and Principal's report. The following points were noted in the discussion:

[a] *Minute 2013.041[a] is confidential.*

[b] The House of Commons Education Committee had been conducting an

inquiry into how students at universities were impacted by various forms of industrial action in recent years, with a particular focus on the marking and assessment boycott. The Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) had made a written submission on behalf of all universities. We were one of c.25 universities that implemented a policy on partial performance. A link to the written evidence submitted to the Committee would be circulated to Council members.

[c] *Minute 2023.041[c] is confidential.*

[d] Council members had received a letter ahead of the meeting from the local UCU branch on discussions in HSS that were initiated by the Faculty leadership about potential changes to the academic organisation. The University Secretary had responded to the UCU branch informing them that their letter would be referred to the Joint Consultative Forum (JCF) as the appropriate governance forum. The Chief Operations Officer, in her capacity as Chair of the JCF, said that discussions in the Faculty were at an early stage and that the response to the letter would be shared with members of Council. In response to a question about the governance route for making changes to the academic organisation, the University Secretary said that changes are approved by the Council on the recommendation of the Senior Executive Team after consulting the Senate, Council's role being to seek assurance that due process has been followed.

[e] Council congratulated the School of Geography for its recent research award success.

*Actions: [b] University Secretary
[d] Chief Operations Officer*

QMSU President's report (QM2023/35)

2023.042 Council **considered** the QMSU President's report. The following points were noted in the discussion:

[a] The elections for next year's sabbatical officers had taken place and engagement had been up on last year. Next year's executive would include a new liberation role in place of the Vice-President for Communities.

[b] QMSU had been working on creating opportunities for students to contribute to the wider social discourse around racism.

Deep dive on student employability (QM2023/36)

2023.043 Council **considered** a deep dive on student employability. The following points were noted in the presentation and discussion:

[a] The Careers Service was engaging with the top employers in the UK to prepare students for the graduate job market through site visits, bespoke mentoring and mock assessment centres. Our diverse student body was attractive to many employers who were seeking to recruit a more diverse workforce.

[b] Council asked about the segmentation strategies for the different gender and ethnic groups and for those who were first in family to attend university. We had identified lower engagement among some segments of the student population and were developing bespoke plans to improve engagement with them.

[c] The Careers Service was working in partnership with the academic schools and institutes, and the Queen Mary Academy, to embed the development of employability skills in the curriculum. A network of culture change champions was in place to identify and share good practice, and the governance arrangements around employability provided opportunities for faculty and QMSU student representatives to feed in.

[d] We had been named for the third consecutive year for being among the top 20 universities targeted by the UK's top 100 employers.

Access and Participation Plan (QM2023/37)

2023.044 Council **considered** and **approved** the Access and Participation Plan for the next five years for submission to the Office for Students. The following points were noted in the discussion:

[a] Council noted that the narrative did not capture the full breadth of the University's work in widening access, but this was because the Plan was written for the Office for Students and to comply with its guidelines and expectations. There were other routes for us to share our positive stories.

Update on Strategy KPIs and the Strategic Risk Register (QM2023/38)

2023.045 *Minute 2023.045 is confidential.*

Finance and Investment Committee minutes (QM2023/39)

2023.046 Council **noted** the minutes of the Finance and Investment Committee meeting held on 07 March 2024.

Current financial position (QM2023/40)

2023.047 *Minute 2023.047 is confidential.*

2024–25 budget and financial forecasts (QM2023/41)

2023.048 *Minute 2023.048 is confidential.*

Updated infrastructure plan (QM2023/42)

2023.049 *Minute 2023.049 is confidential.*

QMSU financial statements 2022–23 and mid–year accounts (QM2023/43)

2023.050 Council **considered** the QMSU financial statements 2022–23 and mid–year accounts. The following points were noted in the discussion:

- [a] Finance and Investment Committee had reviewed the QMSU financial statements and queried whether the University's letter of support to QMSU covered the going concern period. The Chief Financial Officer had confirmed after the meeting that the letter covered the full 12 months from the date of the signing of the accounts.

Compliance with Ordinance B (QM2023/44)

2023.051 Council **considered** a paper on Compliance with Ordinance B. The following points were noted in the discussion:

- [a] There had been an increase in the number of staff dismissals across the University in 2023, predominantly related to an increase in adverse probation dismissals among academic colleagues. There were no EDI issues identified in the profile of dismissals.
- [b] The profile of grievances was similar to previous years. The increase seen in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry could be partly attributed to the work done to address bullying, harassment and discrimination as part of its Athena Swan gold application.

Senate minutes and update to Ordinance A16 (QM2023/45)

2023.052 [a] Council **considered** the minutes of the Senate meeting held on 14 March 2024.

- [b] Council **considered** and **approved** an update to Ordinance A16 (Awards) to provide for the award of Clinical Doctorate (DClin) and Master of Education (MEd).

Student Casework annual report (QM2023/46)

2023.053 Council **considered** the student casework annual report. The following points were noted in the discussion:

- [a] Student casework handling had improved this year through process improvements, better engagement with students, and greater resources. Guidance for staff and students on generative AI had been issued quickly to support the handling of cases involving AI.

Audit and Risk Committee minutes (QM2023/47)

2023.054 Council **noted** the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 12 March 2024.

Minutes of the last meeting (QM2023/48)

2023.055 Council **confirmed** the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023.

Matters arising (QM2023/49)

2023.056 Council **noted** the matters arising from the meeting held on 23 November 2023.

Use of the Common Seal (QM2023/50)

2023.057 Council **noted** the use of the common seal since the last meeting.

Draft agenda for the next meeting (QM2023/51)

2023.058 Council **noted** the draft agenda for the meeting on 16 May 2024.

Dates of Meetings 2023–24

- Thursday 16 May / Friday 17 May 2024 – Annual conference including Council meeting, The Royal Society, London.
- Thursday 11 July 2024 at 1600 hours, Colette Bowe Room, Queens' Building.