

ACADEMIC BOARD

CONFIRMED

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22nd June 2020

Present: Rob Trimble (Chair), Julie Mennell (from 19:77), Elizabeth Bates, Jean Brown, Jeremy Colclough, Colette Conroy, Diane Cox, Karen Hadley, Ruth Harrison-Palmer, Signy Henderson, Lequane Johnson, Michelle Leek, Helen Manns, Steven McCarthy-Grunwald, Jessica Robinson, Ian Sinker, James Stephens, Kaz Stuart, , Katie Walker-Small, Chris Watson, Brian Webster-Henderson, Susie Wilson

In attendance: James Bellhouse, Aleksandra Mecinska, Lucy Haddath

19:70 Apologies for absence: Verbal
Nigel Rourke, Ian Todd, Amanda Lane, Alison Hampson, Alison Marshall, Justine Bigland

19:71 Minutes and actions of the previous meeting AB19/49
The minutes of the 15th April 2020 meeting were approved as an accurate record. (a)

The action log was reviewed and noted. A number of actions were reviewed within the meeting: (b)

19:29 - Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy Action Plan Progress

'A group academic induction for the four new Directors of Institutes to be arranged.'

It was reported that meetings had been held with Institute Directors individually – it was agreed that this action had been completed by different means.

19:32 – Student Retention

'Each Institute to look at outliers in their areas and present to Academic Board areas where performance was exceptional, and why, and where there were remaining challenges and why - DSS / DVC(A) to determine future reporting to Academic Board in reporting retention outliers and actions.'

It was noted that this action would be completed early in the next academic year.

19:33 - Student Achievement

'Institute staff representatives to talk to colleagues about the Personal Tutor role and lead a session at the next Academic Board meeting on how the process is working, challenges with it, in the context of the current policy.'

It was noted that this action was on the agenda for this meeting.

19:35 – NSS

'Institutes to feed in ways that their successes could be recognised.'

It was noted that a more robust approach to closing loops and sharing best practice on the NSS was now in place through the annual

monitoring report process; in addition, the annual monitoring report template had been updated. It was noted that the NSS results would now be published on 15th July.

19:42 – Ambleside Business Plan

'Explore whether the Institute of Arts delivery out of the Ambleside campus would require staff to move from Brampton Road.'

It was agreed that this would be picked up outside the meeting.

'Arrange SLF interaction to influence and input on the Business Plan prior to VCE approval'

It was noted the Ambleside Business Plan had been presented as part of the AOP and it was therefore agreed that this action was complete.

19:02 - Terms of Reference and Membership

'Members of Academic Board, SSQAC, ASPC and RC to come together prior to next meeting of Academic Board to discuss academic matters and areas of focus.'

It was noted that this action had been put on hold due to the COVID19 Pandemic and would be held when appropriate to do so.

19:03 - Institute Representatives

'Ensure that Institute representatives are invited to attend the deliberative committees of Academic Board.'

It was noted that the University Secretary would pick this up with the DVC(A) in due course.

19:04 - Student Union Matters

It was noted that as part of the new Sabbatical Officers' induction process the action plan would be reviewed. The new officers would be supported by outgoing officers with a full action plan to be presented to early in 2020/21.

Each Institute to gather their student representatives together with key staff within the Institute, possibly once a semester.

It was noted that this action would be for the next academic year and digital methods of completing it were being looked into.

19:17 - CMA

Institute representatives to support work to ensure that all have completed the CMA training.

It was noted that this was still an ongoing. The compliance group continue to monitor it. Good progress had been made, however there were still a large number of Academic Staff who haven't completed their training. It was agreed that DAQD would pick up personally with Directors of Institutes.

18:70 - Student Charter

It was requested that consideration be given as to whether to move to a Student and Staff Charter for future years. Academic Board welcomed the initiative, and the inclusion of what students could expect from staff in terms of behaviours and actions.

It was noted that the action would be picked up later in the meeting.

18:49 – UCSU

The PVC/Director of Student & Staff Services recommended that an Equality Impact Assessment should be completed in relation to students union activity and representation.

Academic Board were supportive of the initiative and requested that this should be progressed.

It was noted that an update will be made at an Academic Board early in 2020/21.

The order of the agenda was changed at this point – items have been minuted in the order that they were taken at the meeting

19:72 Institute Representatives

Verbal

Received Updates and comments from Institute Staff Representatives.

The DVC(A) asked Institute Representatives for any updates or comments.

No updates or comments were provided.

19:73 Students' Union Matters

AB19/50

Received A report from the Student's Union Academic Officer

The Student's Union Academic Officer spoke to his report. It was reported that the induction for the new Students' Union sabbatical officers would take place over the summer.

Colleagues were reminded that the Executive Committee contains ten campus representatives and three sabbatical officers, the roles of which were set out. It was reported that the Executive Committee would establish online liberation networks, in response to student demand, as well as a network for BAME students to enable cross campus interaction.

It was reported that there had initially been some confusion in the student body following the Covid19 lockdown, with students seeking advice and support. However, once the emergency regulations were published students had been very satisfied with the communication of these and the supporting FAQ's.

It was noted that communication with students had been a challenge for the Union at the start of the lock-down, however a new student voice inbox had been established which had enabled quicker responses to students and had improved communication.

It was noted that work was now focused on preparations needed for when campus reopens.

A member of Academic Board commented on the positives coming from the Students' Union move to online support, such as being able to reach out to the student body across the country and abroad.

The DVC(A) thanked the outgoing Academic Officer on behalf of the University for his two years of service and wished him well for the future.

AGREED: To receive the report.

19:74 Sector Guidance Update

AB19/52

Received An overview of key sector guidance

The University Secretary spoke to her paper which provided an overview of recently published key sector guidance and principles designed to aid the sector as the Covid19 pandemic progressed and as the country slowly moves out of lockdown. It was noted that further guidance had been published since the paper was written.

In response to a question regarding whether the University was anticipating calls for evaluation of how the guidance was implemented, the University Secretary noted that the OfS were keeping in regular contact with institutions and as part of that contact they had been asking about how an institution had managed through the period, however it was unclear whether there would be an audit carried out.

It was also noted that the QAA's and PSRB's also undertake reviews so it would be appropriate to provide an overview in due course of the University's compliance with the top-level guidance from the OfS, QAA and UUK.

The DVC(A) drew colleagues' attention to the guidance in terms of the OfS Condition of Registration relating to consumer protection law and the requirement to inform students of changes to programmes and to obtain their consent.

AGREED: To receive the report.

19:75 Academic Regulations

AB19/53

Received Proposals for changes to the academic regulations, procedures and processes.

The Director of AQD spoke to her paper which proposed a number of changes to the University Academic Regulations for implementation from September 2020.

The DAQD gave an overview of the proposed changes, the first relating to credit sizes to reflect the Curriculum Design Framework principles; the second in the relation to Assessment Boards; and the last which were mainly proposed additions to enable delivery of Higher National Certificates and Diplomas under licence from Pearsons.

It was agreed to approve the proposed changes to credit sizes for taught modules and to approve the changes required to enable delivery of Higher National Certificates and Diplomas under licence from Pearsons.

With respect to the proposed changes to the Assessment Board regulations, the DVC(A) set out that the proposal had been presented to the February meeting of Academic Board, with more detail requested prior to agreement to the change; the requested detail was within the

paper. The DAQD confirmed that one of the new Institute Directors had reviewed the proposals in detail and supported the changes proposed.

Following a question it was clarified that the proposals provided an indicative timeline to show sequencing of activities.

The timing for implementation of the changes was asked about and whether changes would be required to the roles of external examiners. The DAQD reported that it was anticipated that the changes would be introduced for the summer 2021 Assessment Boards, with a small pilot proposed in one Institute. The terms and conditions for external examiners would need to be updated to reflect the changes proposed.

The changes to the Assessment Board regulations were approved. It was agreed they would be piloted in January, with the Institute piloting the changes to be determined, with the aim of full introduction in Summer 2021. The Terms and Conditions for external examiners would be changed in time for the full implementation.

AGREED: To approve the changes to the Academic Regulations as set out in the paper; to pilot the Assessment Board changes in one Institute in January 2021 with the aim of full implementation in summer 2021.

19:76 OfS Academic Conditions of Registration

AB19/54

Received An overview of assurance reporting.

The DVC(A) introduced the paper, noting that Academic Board was being asked to consider both the content and the approach to reporting. This was the first time assurances had been provided in this manner, which used confirmed minutes from a range of meetings to provide assurance against each of the relevant OfS Conditions of Registration.

The DAQD spoke to the report and noted that when preparations were being made for initial registration with the OfS a detailed mapping process was undertaken, looking at the initial and ongoing conditions of registration; attention was drawn to the appended paper 'OfS Institutional Mapping'.

It was noted that the Schedule of Business and the agenda of Academic Board and its sub committees had been developed and rolled out taking into account the business that needed to be considered to provide the required assurances.

The DAQD noted that the conditions were set out in Appendix 1 then each of the conditions of relevance to Academic Board was stepped through.

It was agreed that throughout the document research student matters should be evidenced alongside taught students. **Action:** DAQD for future reporting.

Condition A1: The University has an Access and Participation Plan (APP) that has been approved by the OfS. With respect to compliance with the APP, it was noted that oversight in relation to action planning and monitoring was provided by SSQAC, within the formal committee structure. However, it was noted that the majority of the work on the APP is undertaken through the APP Steering Group which is not a formal

committee. It was agreed that the Steering Group formally feed into SSQAC. **Action:** DfSS / Uni Sec.

B Conditions: It was noted that much of the routine business of SSQAC provided the evidence base for one or more of these conditions of registration and that there was overlap with requirements of the QAA Quality Code, compliance with which had been assessed in year. The University Student Performance group, established in 2019/20 and reporting into SSQAC, also provided an evidence base across the B conditions.

A question was asked about the review cycle of academic related policies. It was agreed that this would be circulated to Academic Board. **Action:** DAQD/Uni Sec.

Following discussion it was agreed that the minutes from the June SSQAC meeting needed to be added to the report; the summaries should be moved to the beginning of each section; that how assurance could be ascertained from the evidence be considered; and that assurances from other committees e.g. Research Committee, ASPC, be included in future so that all academic assurance was provided through the single document. **Action:** DAQD for future reporting.

C Conditions: It was noted that the first report from the CMA Compliance Group, formed in 2019/20, was presented to SSQAC and could be referenced in the report. ASPC's role with respect to the Student Protection Plan would also be added. **Action:** DAQD for future reporting.

The DVC(A) thanked those responsible for drafting the report, noted the changes agreed for future reporting, and that more focused references to minutes would also be helpful in future. The report was approved for onward reporting to Academic Governance Committee.

AGREED:

- To receive the report and approve for onward reporting to Academic Governance Committee;
- To note the suggestions for future reporting;
- That the APP Steering Group should formally report to SSQAC.

19:77 LTA Strategy Action Plan Progress Update

AB19/55

Received An update on delivery of the LTA action plan.

The DAQD spoke to the report noting that the cover paper provided an overall summary of progress. Good progress had been made, with the small number of activities that had been identified as 'red' having plans in place to deliver. Updates were provided against actions in each work-stream of the plan.

A question was asked as to whether there was anything else that needed to be considered with respect to support for staff. The DAQD responded that a significant amount of time in the last few months had been devoted to responding to the pandemic, this had enabled rapid progress in developing a digitally competent and confident organisation. As such more had been achieved in some areas, less in others, and a review of the plan was now appropriate.

The DVC(A) thanked those involved for their work in delivering the Plan. He asked that objectives 2, 3 and 4, in particular, were reflected upon,

as well as how the activity was balanced across the years of the Plan and how the Institute Action Plans fed into its delivery. **Action:** DAQD.

- AGREED:**
- To note the update.
 - To review to LTA action plan

19:78 Degree Outcomes Statement

AB19/56

Received Draft degree outcomes statement

The DAQD introduced the item, reporting that the proposal that all universities should publish a degree outcomes statement was a recommendation that had come forward from the UK Standard Committee for Quality Assessment. The Quality Assurance Agency had provided guidance in relation to the structure of the statement, which had been followed by the University.

It had been recommended that the statements be published by the end of the academic year, however at the time of writing only two providers had published their degree outcome statements. It was proposed that the statement should be taken to the governing body for their consideration for approval, with the decision on when to publish the statement delegated to management.

In the discussion that followed it was agreed that the section on good practice would be expanded upon. It was commented that there were areas where specific data, percentages and observations had been provided and others where it was not. The DAQD responded that it was a judgement call as to what to include, with the data all available in the APP and therefore in the public domain.

The DVC(A) summarised the changes requested by Academic Board:

- That the data would be displayed in a simpler manner;
- That the reference to top-up degrees in London be reviewed and potentially removed to avoid focusing on a particular campus;
- More to be made of the APP and the work being undertaken across all student characteristics;
- More to be added to reflect good practice at the University;
- The risks and challenges section to be briefer.

The revised document would then proceed to Academic Governance Committee for their endorsement prior to University Board consideration. It was agreed to recommend that the timing of publication be delegated to management to determine.

- AGREED:** To endorse the draft degree outcomes statement, subject to amendments set out in the minute, for onward progression to Academic Governance Committee.

19:79 Annual Review of Student Charter for 2020-21

AB19/57

Received The annual review of Student Charter for 2020/21

The DVC(A) introduced the item stating that SSQAC had approved the Student Charter for 2020/21.

With respect to the question of whether the University should have a staff charter, it was suggested that this was something worth pursuing,

however it was not a priority at the current time and this would be explored further when the Student Charter for 2021/22 was drafted.

AGREED: To note the approval of the Student Charter for 2020/21
To consider a staff charter when the Student Charter for 2021/22 was being drafted.

19:80 Institute Staff Reps

AB19/51

Received Personal tutor policy and toolkit documents.

The item was introduced and it was reported that a series of meetings had taken place to gather and discuss feedback from each of the institutes with the topics of 'what works well', 'what could be better' and 'potential solutions'.

The feedback under each heading was summarised as follows:

What works well:

- Where personal tutors worked as teams, sharing information and providing more than one point of contact for students, the system was more successful than when personal tutors worked in isolation;
- The system was particularly successful when it was a standard agenda item for programme team meetings – with some areas using RAG ratings to highlight students potentially requiring more support;
- Where programme teams had agreed time tabled slots for tutorials this worked better than leaving it to individual tutors to follow up with students;
- The push to support students with the move to on-line teaching was reported to have been very successful.

What could be better:

- The time taken to support students was not very well reflected in workload patterns; students with very complex problems required a more sustained approach than could be provided within the allocated time;
- Personal tutoring was not as successful where a team approach wasn't adopted;
- Staff would like additional training, particularly with respect to sign-posting students to where they needed to go within the support structure, both for academic and pastoral support;
- Staff found the pastoral support a challenge but wanted to be able to support students as far as appropriate without becoming counsellors themselves;
- Fixed questions when a paper driven approach was used were found to limit the conversation, the sessions worked better when there was flexibility in the process and conversations were driven by the students.

Potential solutions:

- It was suggested that the use of the RAG system could be rolled out across the institution;
- A PAT system that supports students through the years and across the year would be beneficial, with themed sessions for year groups as well as individual sessions;

- Time-tabling of tutorials would be a positive move;
- Less structured, specific forms would allow more flexibility on conversations;
- A team approach to tutoring, with a policy of sharing information that clearly supports the sharing of personal tutor documentation across the whole team;
- More support for staff, potentially through CAPE, for staff dealing with particular issues.

In the discussion that followed, the PVC(H) commented that Student Services had learnt a lot through the pandemic and was now looking to update what was offered to students and to work with CAPE to provide training and guidance to academic staff. Alongside this work the University was also looking at the UUK step change framework and the development of a mental health charter.

The importance of the Personal Tutor system was emphasised as a key mechanism for supporting student attainment and retention.

The Student Engagement Dashboard was discussed as a means to share information between staff, with some of the functionality present in the system as it is now, but the potential for this to be explored further.

The DVC(A) asked whether any changes were required to the Personal Tutor system as the University moved to a blended approach to delivery in 2020/21 and whether there had been any changes to the way that students had engaged with the system since the move to on-line teaching. Feedback included:

- That one of the benefits was the systematic approach of organising tutorials through Outlook which had helped and supported students who were usually sporadic in their engagement with their tutor;
- That a blended approach was still very important, with the offer to walk through an issue on a computer with a student often providing better engagement;
- However, it was reported that some students had found it harder to engage online, and some student had issues with connectivity, home working set up and motivation;
- The incidental support at the end of a class or in a café on campus has been missed, making the personal tutor role even more important;
- Small groups of student meeting with their tutor in a virtual meeting has been useful in bringing students together who were not in contact with each other outside of University - students had been encouraged to meet with each other outside of classes through this approach;
- That some students were lacking in confidence to go on-line and to turn their cameras on;
- That it was harder to have contact with less engaged students without the option to catch up with them after a lecture;
- That sense of how a student is progressing can be lost with the lack of face to face contact;
- That management of expectations of students was a potential issue with their access to a lecturer often now via instant messaging, but with the member of staff not always being able to reply – and with this increasing the workloads for staff;

- That students who were key workers had specific needs from their personal tutor.

The DVC(A) summarised the discussion and asked that the personal tutor guidance and toolkit be updated to reflect the good practice identified and the feedback specific to the role through the pandemic. It was also noted that the student engagement dashboard had provided a good step forward but required review to ensure that it was providing all of the information required while working in a blended manner and that handovers of students to professional service staff were recorded.

Action: DfSS

The DVC(A) confirmed that the service provided by personal tutors was critical and needed to be foregrounded in induction / welcome week. The Institute staff representatives were thanked for their work on collating the feedback.

AGREED: To receive the feedback and take the actions as minuted.

19:81 Research Matters

AB19/58

Received Updates on:

- a) REF2021
- b) Implications of the pandemic on research students
- c) Summary of Annual Reports from Research Centres
- d) Proposal for signing Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)

REF2021

The Director of Research spoke to her report noting that the submission date for REF2021 had now been communicated as being 31 March 2021. It was noted that the census date remains unchanged as 31 July 2020 with the data being finalised through the REF Steering group. The cut-off point for the impact case studies had been extended to 31 December 2020, to take account of the pandemic and allow further time for people to show and evidence impact.

Implications of the pandemic on research students

The Director of Research introduced the paper noting that many activities were already undertaken through video conferencing before the pandemic, with all now on-line.

She reported that there had been a dramatic rise in the number of contacts from research students and a high level of anxiety particularly around difficulties with data collection, extensions to time needed to complete their work and the resulting financial implications.

With respect to the return to campuses, the team was looking at opening up the postgraduate study rooms when this was possible.

A question was asked as to whether research students had raised any questions in relation to fees due to the pausing of their ability to collect research data. The Director of Research responded that research students had raised concerns and noted that a recommendation had been provided by UKRI for Research Council funded students to automatically receive a funded 6 month extension. Whilst the University does not have Research Council students, it is looking to take a reasonable approach on a case by case basis, informing students they

will be allowed an extension and that fee waivers may need to be explored.

A question was asked as to whether there were any students where their research progress was becoming unrecoverable due to the pandemic. The Director of Research noted that generic and specific advice had been given to the whole student body about moving data collection to remote methods, where possible. This had worked well for most people, however in the case of non-human participation, i.e. animal behaviour, a different approach had to be taken with timelines being changed. It was noted that work was being undertaken to enable access to laboratories where this was required and that a case by case approach was being taken.

It was noted that evidence of any impact of the pandemic was being kept for each student and would be seen at the Research Degrees Sub-Committee and then would come forward to Student Success and Quality Assurance Committee in 2020/21.

Summary of Annual Reports from Research Centres

The Director of Research introduced the paper noting that the University has three research centres and that the paper provided a high-level summary of what each of the centre leads drew to the attention of Research Committee. She reported that a discussion with the research leads from each institute was planned, looking particularly at interdisciplinarity and whether enough is being done to celebrate success. Feedback would be provided to the next meeting of Academic Board.

The DVC(A) noted that the research centres drove the University's bidding for research income and asked what the overall impact of the pandemic had been on this to date. The Director of Research responded that more opportunities had been opened up, with, for example, an increase in the number of bids and opportunities for research on social aspects of the pandemic. However, other areas had seen a decrease in research funding, such as evaluations into services, as services are currently very busy delivering services for Covid19 patients.

Proposal for signing Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)

The Director of Research spoke to the paper, noting that it had been to Research Committee which had recommended that the University sign up to the Declaration, which would be a future requirement for some UKRI funding.

The DVC(A) asked if there was anything significant to be flagged up, noting that the proposal states 'we need to ensure our processes meet the criteria outlined in the declaration'. The Director of Research commented that there was not.

AGREED: To note the updates and approve the proposal for signing the declaration on Research Assessment (DORA).

19:82 Annual Committee Effectiveness Review Outcomes and Recommendations

AB19/59

Received The outcomes of the 2020 effectiveness review.

The University Secretary introduced the item. It was noted that the report was split into two parts and that staff had firstly been asked to

complete the standard annual committee effectiveness review but had also been asked for feedback on their experiences with virtual meetings as a result the pandemic. Staff were thanked for the rich feedback received.

The sections of the report were summarised, with Academic Board's attention being drawn to the feedback overview and proposals sections, highlighting areas for committee chairs, secretaries and members to consider.

It was noted that the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference and details of committee dates were not ready for the current meeting of Academic Board with delegation of approval of any changes to the Chair requested.

AGREED:

- To note the outcomes of the review and the resulting recommendations;
- To approve the delegation of changes for 2020/21 via Chair's action.

19:83 Update on the University's Response to the COVID19 Pandemic AB19/60

Received An update on the University's response to the Covid19 pandemic.

The DVC(A) summarised the paper stating that it provides a formal update on the University's response to the pandemic.

AGREED: To note the update.

19:84 Approach and Programme Delivery for 2020/21 AB19/61

Received An update on the principles and operational plans.

The DVC(A) summarised the paper noting that it set out the rules and guidelines that would guide actions into the forthcoming year.

It was noted that information around programme changes was required to be provided to students and their consent obtained. It was also noted that Blackboard Collaborate was being implemented.

The DAQD commented that the OfS guidance relating to consumer protection law was clear, with tight timescales. Institutes were asked to provide the information as requested.

AGREED: To note the update.

19:85 OFFA Access Agreement Monitoring Return 2018-19 Outcomes AB19/62

Received The Monitoring Return made to the OfS in respect of the 2018/19 Access Agreement.

The DVC(A) noted that the return had been submitted to the OfS by the deadline, following a review and discussion with the chairs of AGC, FRC and University Board.

AGREED: To note the update.

19:86 Annual Review of Access & Participation Plan 2019/20 and 2020/21 AB19/63

Received An update on the APP 2019-20, and implementation of the APP 2020-25 in 2020/21.

The DVC(A) provided a summary of the item noting that a new data set for 2019/20 had recently been received from the OfS with a full report to be produced for SSQAC and Academic Board. It was noted that actions for the 2020/21 academic year were being worked up, with continuation of many actions from previous years anticipated.

AGREED: To note the update.

19:87 NSS Update AB19/64

Received An update on NSS 2020 completion rates and results publication.

The DVC(A) reported that the OfS was now to publish the results of the 2020 NSS on 15 July 2020, to allow them to take into account any issues caused by the impact of the lockdown related to the pandemic which occurred during the survey period.

AGREED: To note the update.

Apprenticeship Quality Improvement Plan (Ofsted) AB19/65

Received An update to the Quality Improvement Plan

The DAQD spoke to the paper noting that it identified areas where progress had been made and actions completed. She reported that there were a number of actions ongoing and these would continue to be monitored. A new self-evaluation document would be prepared for the next academic year.

AGREED: To note the update.

19:88 Senior Academic Board Committees AB1966a
AB1966b

Received ASPC Minutes – 8 June 2020
Research Committee Minutes – 1 June 2020

The Director of Research drew the Board's attention to the cover note for the Research Committee minutes, reporting that level 8 teaching had now been added into the Academic Workload Model.

The University Secretary noted that within the paper pack, the agenda and the minutes did not align with respect to SSQAC and ASPC. The ASPC minutes were received at this meeting and the SSQAC minutes would come forward to the next meeting of Academic Board.

AGREED: To receive the minutes.

19:89 University Board Minutes UB19/59a
Ub19/65a

Received The minutes of the meetings of University Board held on 17 March 2020 and 21 April 2020.

AGREED: To receive the minutes.

19:90

Vice Chancellor's Report

Verbal

The Vice Chancellor started by thanking members of Academic Board and their colleagues for their hard work and asked that staff keep VCE colleagues informed of the good work being done so that people could be given the recognition that they deserve.

She commented that there was a lot to learn from as well as be proud of from the last period. The feedback from the staff survey and the committee effectiveness review had been informative in terms of what the University was doing well and what needed to be improved upon. The feedback had highlighted how some elements of the flexible working practices that had been adopted had been positively received, with the University looking to learn from the experience going forward both to enhance staff well-being and due to the positive environmental impacts.

The Vice Chancellor set out how the University was preparing for a mixed economy start for the next academic year with no plans for an immediate return to campus for all staff, this would be staged and phased over the coming weeks and months. The likely long term nature of the pandemic situation was reflected upon, and staff were encouraged to continue looking after themselves and one another.

The work of the Task and Finish group looking at how to manage the potential income losses associated with Covid19 was outlined. The Vice Chancellor reported that she had received the Group's recommendations from the first phase of its work, which she had accepted in full. These were now being included in budget setting for 2020/21.

The Vice Chancellor noted that the time of the planned 2019/20 graduation ceremonies was approaching; VCE had challenged itself as to whether the University was doing enough to recognise the 2019/20 graduates and proposals for Institute level events were being progressed. As part of these events the Spirit of Cumbria awards would be presented, with a call for nominations to be launched shortly.

Plans for the academic conferment round were communicated; it had been agreed that it was appropriate to continue the round with the current timescales for 2020/21, with the changes to titles and pay to come into effect from August 2021.

The Vice Chancellor concluded her report by thanking the outgoing Student Union Officer for his work over the past two years and offered him her best wishes for the future.

19:91

Matters for Onward Communication

Verbal

It was agreed these would be collated following the meeting.

19:92

Forward Meetings

Verbal

TBC.