
College Council Minutes -approved

Date	12 July 2023, 17.00
Location	Bush House
Present	Lord Geidt (Chair); Professor Shitij Kapur; Vivek Ahuja; Dr Natasha Awais-Dean; Shagun Bhandari; Tom Berry; Dr Hillary Briffa; Paul Cartwright; Sir Jon Coles; Vinay Jha; Sir Ron Kerr; Yasir Khan; Steve Large; Professor Rachel Mills; Professor Kim Piper; Clare Sumner; Professor Richard Trembath.
Apologies	Nhuoc Lan Tu (Vice-Chair); Donna Catley; Paul Goswell.
In attendance	Malcolm Ace, CFO/Vice President (Finance) Robin McIver, Deputy Vice President (Operations) Nick Leake, Chief Information Officer Darren Wallis, Executive Director, Students and Education Directorate (SED) Aaron Porter, lead consultant, Advance HE (observing)
Secretariat	Irene Birrell, College Secretary Paul Mould, Deputy College Secretary & Chief Compliance Officer Sheronlyn Balfour, Interim Governance Manager

Community Story and Discussion

The Chair introduced the second in a series of presentations by individual members of the King's Community about their experiences at King's. Mackenzie Jorgenson, a PhD candidate in Computer Science specialising in algorithmic fairness and AI classification systems, attended. Her background was philosophy and particular interests were ethics and law. At King's she was a member of the AI Ethics Reading Group which involved students from departments across the College. Also a graduate teaching assistant, she had started her PhD online due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which had presented challenges including bonding with student colleagues. The career centre had provided various opportunities and connections and an ongoing career development plan and workshops: she had been involved in a podcast discussion focused on academics and industry; in outreach work with primary schools; and had become a mentor for an undergraduate student.

Mackenzie's thoughts on improvements, based on her experience as a student elsewhere and as an international student in the UK included:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives were great but responsibility fell too often on minority members, and a bit more allyship would be helpful.
- King's was diverse, and that was positive, but there was a lack of a shared language around diversity and privilege. King's could feel disjointed at times.
- Her professional advice on AI bias was to be wary of AI hype, to be careful of how we use AI, and to always keep in mind that these algorithms are merely prediction tools.

Mackenzie Jorgenson left the meeting.

1 Welcome, Apologies and Notices

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting.

Steve Weiner had a potential conflict regarding [REDACTED] and would leave the meeting for this discussion. Members confirmed that the currently published register of interests was accurate and that there were no other conflicts of interests in relation to any of the agenda items.

It was noted that Shagun Bhandari's status had changed from Observer to Student Member following the Privy Council approval of King's Statute change in May 2023.

2 Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved as circulated.

3 Unanimous Consent Agenda (including Minutes of the Previous Meeting) [KCC-23-07-12-03]

The reports on the Unanimous Consent Agenda were taken as read and noted or approved as set out in the papers.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Actions Log

Noted.

4.2 Other Matters Arising

None.

5 Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that since the last meeting he had been in regular engagement with the Principal, various members of the leadership team and the fundraising team; and that had presided at a number of graduation ceremonies.

6 Report of the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee (ARCC) [KCC-23-07-12-06]

The Chair of ARCC presented the items before Council.

6.1 Cyber Security – Strategic Discussion

The Chair of ARCC provided an update on the improvement programme for the College's cyber security maturity. Cyber security was discussed at most ARCC Committee meetings, and a separate cyber security subgroup met three times a year. Through these discussions, the Chair was able to provide assurance that the right people were doing the right things, enough resource was going in and achievements were as they should be.

The Senior Vice President (Operations) and the Chief Information Officer reported on the practical things being done to ensure the College was appropriately protected. Sophisticated attacks were up in number and, as had been reported in the press recently, universities were targets. A structured approach to cyber security was the best way to improve and to keep up with new threats. Progress was being made on the technical side but there was no room for complacency. Awareness and training of staff was key: the main risk lay in people behaviours – 80% of data breaches were due to user error – and another risk inherent to university culture was allowing external people (e.g., visiting researchers) to connect to networks. A dedicated AI trainer had been employed to improve awareness. An industry standard framework was being introduced, which would provide an external assessment checklist across the institution. Using good mechanisms had slowly been improving the university's posture. An internal audit was also being carried out, and the Chief Information Officer's team had volunteered to be audited first.

During discussion of this item, points raised included:

- Incidents were monitored and dealt with on a daily basis. A major incident management process did exist but had not been needed for some time.
- Many protections were in place, especially against ransomware, for example that backups were unchangeable and could not be encrypted.
- King's had not needed to work directly with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) for some time as their main function was to work with institutions in current distress. However, they did provide useful workshops and training.
- Strengthening ID security and data classification and access would improve data protections scores. This was a significant undertaking due to the scale of data and the number of people in the organisation, but the data of most concern was already highly secure.
- Resource-wise, funding was adequate, and King's had the second largest cyber team in the Russell group, all of whom had been certified through the right levels.
- There were peaks and troughs of activity, which could be identified over the long term, and some areas were more vulnerable than others, receiving persistent attacks.
- Regarding collaboration within the sector, there was a JISC cybersecurity group, and the NCSC also shared information.
- King's did have insurance cover, which was a testament to its strength in this area as cyber security cover was tightening in the insurance sector.
- Regarding ransom incident response, it would depend on the circumstances, noting there were serious issues involved with paying ransom.
- King's "Simple, Nimble, Effective" drive would help make the institution more secure as it would reduce complexity. The Library also helped manage mandatory data management plans.

6.2 External Audit Tender

Council received a report setting out the tender exercise to procure an External Auditor for the next contract period.

Decision:

That KPMG be approved as the External Auditor for the next five-year contract.

6.3 Annual Report of Fundraising Operations

Council received a report which outlined how the College had met the regulatory requirements and standards around fundraising in the year.

Decision:

That the annual report of the Associate Director of Fundraising Operations, be approved.

6.4 Annual Report of the Fundraising Ethical Review Group (FERG)

The Chair reported that FERG had operated well this academic year.

Decision:

That the annual report of the Fundraising Ethical Review Group be approved.

6.5 Carbon Management Plan

The Chair reported that the net zero plan needed to be aligned with the financial plan, and that the November meeting of the Committee would discuss this. Management was keen to meet the commitment, though it was noted that it had been reported recently that the higher education sector faced a £40bn bill for meeting its net zero commitments and so the scale of the ambition was significant.

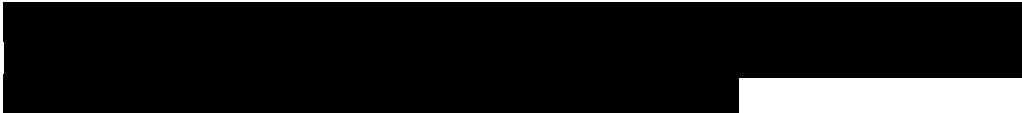
6.6 Board Assurance Framework

The Board Assurance Framework (BAF), which had been in place informally, was now being formalised in order that strategic objectives could systematically be mapped against controls, mitigations and assurances and be embedded in both executive and assurance planning. The BAF provided the internal assurance plan each year. It was endorsed by the Chief Finance Officer as a good management and governance tool. It was confirmed that while certain parts of it would be delegated to ARCC it would be owned by Council.

7 Report of the President & Principal

7.1 Summary Report of Current Issues [KCC-23-07-12-07]

The President & Principal presented his report to Council. The written report was taken as read and the following additional items and points made:

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- The Marking and Assessment Boycott was a national issue. In spite of the offer of a 5-8% increase (plus individual increments) this Action Short of a Strike had been in effect for the exam season and implications had varied for different universities. Due to King's Emergency Regulations, which had been invoked, and the extremely hard work of Deans and staff, all eligible King's students would graduate, and almost all would receive their classification. It had been complicated, had required a significant amount of mitigation and had had immense impact on workloads - and was not sustainable for period 3, the post-graduate and resits process, for which an alternative way through would be sought. College Council members put on record their thanks to all who had worked hard to ensure that King's students could graduate. The Principal noted, however, his concern about the consequent impact on relationships within the College and within departments. It was likely that a formal process of reconciliation would be needed once this period of industrial action ended. The members of Council were provided with assurance that quality controls had been high, and that messaging for students was being prepared to allay their concerns.
- The KCLSU President commented on international students and student fees and the cost of living crisis, and the perception that London universities were accessible only to rich international students. The Principal stated that a major improvement in fundraising success would help, but that King's international fees offering was competitive and with domestic fees frozen by the Government, would need to continue.
- The staff survey had had a 60% response rate, which ranked high in the Russell Group, and results were on the whole heartening and instructive. However, the responses to bullying and harassment questions exhibited dissatisfaction in this area.
- The postgraduate survey was a focus for the KCL/KCLSU relationship agreement, and pilots were underway for engagement from the point of enrolment and even pre-enrolment. The post-graduate student member of Council had urged for particular

focus on the beginning and end of the student experience, and on setting up mentors in the first weeks.

- The Principal reported on a recent visit to the House of Lords with ten of King's PhD students who had formed good working relationships with Peers doing research work on Bills and submissions.

Council Member Steve Large left the meeting.

8 Report of the KCLSU

8.1 Summary Report of Key Issues [KCC-23-07-12-08.1]

This being the last meeting for the outgoing KCLSU President and Vice-President (Post-Graduate), the Chair put on record thanks and congratulations for their achievements over the academic year. He also welcomed the incoming KCLSU student officers, who were observing the meeting.

The KCLSU President presented his report and made the following points:

- It could be useful to inform students through an all-student email about the measures which had been taken to achieve graduation.
- A KCLSU proposal under development for the cost-of-living crisis was to allocate additional funding to Estates in order to subsidise the cost of accommodation.
- Regarding tuition fees for international students, his view was there should be pre-emptive actions for students at the point of application to help those from less affluent backgrounds attend.
- Note was made of a detailed KCLSU survey on discrimination, which would be taken up by the incoming KCLSU President. There would be a focus on caste discrimination, and he noted that King's would be the first university in the UK to recognise this.

8.2 KCL/KCLSU Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) [KCC-23-07-12-08.2]

The Executive Director of Students and Education Directorate reported that the MOU had been straightforward.

Decision:

That the Memorandum of Understanding between King's College London and the King's College London Student Union, to be effective 1 August 2023, be approved.

8.3 KCLSU/KCL Relationship Agreement Update [KCC-23-07-12-08.3]

The Executive Director of Students and Education reported that the KCLSU/KCL Relationship Agreement Update used to be renewed annually with the new officers but was now on a three-year cycle and outlined areas of shared focus. This was a progress report against the seven commitments agreed in 2022-23. Progress was good. Student welfare had been a focus and there had been a reduction in average waiting times for counselling appointments. Student-led conversations on wellbeing would include evaluation of additional funding from the university. The Relationship Agreement was a work in progress and would be regularly reviewed. The KCLSU President highlighted the table of recommendations.

8.4 KCLSU Report of the Deputy Returning Officer [KCC-23-07-12-08.4]

The Executive Director of Students and Education reported that turnout for the KCLSU elections remained a concern. The KCLSU President reported that KCLSU focus was moving to all elections taking place at the same time with an extended nomination periods.

Reports of Committees

9 Estates Strategy Committee [KCC-23-07-12-09]

The Senior Vice-President (Operations) rejoined the meeting.

Steve Weiner, Chair of the Finance Committee, left the meeting in advance of the next item due to a potential conflict of interest.

■ [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Steve Weiner, Chair of the Finance Committee, rejoined the meeting.

■ [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The remainder of the Estates Strategy Committee report was on the Unanimous Consent Agenda.

10 Finance Committee [KCC-23-07-12-10]

10.1 Advanced Cell Therapies project

Approved at Item 9.1, above.

10.2 Integrated Planning Process & 2023/24 Budget Setting

Council received a report on the Integrated Planning Process (IPP) which was the business planning approach to connect faculty and professional service directorate plans to the university's overarching strategic goals and financial resources and targets.

The Chair of the Finance Committee put on record his thanks to the previous Chief Finance Officer, Annie Kent, and the previous Deputy Chief Finance Officer, Simon Cruickshank. He also noted his thanks to the Investment Subcommittee Chair, who had agreed to stay on as Chair for an additional year until a new Chair could be appointed.

The Chair noted that the USS pension results would change the finance numbers considerably at year end.

The Chief Finance Officer congratulated the Executive and the Deans for achieving the multi-year plan. He set out the shape of next year's budget, which was that the operating surplus target of 4.5% of income would rise to 5.5% and then 6% over the period 2023-24 and 2025-2026, all of which were achievable with a good level of prudence in the estimates at microlevel, though there was a continued concern at macrolevel on the reliance on international fees.

Decision:

- i) That the Integrated Planning Process be endorsed; and
- ii) That the 2023/24 Budget setting plan, be approved.

The remainder of the Finance Committee report was on the Unanimous Consent Agenda.

11 Governance Committee [KCC-23-07-12-11]

11.2 Update on Progress of Governance Review

The Chair of the Governance Committee reported good progress on the governance review. She had attended a meeting of One King's Leadership Team and had been impressed with the level of engagement. She had also met with the leadership of the UCU to further discuss their requests for changes to the membership structure of Council and assured them that their proposals would be given proper consideration as part of the review.

11.3 Away Day Agenda

The Chair noted that the Away Day in September would provide an opportunity to consider the emerging findings of the governance review.

The remainder of the Governance Committee report was on the Unanimous Consent Agenda.

12 Report of the Staff & Culture Strategy Committee [KCC-23-07-12-12]

All items on the Staff & Culture Strategy Committee report were on the Unanimous Consent Agenda

13 Academic Board [KCC-23-07-12-13]

13.1 Generative AI

Council received a report exploring the challenges and opportunities offered by Generative AI that had been presented and discussed at length at the Academic Board. The Principal noted that King's was taking an educational approach: educating students about AI software and how it could be incorporated. A staff Council Member noted that regarding generative AI and research, some sort of guidance on responsible ways forward would be needed.

13.2 Academic Education Pathway

The Principal noted that the Academic Education Pathway had been in place for five years now and an assessment was timely.

The remainder of the Academic Board report was on the Unanimous Consent Agenda.

14 Any Other Business

On behalf of Council, the Chair put on record thanks to Annie Kent for her service to the College and the Council over the last several years as Chief Finance Officer.

The Chair thanked the outgoing KCLSU student members for their service to the Council over the past year.

Executive members of Council, excepting the Principal, and all non-members of Council left the meeting.

15 Report of the Remuneration Committee – RESTRICTED

15.1 Policy on Remuneration of Senior Post Holders

The Principal noted that the Policy had been reviewed on the regular three-year review process for university policies. No changes had been suggested at this juncture but it had been suggested that it be reviewed again in a year, given the ongoing discussions in the Committee with respect to the developing approach to performance management and accountability

Decision:

That the Policy on Remuneration of Senior Post Holders be approved to 31 July 2024.

15.2 Update on Performance Management and Accountability Programme

Good progress was being made in the development and consolidation of a comprehensive programme focused on strategic objectives and KPIs. A fuller report would be provided to Council in the autumn.

16 Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 19:40.

Lord Geidt

July 2023