Academic Board	
Meeting date	9 December 2020
Paper reference	AB-20-12-09-03.2
Status	Confirmed
Access	Members and senior executives
FOI release	Following approval by Academic Board, subject to redaction
FOI exemption	None, subject to redaction for commercial interest or personal data

Minutes - Approved

Date	7 October 2020, 14.00
Location	Remote Meeting held by MS Teams

Composition			Members	Attendance 20210-21				
				07.10.20	09.12.20	03.02.21	28.04.21	16.06.21
Ex officio	President & Principal (Chair of Academic Board)		Professor Edward Byrne	✓				
	Senior Vice Presidents & Vice Presidents	SVP/Provost (Health)	Professor Richard Trembath	✓				
		SVP/Provost (Arts & Sciences)	Professor Evelyn Welch	✓				
		VP (Education)	Professor Nicola Phillips	✓				
		VP (International)	Dr 'Funmi Olonisakin	✓				
		VP (Research)	Professor Reza Razavi	✓				
		VP (Service)	Professor Bronwyn Parry	✓				
		VP (London)	Baroness Bull	✓				
	College Chaplain & Acting Dean		Rev'd Tim Ditchfield	✓				
	The President of the Students' Union		Ms Salma Hussain	✓				
	KCLSU Vice Presidents Education	Vice President for Education (Arts & Sciences)	Mr Vatsav Soni	✓				
		Vice President for Education (Health)	Ms Aless Gibson	✓				
		Vice President for Postgraduate	Ms Heena Ramchandani	✓				
	Deans of Faculty	Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care	Professor Ian Norman	✓				
		Social Science and Public Policy	Professor Frans Berkhout	✓				
		Dickson Poon School of Law	Professor Gillian Douglas	✓				
		Arts and Humanities	Professor Marion Thain	A				
		Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience	Professor Ian Everall	✓				
		King's Business School	Professor Stephen Bach	A				
		Natural and Mathematical Sciences	Professor Bashir A-Hashimi	✓				
		Life Sciences & Medicine	Professor Richard Trembath	✓				
		Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences	Professor Mike Curtis	✓				
	Dean for Doctoral Studies		Professor Rebecca Oakey	✓				
Elected Students	One student from each faculty, split equally across UG/PGT/ PGR	Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care	*Vacancy – elections in October*	v				
		Social Science and Public Policy	*Vacancy – elections in October*	v				
		Dickson Poon School of Law	*Vacancy – elections in October*	v				
		Arts and Humanities	*Vacancy – elections in October*	v				
		Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience	*Vacancy – elections in October*	v				
		King's Business School	*Vacancy – elections in October*	v				
		Natural and Mathematical Sciences	*Vacancy – elections in October*	v				
		Life Sciences & Medicine	*Vacancy – elections in October*	v				
		Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences	*Vacancy – elections in October*	v				

Elected Staff	Four academic staff members from each faculty (and five in the case of larger faculties) elected by and from the staff of each faculty.	Arts & Humanities (5 members)	Professor Anna Snaith	✓				
			Dr Jessica Leech	✓				
			Dr Simon Sleight	✓				
			Professor Matthew Head	✓				
			Professor Mark Textor	✓				
		Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences (4 members)	Professor Kim Piper	✓				
			Dr Barry Quinn	✓				
			Dr Anitha Bartlett	✓				
			Dr Ana Angelova	✓				
		Dickson Poon School of Law (4 members)	Professor Alison Jones	✓				
			Dr Federico Ortino	✓				
			Dr Ewan McGaughey	✓				
			Professor Satvinder Juss	✓				
		King's Business School (4 members)	Mr Crawford Spence	✓				
			Dr Chiara Benassi	✓				
			Professor Riccardo Peccei	✓				
			Dr Susan Trenholm	A				
		Life Sciences & Medicine (5 members)	Dr Alison Snape	✓				
			Dr Samantha Terry	✓				
			Professor Maddy Parsons	✓				
			Dr Baljinder Mankoo	✓				
			Dr Susan Cox	✓				
		Natural and Mathematical Sciences (4 members)	Professor Paula Booth	✓				
			Professor David Burns	✓				
			Professor Michael Kölling	✓				
			Professor Sameer Murthy	✓				
		Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care (4 members)	Dr Tommy Dickinson	A				
			Professor Jackie Sturt	✓				
			Dr Julia Philippou	✓				
			Mrs Irene Zeller	✓				
		Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience (5 members)	Professor Guy Tear	✓				
			Dr Marija Petrinovic	✓				
			Dr Yannis Paloyelis	✓				
			Dr Eamonn Walsh	A				
			Professor Robert Hindges	✓				
		Social Science and Public Policy (5 members)	Professor Kerry Brown	✓				
			Dr Rebekka Friedman	A				
			Dr Clare Herrick	A				
			Dr Ye Liu	✓				
			Dr Jane Catford	✓				
	Three professional staff	Education Support	*Vacancy*	v				
		Research Support	Mr James Gagen	✓				
		Service Support	Ms Kat Thorne	✓				
	Two academic staff on research-only contracts	Arts and Sciences Faculties	Dr Hannah Murphy	✓				
		Health Faculties	*Vacancy*	v				

In attendance: v= vacant post

Ms Lynne Barker, Associate Director, Quality Standards & Enhancement
Darren Wallis (for item 6.2 – Covid-19 Update and Return to Campus)
Rachel Parr (for Item 6.2 – Covid-19 Update and Return to Campus)
Dr Helen Brookman, Vice-Dean Education Arts & Hums (for item 7 – Portfolio Simplification)
Joy Whyte (for item 8.1, CEC Report - Digital Education Policy)
Niamh Godley (for item 7 – Portfolio Simplification)

Secretariat:
Ms Irene Birrell (College Secretary)
Ms Xan Kite (Director of Governance Services)
Ms Joanna Brown (Governance Manager)

1   **Welcome, apologies and notices**

The Chair welcomed members and guests in attendance to the meeting. In particular newly elected members and the new KCLSU sabbatical officers were welcomed to their first meeting, and it was

noted that the KCLSU elections, due to be announced on 1 October, would include the nine new student representatives on Academic Board.

2   **Approval of agenda**

The Chair reported that he had received a request received to add two motions to the agenda. The first related to the membership of Council which was not a matter within the terms of reference of the Academic Board and was more appropriately addressed to Council and, therefore, had not been added to the agenda. The second concerned a matter related to the operations of the Academic Board and would be dealt with substantively first by the Academic Board Operations Committee (ABOC). However, under Any Other Business, he would ask one of the proposers of that motion to speak to it briefly to provide context for it to assist ABOC in its discussion. The agenda was approved.

3   **Unanimous Consent Agenda (including Minutes of the Previous Meeting)** [AB-20-10-14-03]

There had been a request to remove two items from the College Education Committee report from the Unanimous Consent Agenda. Item 8.1 Annex 6 (Guidance for the use of data in PDRs) would be addressed with the CEC report at Item 8.1. Item 8.1(xiii) (Decolonisation of the curriculum) had been agreed as an item for strategic discussion on a future agenda to allow for a more in-depth review, and so would be noted on the Unanimous Consent Agenda for this meeting.

Decision
That the remaining reports on the Unanimous Consent Agenda be taken as read and noted or approved.

4   **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Item 9.2 Report of the College Education Committee

A member raised a query about student understanding of the safety net procedures, as she believed that they were incorrectly communicated, leading to complaints and appeals. The Vice President (Education) stated that communication had been identical to the policy so there was a need to follow up to see what had occurred in particular cases. She clarified that the safety net had been put in place to prevent disadvantage, not to allow upgrades, and that the key part of the safety net information was the clause "in a given year" which had been intended to address the sorts of situations being highlighted.

Decision

The Vice President (Education) and the Board member would discuss the matter outside of the meeting and report back on any proposed amendments arising.

5   **Student Engagement and Satisfaction** [AB-20-10-14-05]

5.1   **Overall picture and priorities**

The Vice President (Education) presented the report, which was a preliminary paper that pulled together reflections on the NSS scores for this year. It was noted that some areas had done well in NSS this year but generally results were disappointing. The report did not encompass every point of feedback and was intended as a set of starting points for discussion. The NSS scores had already been discussed at workshops with each faculty, within departments, and at the College Education Committee and other meetings. Academic Board was being asked for input and comment on these reflections, with a focus on priority areas to be taken forward immediately.

Questions and comments from some members had been received and noted in advance of the meeting, including turnaround times for feedback. The Vice President (Education) stated that King's was at the bottom of the Russell Group for NSS scores on feedback and the proposition was to do

something bold in this area, while acknowledging the variety of comments and opinions received from across the university. Discussion on this matter during the meeting included:

- The main point and direction of the paper was welcomed by some as providing a good framework for the faculties but there were concerns about a blanket reduction in turnaround times as a key focus when complaints were being received about the usefulness and quality of feedback.

- Concern that a reduction in turnaround time could increase staff stress, especially for those with large classes, or during examination periods. A three-week turnaround time seemed a reasonable aim for term time but longer could be needed at exam time.

- The Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy had adopted the three-week turnaround as an ambition and aimed to have it fully implemented by the next academic year. This would involve doing less assessment and providing more timely regular feedback.

- The three-week horizon was established at other universities as the norm and they tended to have better student satisfaction numbers. Sticking to promised timelines was recognised to be important to students, and faculty targets could be helpful.

- Feedback was often an early career matter, and research staff or teaching fellows needed to focus on future contracts over more pastoral work; NSS results showed that students were happy with their experience in the classroom, which was often down to the early career staff.

- Concern was voiced about emphasis on doing things differently rather than on doing things well. Changes need time to filter through to be effective.

- While reassuring to know that the College intends to reduce feedback times for students, focus on assessment and assessment tools throughout the year and providing students the skills to do well should be prioritised. There could be much better education and messaging provided to students about what feedback actually is – it is much more than one or two assessment tools at key points in the year.

- The Executive Director, Student and Education, stated that King's education processes were not facilitating its academic aspirations and practices as hoped. The four-week turnaround for feedback had been in place for a long period and the paper provided a proposal to think differently.

The Vice President (Education) invited comments on the other issues set out in the paper, and comments included:

- It was pointed out that professional staff also engaged in student support and were a potential further resource in terms of reaching students.

- Student experience regarding personal tutoring was variable. A range of suggestions had been put forward around personal tutoring, for example group tutoring, and further suggestions were encouraged, keeping in mind the aim to respond to extremely challenging NSS feedback on this topic. It was noted that perhaps the PDR (Performance Development Review) process did not consistently address personal tutoring.

5.2 Disparities in satisfaction between ethnic groups

This item would be brought forward to the next meeting of the Academic Board when there would be opportunity for fuller discussion.

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6 Report of the President & Principal [AB-20-10-14-06]

6.1 Key Current Matters

The Principal highlighted the following key current matters covered in his summary report: Coronavirus preparations; Admissions Update; and League Tables. He announced that the admissions news was good

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enough that, with support from the Chief Finance Officer, a recommendation to release the pay freeze was to proceed. The Principal also announced:

- Two Nobel Prizes had been awarded to scientists with King's connections: Michael Houghton and Sir Roger Penrose
- That he would be stepping down as President & Principal at the end of January, and that the announcement of the new Principal could be expected within the next few weeks.

6.2 COVID-19 Update

(i) Education Strategy [AB-20-10-14-06.1]

The Executive Director, Students and Education, reported that blended learning was in place and that feedback from colleagues had been largely positive, while noting that the situation was still fluid in terms of changes in student status on campus. There had been a record amount of use of KEATS and it had proven stable and responsive, though there were some MS Teams facilities that needed improvement. HyFlex classrooms were operational in 34 rooms and the users of those rooms would be surveyed on a weekly basis. Students would be surveyed after a few weeks on the blended experience. In addition to classrooms there were 40 bookable spaces for staff and student meetings and spaces had been made available for informal study. The next semester would be timetabled with a similar approach.

During discussion questions included:

- Concerns about ventilation and being unable to open certain windows – the Director of Estates & Facilities, who was not a member of Academic Board, would be asked to provide a response.

- The Vice President (Education) reported that approval had been secured for nine faculty-based Welfare and Well-being Advisor positions.

- Mental Health Strategy - the focus was on proactive work. As referred to above there would be a Welfare and Well-being Advisor in each Faculty with whom students could engage at an early point.

- Regarding whether there was a timeline for a decision on teaching for next year, this would be guided both by external events and internal time constraints. It was reported that some students had already decided to work remotely in term two. It was noted that there were a number of programmes that would require face to face attendance, particularly where practical activities had been moved from term 1 to term 2. Otherwise the general sentiment was to allow students to continue to work remotely if they were unwilling or unable to attend in person. It was noted that communications around this would need to be very clear.

- Regarding potential tuition fee refunds, the Principal reported his confidence that the quality of education students were receiving was equivalent to what would normally be offered. It was also noted that online education was more expensive to deliver. What was not equivalent was the London experience and the university was doing its best to remedy that. The university was considering rebates for when students were not able to occupy residence spaces.

- Access to informal campus workspace was an inclusion issue, being particularly important to those students who did not have suitable study space at home.

(ii) Return to Campus

The Chief Operating Officer (Health Faculties) reported a recent COVID incident on the Guy's Campus. A Silver Team had been formed and 112 students asked to self-isolate. The incident had provided a good test of the systems created, which had largely worked well. As a result of the incident:

- KCLSU risk procedures had been followed but were taking the opportunity to revisit them.
- Support packages for self-isolating students were being reviewed.
- The team was investigating how to track and trace without recreating the NHS processes, which could not provide information in a timely way.
- Campus ambassadors had been mobilised to report on numbers on site, and to identify pinch points on campus that might need to be addressed quickly.
- Ensuring rollback plans in place for all of faculties and central functions in case of a move back to all online teaching.

7   Portfolio Simplification Update and Decisions [AB-20-10-14-07]

The Vice President (Education) presented the report, which requested approval for recommendations from the Curriculum Commission of English and Film Studies modules at PGT level.

The Vice President (Education) noted that one of the modules, Cultural Analytics, had been coded under two departments, but was a Digital Humanities module and so would be listed under that department. She further noted that the English Department had indicated they would like a discussion on two modules on which decisions had already been taken. Academic Board were assured that if there was any proposed revision then those decisions would be brought to Academic Board at a future date.

There was an electronic vote by Microsoft forms and via the chat function and it was resolved by majority vote:

Decision:
That the remaining recommendations made by the Curriculum Commission on English and Film Studies modules at PGT level, be approved.

8   Reports of Committees

8.1   Report of College Education Committee (CEC) [AB-20-10-14-08.1]

The Vice President (Education) presented the report.

(i)   Academic Strategy 2020-2021
The Vice President (Education) presented a verbal update on recommendations for 2020-2021 assessment. The decision had now been taken that all academic assessment for semester 2 would be online, excluding those with professional body requirements for in-person assessment. The Academic Standards Subcommittee was looking at lessons learned from last year and arrangements would be put in place to avoid problems such as collusion.

(ii)   Digital Education Policy
The Vice President (Education) reported that this policy would supersede the Lecture Capture Policy. Questions and comments on this policy had been received and noted in advance of the meeting, including a comment that "teaching materials" was too vague a term. The Vice President (Education) acknowledged this and undertook to revise that wording to capture clearly the intention of the recording of teaching sessions across the university.

It was noted that this was a different situation to lecture capture which had been provided as a revision tool. The Digital Education Policy presented to the Board was focussed on providing an education in situations where there was no alternative for students to attend in person.

There was an electronic vote by Microsoft forms and via the chat function and it was resolved by majority vote:

Decision:
That the Digital Education Policy be approved, subject to the term "teaching materials" being amended to capture clearly the intention of "recording of teaching materials".

(iii)   Guidance for the use of data in PDRs

This item had been removed from the Unanimous Consent Agenda at the request of a member who reported concern amongst colleagues about timelines and whether module evaluations might be quite different this year. He noted that report distribution was quite variable across the institution. While it was welcomed that teaching was being valued in this way, staff wished to know when and how it would introduced, and whether they would receive sight of it before their Performance Development Reviews. The Vice President (Education) reported that the same schedule as usual would be followed.

Point 4 had been added to take account of the fact that this was an unusual year. This document had been requested by the Academic Board, and, along with the original policy document, would apply. In terms of distribution, the original policy had been adhered to rigidly. This had been discussed and endorsed by UCU, noting there were some small glitches to be worked through.

Items approved on Consent

(iv)   Annual report to Council on OfS Conditions of Registration
(v)   Proposal for a new Master of Nursing Award
(vi)   Degree Outcome Statement
(vii)   DClinDent Proposal

Items noted on Consent

(viii) Amendments to Academic Regulations
(ix)   Library Policy
(x)   Programme Enhancement Plan Template
(xi)   PSRB Update
(xii)   Student Attainment
(xiii) Race Equality Charter Mark
(xiv)   College Teaching Fund
(xv)   Decolonisation and Curriculum Design
(xvi)   NSS 2020
(xvii) Debiasing Module Evaluations
(xviii) CEC Terms of Reference 2020-2021
(xix)   Schedule of Business for 2020-2021
(xx)   Online Executive Education and CPD
(xxi)   Grade Inflation: College Response

8.2   Report of College Research Committee (CRC) [AB-20-10-14-08.2]

(i)   Update on the Academic Strategy (Research)

The Vice President (Research) reported that the Academic Strategy for research aimed to support King's research activity in the best possible way during the 18-24 months crisis caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, maintaining the research momentum and ensuring that King's research was in a good position to resume growth in 2021. Key priorities currently included how to deliver research on site, improving the grant pipeline and enhancing the infrastructure. The Academic Strategy for research was currently in consultation phase with a Town Hall meeting scheduled for 3 November 2020. The Vice President (Research) had also had one-to-ones with faculty leadership teams and had large consultation workshops across the university. Academic Board would be invited to provide detailed input to the draft Strategy at its next meeting.

(ii)   King's Together COVID Rapid Call Funding – and successes in COVID-19 research

The Vice President (Research) presented the report, which was for noting.

Items noted on Consent

(iii)   HR Excellence in Research (HR EiR) Award Submission

(iv)   Post Graduate Research (PGR) Academic Regulations 2020-21

8.3   Report of the College International Committee (CIC) [AB-20-10-14-08.3]

Items noted on Consent

(i)   International Profile & Reputation Working Group

(ii)   Delivery Priorities for 2020-2021 Academic Year: Cultural Competency

(iii)   Global & Regional Envoys

8.4   Report of the College Service Committee (CSC) [AB-20-10-14-08.4]

Items noted on Consent

(i)   Chairs Update

(ii)   #ContinuingToServe stories

9   Report of the KCLSU President [AB-20-10-14-10]

The KCLSU President presented her first report to Academic Board. She stated that this year, more than any other, it was important that the student voice be heard and that students feel that it is heard. There would be actions required resulting from many organisational challenges which would need to be mindful of the student experience. An example was the recent reversal of the decision to use Wednesday afternoons for timetabling on a temporary basis so that they will be protected once again in Semester 2 from 2pm. The key strategic areas for KCLSU for 2020-21 were set out in the report: Assessment and Feedback; Student Representation; Upskilling students; Inclusion; and COVID-19. In all these areas, the President was keen to work together with the university to improve the student experience.

In discussion the following points were raised:

- The working relationship between the university and KCLSU has been very effective and work with the new sabbatical team on many critical issues in the first weeks of their appointment has already been extremely impressive.
- One member asked the KCLSU President about her view on staff representation on Council. She agreed that it was important to have representation from students and staff, and noted that there were currently three elected staff members on Council. It might be that the way in which Council reports back to Academic Board could be improved. It was noted that the university had significantly increased the numbers of elected to non-elected staff members on Academic Board as a result of the recent governance review.
- A member asked how we might best enter a genuine dialogue about concerns with respect to receiving value for full tuition fees and questions about potential refunds when much programming was and would continue to be online. The KCLSU President noted that there needed to be transparency about costs and the work undertaken by King's behind the scenes so that students could understand the way in which the fees were used. There was a need to engage with students on the work being undertaken and the mitigations being put in place. It was important to try to get module evaluations and surveys used as more than a way to complain.
- The sabbatical officers reported that students want an honest, transparent answer to their question about value for money. The university should explain that they are not getting the London experience but that there was a greater spend on IT, external venues, etc. There should be genuine, collaborative discussion between students and the university on the basis that the university is not profit-making in terms that can be easily understood.

10   Report of The Acting Dean

10.1   Report of the Acting Dean [AB-20-10-14-10]

The Acting Dean gave a report on the activities of the Chaplaincy and drew particular attention to the outstanding uptake in services concerning pastoral support and mental health measures.

The new Dean, the Revd Dr Ellen Clark-King, would join King's from 1 December and would take up the position on Academic Board accordingly from the next meeting. The Board thanked Reverend Ditchfield for his contribution as Acting Dean over the past two years.

Item approved on the Unanimous Consent Agenda:

10.2   Election of Associates of King's College [AB-20-10-14-10]
Decision:
Academic Board elected as Associates of King's College those students and staff listed in the report.

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11   Any Other Business

11.1   **Academic Board Powers**

The Principal invited elected Board Member Dr Ewan McGaughey to speak to the motion that he had requested be considered concerning the provision of a statement of powers for the Academic Board. Dr McGaughey presented two alternate examples of statements of powers for an academic board/Senate from California and France, posting them in the chat for the online meeting, and noting that King's Board did not have any such written statement describing 'powers'; the Board's constitutional documents spoke rather of 'responsibilities'. Dr McGaughey also advocated elections for Council and an academic voice to decide who would be the next Principal.

In discussion the following points were made:

- The King's statements on the functions of committees of Council, which included the Academic Board, were set out in the terms of reference and were described as authority and duties – they did not currently use the word power. It was reasonable to review these to ensure that they were clear and to consider whether any amendments should be suggested and the Academic Board Operations Committee would be asked to consider this at its next meeting and report back to the Board.

- The College Secretary was available to provide offline briefing sessions on the role of the Board and how it functions for any members who would find that helpful.

- The process for the appointment of the next Principal had been underway for a year and had included an academic staff member and a student on the selection panel.

- A new member noted he was unsure what the powers of the Board were and what he could do as a member. Was it simply the case of having 'the ear of power.'? The Principal remarked that the role was more than that noting that in the last two hours the Board had made decisions on fundamental academic matters such as significant curriculum changes.

- The importance of improving communication between Council and the Academic Board was an issue that both bodies wanted to improve and the recent changes to the numbers of elected posts and elections to Council were recent attempts to make such improvements.

- The Principal reported that the size of Council had changed over time and it was now a smaller body with more elected members and, he believed, was working much more effectively.

11.2   **Length of Meetings**

The Principal noted that this had been a good meeting, covering all the key academic issues brought forward, but that it was difficult to fit the business into the time. The Senior Management Team meetings had been extended due to the volume of business in this

extraordinary time and he asked whether Board members would countenance an extra half hour on each meeting until the COVID issue was through.

Decision
Academic Board members would let the College Secretary's Team know whether they could stay for an extended meeting to 4.30pm for future meetings.

11.3   **Adjournment**
There being no other business, the Principal declared the meeting adjourned.

Irene Birrell
College Secretary
October 2020