



UCP DEVELOPMENT DAY INC. UCP COUNCIL

6 December 2023

13:30 - 18:00

Boardroom, Peterborough College

Lunch available from 1:30pm

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT

Les Ebdon (Chair)

Alison Davies

Sameena Aziz

Tony Keeling

Mark Woods

David Dixon

Peter Walker

Rachel Nicholls (CEO IEG)

Rachel Pishhorn (Staff Governor)

Louise Perry (CFO IEG)

Liz Knight (UCP Academic Director)

Molly Woodthorpe (Student Officer)

IN ATTENDANCE

Joanne Ulyatt (Governance Director)



1. MEET, GREET AND LUNCH

Other Time: 13:30

An opportunity to meet informally with Council colleagues.

2. CHAIR'S WELCOME

Standing item Speaker: Chair Time: 13:55

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. TRAINING SESSION WITH ADVANCE HE

Other Speaker: Aaron Porter Time: 14:00

A presentation was delivered with slides made available after the meeting.

4. UCP COUNCIL MEETING - WELCOME

Standing item Speaker: Chair Time: 16:40

(a) Apologies for absence: None received.

(b) Eligibility, quorum and declarations of interest: No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there were no unregistered interests declared; the register was available for scrutiny. Following the resignation of Claire Bowes, Rachel Pishhorn had been elected from among the whole staff body as the UCP Council staff governor for a term of 3 years; the appointment was ratified.

(c) Requests for urgent business: None received.

5. MINUTES

Decision item Speaker: Chair Time: 16:45

(a) Minutes of the last meeting (08.06.23);

(b) Matters arising from the minutes; and

(c) Actions from the minutes.

a. The Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 June 2023 were confirmed for signature. **(ACTION 1)**

b. There were no matters arising.

c. Actions from the last meeting were considered; all had been completed.

6. UPDATE TO UCP ARTICLES



An update was provided as per the paper, noting an update to the UCP Articles of Association following legal advice from Eversheds Sutherland, which have now been filed with Companies House to correct a previous administration error. In conjunction with the filing, members of UCP Council had all indicated agreement to extend terms of office for a further term of 3 years under the new set of Articles and this had been approved.

Governors indicated that they would welcome a briefing on director responsibilities. JU to circulate a link for the next webinar which comes available regarding company director responsibilities. **(ACTION 2)**

7. ACADEMIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. The Council received an overview of responsibilities following changes within the OfS. In response to new legislation around free speech and academic freedom, some changes had been made to the tutorial system to address pertinent issues and to guide students through the journey.
- b. A briefing received from the OfS yesterday established a new email address to facilitate engagement with them.
- c. The Prevent return has been completed with no issues identified.
- d. A TEF update was provided; UCP remains committed to achieving Gold status and the next steps will be completed before Christmas.
- e. The Council was informed of successful validation events with the Open University to validate L4 and L5 Counselling provision and a validation of micro-credentials.
- f. Further news on the Lifelong Learning Entitlement is expected in the coming months
- g. A meeting with the DfE last week discussed delivery and spend of HTQ funding. Two options are being pursued for use of this funding, some delivery with Pearson and accreditation of foundation degrees with IFATE. There can be a clawback element if insufficient students are recruited. This has been added to the Risk Register.
- h. There are ongoing discussions regarding alignment of teacher education within the IEG Group so that all L4 and above provision sits within UCP.
- i. Current student numbers against target were noted.
- j. The shift to Lifelong Learning Entitlements was noted and some detail on this provided.
- k. A productive and open discussion was held with ARUP on 6 November around curriculum intentions and ways to differentiate provision. It was a positive meeting with good dialogue. The development of a Memorandum of Understanding is underway and will be brought to Council in March; the Council endorsed continued development of the MoU which could help gain insight on ARUP intentions and a longer term of view of this major competitor, noting that it makes absolute sense to codify good behaviours between two institutions wanting to do their best for the city. There are definite shared values and desire to complement each other where possible so this collaboration was welcomed and staff are pleased to see this positive direction of travel. The Council suggested legal advice be taken in relation to the MoU and which legal entity would be authorised to sign it.
- l. The Council acknowledged recent positive news stories highlighting UCP achievements.
- m. The December Academic Board meeting discussed the National Student Survey (NSS) and student engagement.
- n. The Council discussed the humanitarian impact of ongoing conflicts, and recognised other communities affected outside of the Jewish community. UCP's commitment to ensuring the safety and support of all students through ongoing collaboration with the chaplain and open discussions about



freedom of speech was reiterated, talking extensively with students about what can be done to express views and feelings within the bounds of the law.

o. The Council congratulated UCP on both the successful OU validations which are a great achievement, and also on securing HTQ funding which, whilst it will be challenging to secure the student numbers, will offer a fantastic opportunity to do so.

8. FINANCE REPORT P3 & UCP FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Decision item

Speaker: CFO

Time: 17:10

a. The P3 Finance Report has been changed significantly since last year to align the style to the IEG Board report, starting with some KPIs which reflect the business plan shared earlier this year to assist in monitoring of whether targets are being met.

b. The YTD position stands at a deficit, as is usual for this time of year due to the timing of enrolments. Income is slightly ahead of budget but will normalise when withdrawals are processed. Overall it is on track and as expected.

c. It was noted that cash days in hand are reporting as high because all income comes into UCP and necessary transfers to IEG are not completed as regularly as is necessary to reduce; it does not show up on IEG reports due to it being reported as a Group. Governors noted that the £3m balance could be put to better use and the CFO confirmed that this will be swept down to maximise opportunities to earn interest.

d. The Council queried staff costs with a planned target of 32% against YTD actual of 45.82%. This relates to staff being employed by IEG and the lack of Back Office costs which is why planned target is only 32%, however, Back Office functions sit within management charges. There are 3 months of cost and 2 months of income being reported. The Council suggested adding a permanent note to explain this otherwise a regulator could suspect something untoward is happening, or alternatively utilising an adjusted staff cost figure to balance the position.

e. The 5 Year Plan was presented for review as financial matters are reserved for approval by the IEG Corporation Board. The paper has already been reviewed by the IEG Finance & Resources Committee. This plan is updated each year and the tight timelines were explained. The plan includes all that is known at this point but is liable to change in the summer term, so whilst in many ways it is prepared a little too early, it does help focus in terms of early planning. The transition to new types of provision with HTQs and LLE presents initial challenges in the first 2 years and then should lead to growth in later years.

f. The Council challenged in terms of a requirement for further sensitivity analysis to assess the potential risk of the 4 years of breakeven position reported moving instead into 4 years of deficit, which could affect sustainability. The Council asked how up to date the strategy is; it is currently 2022-24 and current performance is RAG rated against it, but is to be reviewed in the coming year. The difference between the strategy and business plan was discussed and that the business plan, which has a huge amount of sensitivity analysis around it, has been thoroughly scrutinised. This is primarily a compliance exercise at this stage and will be revised to align with the strategic plan. It was reiterated that this is an early planning tool, not an absolute planning tool, and the red lines in terms of deficit are known. ALL allocation is one of the biggest risks because it is impeding UCP ability to achieve the growth in recruitment which would otherwise be possible, but this is set to change with the introduction of LLE. It was also noted that there are upsides as well as downsides in the sensitivity analysis. The purpose of the exercise is for OfS to put in their bid for funding to government in January ready for consideration in April. The Council were assured that work is ongoing on a forecast that is useful in understanding the financial prudence with which UCP is being run.

Financial Statements



- g. Audited accounts went to IEG Audit Committee last week for review.
- h. It was noted that the position on these accounts will not change, though there is still some conversation around presentation of bad debt provision which will not affect overall position or overall surplus. The surplus of £21K indicates good forecasting. The reports will go to IEG Corporation Board next week for final approval and signing.
- i. The IEG Audit Findings Report is a little out of date, with a final version awaited from auditors to tie this off. This will be added to the pack as soon as available. **(ACTION 3)**
- j. Auditors verify the charge between IEG and UCP; the Council requested sight of an SLA regarding the services charges which will be brought to the next meeting. **(ACTION 4)**
- k. It was noted in the Audit report that an incorrect set of accounts had been filed for UCP at Companies House. The file submitted to HMRC overwrites the filing for Companies House and the only way to resolve this is to post them, which has been done.

9. BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK & RISK REGISTER

Discussion item

Speaker: CFO/Academic Director

Time: 17:25

- a. The report was presented, noting that it had been thoroughly scrutinised at the meeting of the UCP Audit Committee.
- b. The Risk Register had been comprehensively refreshed with updates in red type for easy identification.
- c. Updates relating to the risk of insufficient Advanced Learner Loan allocation and the HTQ delivery were noted.
- d. Action plans are actively managed and utilised as a key management tool and the continued monitoring of risk and associated mitigation strategies remains ongoing.

10. UCP KPIS AND DASHBOARD

Discussion item

Speaker: Academic Director

Time: 17:35

- a. The review of KPIs was presented.
- b. Absence levels are trending downward and staff retention and recruitment is improving. Some part time/fractional posts remain challenging to fill but this is a national picture across the sector, not specific to UCP. It was noted, however, that it is a 12 month rolling data position so takes some time to reduce even if the overall position is improving, but there are some stubborn vacancies. Data shows a positive trend in staff returning to IEG. Recruitment challenges also remain due to the lingering repercussions of Covid which saw people enjoy alternative ways of working and now make the market more challenging, combined with underfunding in the education sector which limits pay.
- c. There is further work to be done around module evaluation.
- d. Plans are underway to refresh the dashboard going forward.
- e. Confidence levels in the Teach Out with Addict remain high despite the complexities. Careful monitoring of intermissions is ongoing.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 14 MARCH 2024

Scheduling

The meeting closed at 17:55.