



Minutes of a meeting of the UCP Council held at 1630hrs on 1 December 2022.

Present	Prof Sir Les Ebdon (Chair)	Sameena Aziz	Dr Alison Davies	David Dixon
	Claire Bowes	Peter Walker	Mark Woods	Rachell Nicholls (CEO IEG)
	Louise Perry (IEG CFO)	Maddi Hobman (Student Officer)		
In Attendance	Joanne Ulyatt (CoSec/IEG GD)	Liz Knight (AD)	Dan Lee (HE Manager)(SC)	
Apologies	Mathew Bradbury			

12/22 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- a. Apologies were as noted. Maddi Hobman was welcomed to the UCP Council.
- b. 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. Resignations from Dr Mary Kiernan and Shakira Martin were noted. Expressions of interest in joining the UCP Council will be sought from the IEG Corporation Board to replace MK. **(ACTION 5)**
- c. There were no requests for urgent business.

The information was received and noted.

13/22 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The Minutes of the last meeting held on 4 October 2022 were confirmed for electronic signature. **(ACTION 6)**
- b. Matters arising. There were no matters arising.
- c. Outstanding Actions. Actions from the last meeting were considered; all had been completed.

See referenced minute for full detail.		Resp
Action 1	2/22a Minutes of last meeting (7 June 22) approved for signature	Completed
Action 2	4/22 Suggested amendments to the dashboard to be taken forward and actioned. Annual Safeguarding Report to be brought to December meeting.	
Action 3	5/22c Income & Expenditure Statement to be reviewed with regard to anomalies in the variance column.	
Action 4	Duplicate risk to be removed.	

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (See Register at end of document)

14/22 ACADEMIC DIRECTOR'S (AD) REPORT

The AD Report and annexes considered areas of interest which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda and the detail was discussed, specific points included;

- a. Update on position with Addict provided. Modelling for the provision being retained still in the UCP 5-year plan as it is easier to remove the provision than add back in once removed. Also planning for new provision for students with the SLC; again, this can be easily removed but is harder to re-enter them if they do remain. Approach agreed since the financial position is not affected as it as does not add to profit.

- b. Congratulations were given regarding the new Level 5 Web Development Diploma. It should not be underestimated how much effort goes into this and the Council are grateful to staff for the hard work put in to achieve this.
- c. Decision of the ONS reclassification of FE colleges was noted in terms of the UCP building; the impact would not have been different had the building been added to the UCP balance sheet as the outcomes affect colleges and their subsidiaries.

The information was received and noted.

15/22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) AND DASHBOARD

- a. Amended version of the dashboard presented, including amendments requested at the last meeting.
- b. Data presented as accurate at the end of September. 60% of applications expected by around 20 January 2023.
- c. Changes in applications were outlined.
- d. A lot of internal activity to work on IEG progression as well as some work with local schools.
- e. Two big social media campaigns undertaken to increase engagement. Analytics show 25% increase in engagement on website.
- f. A range of annual monitoring reports to be prepared.
- g. Improving communication for students has led to investing in a student hub. The Student Officer advised that feedback has improved around student communications and actions taken so far have been welcomed.
- h. Running higher than target with staff vacancies; this is sector wide and a national problem.
- i. Retention by Addict at 89.2% in 2021/22 was noted as below the target of 93%; this was a difficult year for Addict which typically sees very good retention rates, but they had faced challenges in having to audition online and can also be impacted by muscle strains and injuries.
- j. The income target is challenging as although UCP is not massively down on numbers, the mix of FT and PT has changed. Some assumptions have had to be made regarding the expected uptake of the new diploma and so it will be difficult to get a real sense of the income figure until February when the year-end position will be able to be more accurately forecast. There is some anecdotal evidence that HE in FE has struggled this year across the sector.

The information was received and noted.

16/22 FINANCE REPORT

- a. P3 finance report is as expected with just a slight deficit.
- b. The 5-year plan was presented. A lot of work is being done as this is the base line year. Through the years things such as staff costs will naturally grow and it becomes difficult to maintain a surplus position. Whilst not a lot of profit is made out of Addict, it does make up circa 30% of income and covers a large proportion of the costs. Unless there is growth elsewhere then that will cause issues. In light of the uncertainty regarding Addict now it is a high risk plan
- c. Staff costs are under pressure and staff continue to be offered higher salaries by ARUP. To meet the plan in terms of staff costs will be a challenge.
- d. A great deal of work was undertaken last year regarding the increase to fees to consider the impact on enrolments and it was generally felt that the positives would outweigh negatives and would improve the income position. There is some evidence that 18-21 year olds are not overly price sensitive in this market. In terms of staff costs and pay awards, IEG as a Group has pushed pay awards to the absolute maximum this year and brought the increases forward which was a huge undertaking and sees the biggest award in many years, which although still cold comfort given the inflationary environment is still a big step forward.
- e. Members noted that the income was supported by a one-off amount on the balance sheet; this relates to amounts leftover from a couple of funds totalling circa £30-40k that can now be released on the balance sheet.
- f. Loss-making activities which were identified relate to number of teaching hours versus students. Pathways and group sizes require further review.

- g. The accounts presented are a worst-case position as there is a lot of work to be done with ARU regarding bad debts, to understand why they have not been collected by the ARU Finance Team and how this can now be progressed.
- h. The UCP 5-year plan was recommended to the IEG Corporation Board for approval (**ACTION 7**)

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (See Register at end of document)

17/22 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

- a. The figures presented have not changed from the P12 position, showing a deficit of £194k which does include provision for bad debt, and a fairly strong balance sheet position still at year end.
- b. One oddity showing on the balance sheet is the £7m cash, most of which is offset by creditor balances due to problems accessing the bank for a few months, so most of that is money to cover salaries and costs for IEG. Overall this does not make a difference to the bottom line but it is taking some time to remedy as there is only facility to move £0.5m per month.
- c. The financial statements are recommended to the IEG Corporation Board for approval (**ACTION 8**)

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (See Register at end of document)

18/22 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

A summary of the work undertaken by the Committee and the IA/EA was presented. It was noted as an encouraging report and the Council is grateful for the work carried out by the Audit Committee. The report will now be taken to the IEG Corporation Board meeting on 13 December 2022.

The information was received and noted.

19/22 ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT

- a. The annual report was presented, noting that UCP abide by the IEG Safeguarding policies but that the Prevent agenda remains distinct in terms of HE.
- b. The HE Prevent return seeks to identify welfare issues, training undertaken by staff, and safeguarding issues; no Prevent issues have been identified.
- c. The deadline for a data return regarding external speakers was successfully met and LK is to attend Freedom of Speech training with the OfS.
- d. Referrals to counselling services can be internal or external depending on the need of the student. This is done on a case by case basis and all available support and services that can be accessed are also clearly signposted for students.

The information was received and noted.

20/22 RISK REGISTER AND BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

- a. The report was presented and reiterates the three key risks reported through the Board Assurance framework, tracking the residual risk score of those items and the robust action plans in place to manage them. Financial risks include the 5-year plan and Addict provision. Scoring has not yet changed as current information is insufficient to inform this at this stage. Enrolment numbers and internal progression were noted. A number of actions are being undertaken to try to stabilise staffing levels and reduce vacancies. These risks are being monitored and actively managed.
- b. Risk 261 has been updated following recommendation from UCP Audit Committee to split out the operational elements of the risk to Addict provision into Risk 262.
- c. Students who graduate this year will graduate into a more difficult employment environment so UCP will continue to consider the mitigations engaged in regarding risks for the employability of students, including special programmes for sharpening interview skills, etc. and this will be kept under review.

The information was received and noted.

21/22 URGENT BUSINESS

There had been no requests for urgent business.

22/22 NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be Thursday 9 March 2023.

ACTION TABLE

See referenced minute for full detail.		Resp	Date
Action 5	12/22b Expressions of interest to be sought from the IEG Corporation Board to replace MK on the UCP Council	GD	13/12/22
Action 6	13/22a Minutes of last meeting (4 October 22) approved for signature	GD	wie
Action 7	16/22h The UCP 5-year plan is recommended to the IEG Corporation Board for approval.	GD	13/12/22
Action 8	17/22c UCP Financial Statements recommended to the IEG Corporation Board for approval.	GD	13/12/22

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 18:10.