

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
AUDIT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 21 JUNE 2018
10:00 AM IN ROOM 103, SKINNER BUILDING

Present

Mr Richard Hallsworth (Chair)
Dr Stephen Critchley
The Revd Dr Sally Myers
Rev Canon Professor Peter Neil
Mr Philip Wright (*invited Cooptee*)

In attendance

Mr Stephen Deville, Chief Operating Officer
Mr Sean Ryan, Internal Auditor (Uniac)
Ms Silla Maccario, Internal Auditor (Uniac)
Mr Edd Ward, External Auditor (Mazars)
Ms Rachel Harvey, Director of Strategy and Planning (*for items 6, 7 and 8*)
Ms Kelly Fisher, Head of Quality and Regulatory Compliance (*for items 10iv, 11 and 12 only*)
Mr Phil Davis, Head of Student Support (*for item 13 only*)
Ms Leanne Chancellor (Minuting Officer)

1. Welcome

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the fourth and final Audit Committee meeting of the 2017/18 academic year.

The chair welcomed Mr Edd Ward, External Auditor (Mazars) and Mr Philip Wright (who was a guest at this meeting, but will be an invited member, as a cooptee, in the future).

2. Apologies

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were RECEIVED from:
- Mr Barrie Shipley, Director of Finance;
 - Mrs Angela Crowe;
 - Mr David Hoose, External Auditor (Mazars).

3. Declarations of interest

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

Members raised the following issues and concerns:

- Members asked how far away the institution was until it became a 'real concern' and BGU were unable to fill in the returns.
RH REPORTED that if we have not got a real good understanding of our user system, concerns would be for January 2019. If the current system was not developed well enough for January 2019, then BGU would not be able to complete their statutory returns.
- Members questioned whether this was the right time for the institution to be registering for the BETA pilot and for training staff on the system when it may not go ahead.
SD HIGHLIGHTED that taking part in pilot would provide the institution with a valuable insight to future requirements, but clearly this would not proceed if the system was not developed to do so.

The Chair asked if some timescales leading up to the installation of the new system could be presented to members in September 2018.

DoS&P

6.3 OfS Update:

SD updated the committee on the audit that the OfS had undertaken into Student Fees.

SD circulated to members a letter from the OfS dated 20 June 2018, regarding an audit of 2016-17 student payments.

SD NOTED that the letter highlighted the OFS conclusions from the audit work carried out:

"We have gained assurance that the sums charged are as originally agreed with the student, and in line with those advertised.

We have gained assurance that sums charged are consistent with fee regulations.

In reaching these conclusions we have made recommendations that, if implemented, should further improve systems and protocols in relation to student payments"

However, SD NOTED that items regarding HESA student data issues identified during the audit would be followed up a future date

SD REPORTED that the OfS Action Plan would be completed, circulated to members and sent back to the OfS by the deadline of 20 July 2018.

COO

10.3(ii) Data Assurance

Brought forward

Members RECEIVED and NOTED the Data Assurance Review 2017/18 from Uniac (Final Report June 2018). This was an interim review that had been commissioned to follow up draft comments by the OfS audit team around certain aspects of student records.

Uniac and members were CONTENT with the management responses contained within the audit report.

Uniac agreed for SD to share their Data Assurance Review Report with the OfS in response to their letter.

COO

contained within the accounts. This will be provided at a future meeting once received from the OfS and reviewed.

- It was NOTED that an update on disclosures relating to senior salaries had recently been received and will be factored into the accounts preparation process.
- SD NOTED that when clarity over the accounts direction is received, he would circulate it to members to review ahead of the Audit Committee in September 2018. COO
- SD NOTED that as part of the accounts preparation, consideration will have to be given to disclosures as a result of the University's intention to incorporate.

10. To note and consider internal audit reports

10.1 Internal Audit Progress Report

Members RECEIVED and NOTED the internal audit progress report from Uniac

Sean Ryan (SR) presented the Internal Audit Progress Report, providing an overview of progress and the reports done so far.

SR NOTED that Uniac would aim to have all their outstanding reports ready for Audit Committee in September 2018. Uniac

SR asked members whether they would allow Uniac to complete a review on planned and preventative maintenance as an alternative to that planned for capital expenditure review, as it was understood this would have more value at this time.

Members were CONTENT for Uniac to look at this area and report back them when appropriate. Uniac

10.2 Internal Audit Coverage Planning 2018-19

Members RECEIVED and NOTED the internal audit annual planning report for 2018/19 from Uniac.

SR NOTED the potential themes Uniac will be focussing on in the coming year:

- Student recruitment;
- Student data governance;
- OfS registration conditions;
- Performance management;
- Organisational investment & resilience;
- Estate programme delivery;
- Student attendance monitoring;
- Student journey;
- Wellbeing;
- GDPR;
- Health & Safety;
- IT
- Programme management.

2. *The New Regulatory Framework for HE*

SR highlighted the theme on the student perspective on “value for money” and the (*yet to be identified*) OfS lead data indicators.

PN NOTED that Senate had discussed “value for money” and “good value” at its meeting on 20 June 2018 and that this theme would form discussion at the University Council Training Day on 4 July 2018.

SR NOTED that Uniac would like to start unpicking, “what does good value for money look like?” in 2018-19.

Uniac

(v) Audit of FireWall

SD shared the report on the University’s firewall with members to assure them that an audit is completed.

10.4 Audit Tracker Report

Members RECEIVED and NOTED the progress update against Uniac’s internal audit recommendations.

SD REPORTED that due to progress made, there were no fundamental actions open, and the closure of actions (*shaded in green*) had been approved in principle by VCEG and recommended the Committee approve the action.

Members were CONTENT to ratify the decision for the actions to be closed.

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11. **To note the Charity Commission Return**

11.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the submission of BGU’s Annual Return to the Charity Commission.

Kelly Fisher (KF), Head of Quality and Regulatory Compliance, CONFIRMED that the Annual Return was submitted on 22 May 2018.

12. **To note and consider the Student Contention Report and Admissions Complaints Report**

12.1 Members RECEIVED and NOTED the Student Contention Report and the Admissions Complaints Report for 2016/17.

Members noted that contention issues raised by students with reported access needs had previously identified in the 2015/16 report as an area of concern and asked KF for clarification on progress in this area.

KF advised the Committee that actions had been taken following both the 2015/16 and 2016/17 reports and these would be noted in the report being compiled for 2017/18.

HofQ&RC

13. **Prevent duty annual report outcome**

13.1 Phil Davis (PD), Head of Student Support, INFORMED members that the Prevent Annual Report was submitted to HEFCE in advance of the 1 December 2017 deadline.

16. Any other business [redacted]

17. Key Items for University Council

- 17.1
- Student Records System;
 - Student Fees Audit by the OfS and Data Assurance report.

Chair/
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18. Date of next meeting

18.1 The next meeting of the Audit Committee would take place on:

- Wednesday 26 September 2018 at 9:00am

Signed



Date

4/3/2010