

# Council

25th June 2020

**Present:** Dinah Caine, Frances Corner, Mark d’Inverno, David Oswell, Elisabeth Hill, David Reddaway (left at 6pm), Lauren Corelli, Rodger Kibble, John Price, Atau Tanaka, Ben Fowler, Kierin Offlands (left at 4.15pm), Philip Stoltzfus, Ian Borman, Theodora Zemek, Pam Raynor, Aaron Porter, Andrew Laurence, Carol Rue, Susan Dilly, Ravi Mahendra (left at 5.30pm), Lynn Percy (left at 5.50pm), Monika Barnes, Ronke Akerele

**In attendance:** Nirmal Borkhataria, Helen Watson, Melanie Rimmer, John Dickinson-Lilley, Matthew Brooks and Sally Priddle

**Apologies:**

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## 1 Apologies for Absence

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**Received:**

- 1.1 No apologies were received.
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## 2 Chair’s Action

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**Received:**

- 2.1 No action had been taken on behalf of Council since the last meeting.
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## 3 Minutes

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**Received:**

- 3.1 Minutes from meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020  
3.2 Minutes from meeting of 13th May 2020

**Resolved:**

- 3.3 The minutes were approved as accurate records of the meetings on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 and 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
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## 4 Actions

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**Received:**

- 4.1 Council action tracker

**Noted:**

- 4.2 Council noted the updates provided and there were no matters arising.
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## 5 Chair's Report

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**Received:**

- 5.1 A verbal update was provided on the Chair's work since the last meeting.

**Noted:**

- 5.2 It was reported that the Chair had been supporting the executive on the priority work currently being undertaken by the College, as well as lobbying externally on the importance of arts and humanities and support for Higher Education.

**Action:**

- 5.3 A written note on the work of the Chair would be circulated following the meeting.
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## 6 Warden's Report

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**Received:**

- 6.1 A report from Warden (19-503)

**Noted:**

- 6.2 This was the first full academic year that Council had received written reports from the Warden. The reports aimed to provide updates on work against the strategy, escalate risks as well as provide updates on internal and external priorities. Council were asked to consider the effectiveness of these reports and provide any feedback to the Warden to ensure the reports were beneficial going forward.
- 6.3 The report acknowledged the serious context of the death of George Floyd and resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement in the public consciousness; failures and potential lessons to learn needed to be accepted and addressed. Issues surrounding inequality had been exacerbated by Covid-19 and this would be furthered by the longer term social, cultural and economic impact of the pandemic. Goldsmiths would play an important role in addressing these issues and needed to continually reflect on its role within the community.
- 6.4 The Student's Union expressed concerns about the College's approach to racial justice and how its commitment had been expressed in communications. The commitments to GARA and wider racial justice work had not been progressed as they should have been and it was important that the College held itself to account and acknowledged where it had fallen below own values and standards.
- 6.5 The report stated that the Warden was taking steps to ensure that Goldsmiths was positioned effectively to participate in key conversations relating to Higher Education. The Warden would be participating in NLC's Leadership Programme (for public sector leaders), and this programme included conversations with national leaders. There had recently been a conversation with the Cabinet Office concerning mental health, the economy and the importance of ensuring inclusivity.
- 6.6 The report summarised priority work the College had been doing. Focus had remained upon student experience and maintaining quality and standards. However, it was outlined that the College had received a significant number of complaints which posed a real risk to the Institution and highlighted concerns about student experience.
- 6.7 The Student Union Assembly representative asked for further information about the progress of the 2000 complaints the College had received and how they aligned with the complaints received from previous instances of industrial action. Council asked for information on the stages at which the complaints ended. The current complaints were being reviewed by panels and therefore the outcomes could not be shared but would be shared when it was appropriate to do so.

- 6.8 The College had a successful partnership with University of London Worldwide and additional areas were being investigated to identify new opportunities. It was reported that other remote and online courses would continue to be built into the College's future plans.
- 6.9 The College had commissioned a local impact study, this study provided evidence and data which confirmed the benefit of the role the College played in the community. The survey would be utilised to inform an action plan to sustain positive and impactful work and improve on areas for development. The report would be circulated once finalised.
- 6.10 It was agreed that an update on the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion would be included in all Warden's reports going forward.
- 6.11 Council discussed the support for students in halls during the pandemic. The Executive was asked to confirm whether data had been collected from students on their experience and support received. It was reported that daily catch ups had been offered to students and there were regular social and support events. It was agreed a survey would be considered to assess the experience and feed into support for next academic year.
- 6.12 Council were assured that there had been no more cases of Covid reported in halls since the two cases identified in March. Plans were in place to support any students who may need to self-isolate in the future.
- 6.13 It was reported that the student support chat function which had been implemented during lockdown had been positively received by students, the Executive was asked to confirm whether this chat would be continued after lockdown.
- 6.14 An update on the Enterprise Hub and its aims was provided. The vision had not changed since it was originally proposed and commitments had been made to external funders including support for local businesses and community initiatives.

**Action:**

- 6.15 Provide an update on complaints outcomes from previous industrial action to Council members.
  - 6.16 Include update on complaints in the Warden's report
  - 6.17 Provide an update to Council on the outcome of the current complaints, when appropriate.
  - 6.18 Consider survey with students in accommodation asking about their experience and satisfaction.
  - 6.19 Confirm whether the student chat function would be continued following a reopening of campus.
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## 7 KPI Report

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### **Received:**

- 7.1 The updates against the College KPIs (19-504)

### **Noted:**

- 7.2 Council reported that it was beneficial to see the KPIs reported in this format, providing clear context on where the Institution was against the key indicators. It was important that these indicators and measures were utilised to inform parts of the recovery plan and restructuring processes.
- 7.3 It was agreed it was beneficial for the community to be informed on the College's situation, with a clear picture of how the College measured up against other institutions. These metrics provided key information that should inform actions to improve the College's provision.

### **Action:**

- 7.4 Circulate updated data book.
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## 8 Equality Update

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### **Received:**

- 8.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report (19-505)
- 8.2 Update on College's racial justice work (19-506)
- 8.3 Updated GARA action plan (19-507)

### **Noted:**

- 8.4 The Executive reported that there had not been sufficient progress on the racial justice work and the College was not where it wanted to be. Though there was positive work happening across the Institution, it was not being effectively coordinated or learnt from. The Senior Management Team had agreed to establish Equality Champions, linking with staff networks to better connect the positive work with wider College initiatives. Terms of reference would be established for a strategic group looking at the work and initiatives of staff networks and how they could be utilised to improve wider practice. The Communications team would support this work to raise awareness for activities, build confidence and share best practice.
- 8.5 The College had achieved the Athena Swann Bronze award. This was the outcome of a significant amount of work and it was essential that the resulting action plan was implemented and impact continually evaluated.
- 8.6 The College was scoping out the resource commitment required for the Race Equality Charter Mark. It would require a significant amount of work, but this aligned with the priorities of the Institution.
- 8.7 Council asked for data on BAME Professors.
- 8.8 The Executive reported that the College had not undertaken sufficient equality impact assessments for previous strategy work, but this would be a priority area for improvement. There was insufficient experience and capacity in this area so staff would be supported to develop the required skills to undertake these assessments.
- 8.9 The Warden reported that she was personally disappointed that there had been insufficient progress in key areas of work. A project board would be established and chaired by the Warden to ensure that there was greater progress made. The first meeting would be held before the September Council meeting to enable a detailed report on the actions and priorities. The Warden confirmed a project board was part of the Institution's commitments to GARA, and this would be publicly acknowledged in the College's communications.
- 8.10 The Executive was working with stakeholder groups to consult on the racial justice work and discuss experiences. It was agreed with colleagues that this work should be undertaken in July due to other work pressures they were currently facing. There would be continuous engagement with stakeholders throughout July and August. A draft proposal would be presented to the project board as a starting point for an iterative process of development.
- 8.11 The Executive was asked to consider how Council, particularly Independent Members, could feed into work and support initiatives.

- 8.12 The report provided information on a high number of initiatives implemented to address inequality and injustice, however it showed that there had been delays in implementation, and impact had fallen short in places. Council asked for assurance that there would be sufficient resource and capacity to implement actions going forward and asked for analysis on why certain initiatives had not had the intended impact to date.
- 8.13 It was reported that re-planning and community feedback would include an assessment of why actions had not had the intended impact. The outcomes would not be pre-empted. It was essential that the review covered identified good practice and looked at how that might be replicated across the College.
- 8.14 It was agreed that Council would receive an update on racial justice work at each meeting and Council committees would receive updates on work relevant to their terms of reference. The reports would include clear targets which linked to point impact and enabled effective scrutiny.
- 8.15 Council asked about the community's commitment to change and whether initiatives, to date, had experienced resistance. The Executive reported that in recent conversations with departments there was an improved sense of shared responsibility for addressing concerns and supporting students of colour. All stakeholders needed to listen, reflect and be humble in the face of constructive criticism.
- 8.16 The Student's Union outlined that when having a conversation about racial justice it was important that actions and aims did not get lost in bureaucratic structures. Open conversations and challenge was the only way to begin to try to unpick structural racism across the College. It was key that when utilising language like respectful conversation it did not become tone policing. Students and staff had experienced extreme pain and violence as a result of the effects of racism; these experiences needed to be considered and fully addressed. It was vital that the College did not become overly self-congratulatory on any positive work undertaken to date. A statement of support for the Black Lives Matter movement required action and demonstrable positive outcomes to follow.
- 8.17 The Student's Union expressed concerns about how the action plan presented work. Actions which were presented as green may have been undertaken but had not had the intended impact. Funding had been allocated to support racial justice work, but a lot of this had not yet been spent or initiatives developed and progressed. There needed to be transparency and accountability for all this work. There had been a high turnover of staff working in the racial justice team, the Student's Union wanted commitment that staffing in this area would be retained to strengthen efforts in this vital field.

- 8.18 The Executive reported that the action plan would be updated to ensure actions were contextualised and updates included specific references to impact and targets.
- 8.19 it was reported that to make real change in the College's community actions needed to be reflected upon and considered in this context. The College's racial justice work was inseparable from decisions made about the employment of associate lecturers and GTTs.
- 8.20 Council needed to consider their own responsibilities as individuals and as a collective in enacting racial justice and considering the impact of decisions taken.
- 8.21 The Executive confirmed that they would be meeting with the Student's Union prior to the project board to discuss work and the College's approach.
- 8.22 Council asked whether students were asked to undertake training, for example unconscious bias training, as many of the experiences appeared to be amongst students. It was reported that it was likely that student training would be an action coming out the revised approach.
- 8.23 The Chair recognised that the Student's Union representative had made strong points about the challenges the Institution faced and the need to institute meaningful changes. There needed to be broad understanding of; what was going to be undertaken, where things had not been addressed effectively and why those things hadn't had the intended impact.

**Action:**

- 8.24 Provide update on racial justice work including GARA action plan at each Council meeting.
- 8.25 Confirm how equality impact assessments will be implemented effectively for work going forward.
- 8.26 Publically acknowledge the role of GARA in establishing a racial justice programme board.
- 8.27 Arrange first racial justice programme board before September Council meeting.
- 8.28 Provide overview of engagement approach, clarity on action plan and clear targets.
- 8.29 Provide overview of SMT equality links with staff networks, how this work will feed into the governance structures and communications.

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## 9 Governance Update

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**Received:**



- 9.1 Changes to Department Board Ordinances (19-508)
- 9.2 Changes to Standing Orders (19-509)
- 9.3 Nominations for Council Committees (19-515)
- 9.4 Change in composition of Human Resources and Equalities Committee (19-510)

**Noted:**

- 9.5 Changes to the Department Board Ordinances had been proposed to clarify the role and responsibilities of Department Boards. The changes had been reviewed by the community with feedback integrated. The changes were recommended by Academic Board.
- 9.6 The Standing Order changes were proposed to ensure the robustness and validity of all meetings whether run face to face or remotely.
- 9.7 The nominations for internal vacancies on Council committees had been recommended by Nominations and Governance Committee.
- 9.8 The change in composition of Human Resources and Equalities Committee to include a representative from each recognised staff union was recommended by the Nominations and Governance Committee and Human Resources and Equalities Committee.

**Resolved:**

- 9.9 The changes to Department Board Ordinances were approved for implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.
- 9.10 The changes to the Standing Orders were approved for implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.
- 9.11 All nominations for internal vacancies on Council committees were approved for a 3-year term from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.
- 9.12 The change in the composition of Human Resources and Equalities Committee to include a representative from each recognised staff union was approved for implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

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## 10 Health and Safety Update

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**Received:**

- 10.1 The Health and Safety update (19-511)

**Noted:**

- 10.2 Earlier in the year a risk was identified within the College's controls in relation to health and safety. Council was required to approve the College's Health and Safety Policy and Procedures and to monitor their implementation. This report intended to provide assurance to Council on changes and improvement in controls to ensure the same risk would not arise again.
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## 11 Academic Board Report

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**Received:**

- 11.1 Academic Board report (19-512)

**Noted:**

- 11.2 The business of the June Academic Board had focused on the required changes in response to Covid-19. An extraordinary meeting would be held on the 27<sup>th</sup> July to complete the required business for the academic year.
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## 12 Committee Impact Reports

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**Received:**

- 12.1 Audit and Risk Committee  
12.2 Estates and Infrastructure Committee  
12.3 External Relations Committee  
12.4 Finance and Resources Committee  
12.5 Health and Safety Committee  
12.6 Nominations and Governance Committee

**Noted:**

- 12.7 The impact reports had been included to provide a summary to Council of the focus and impact of Council committees and escalate any risks. The reports had been in place for a whole academic year, Council were asked to provide any feedback on the effectiveness of the reports to ensure improvements going forward.

**Action:**

- 12.8 Circulate the Human Resources and Equalities Committee Impact report via email.
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## **13 Office for Students' Prevent Assessment Outcome**

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**Received:**

- 13.1 Outcome of College's, Prevent submission (19-514)

**Noted:**

- 13.2 Council noted that the College had received confirmation that it had been deemed compliant and had due regard for the Prevent Duty.
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## **14 Any other business**

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**Noted:**

- 14.1 Council confirmed that an extraordinary meeting would be held in August.

**Action:**

- 14.2 Arrange an August Council meeting.