

Agenda Item:	4ia
Document Code	SPC22/37
Category	CONFIDENTIAL
Committee:	Strategic Performance
Date:	5 June 2023

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

13 April 2023 via Microsoft Teams (including videolink)

UNCONFIRMED SUMMARY MINUTES

Contact Georgina Bailes, georgina.bailes@northumbria.ac.uk. Secretary to the Board of Governors, with any queries about these Summary Minutes.

Present: C Apsey (Chair), Dr B Bartoli, Dr R Blackman-Woods, E Collier, S Haagensen, Professor A Long, H Thorne.
 Apologies: K Fawcett, S Newitt
 Secretary: G Bailes, R Elliott (Assistant Secretary).
 In attendance: Professor T Lawson, D Monnery, Professor G Wynn [SPC22/25 and SPC22/27].

MAIN ITEMS DISCUSSED/DECIDED ON AT THE MEETING

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. | <p><u>Introduction</u>
 <u>Vice-Chancellor’s Horizon Scanning</u> [Oral Report]
 The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive presented on sector wide matters and the implications of these for the University. The devolution deal for the North East Mayoral Combined Authority represented a significant opportunity for the region, and following the recent budget, local discussions on potential applications of the Shared Prosperity Fund were in progress. The Lifelong Learning Entitlement would be introduced from 2025 and for degree level in 2027, and a cap on foundation years fees for non-STEM subjects was still anticipated with its impact on the University being modelled; restrictions on visas for international students were likely to focus on visas for dependents. The recent UCU re-ballot for industrial action had resulted in a majority in favour with turnout over the required threshold – action was thought likely to be a marking and assessment boycott, and appropriate mitigations were being put in place to ensure that students would be able to graduate. The Committee noted the update.</p> |
| 2. | <p><u>Strategic Discussion Items</u>
 <u>Strategy Development Engagement Update</u> [Oral Report]
 The Committee considered progress on recent engagement events and next steps in the development of the new University Strategy. Workshops covering research and KE and education and the student experience had both been well-attended and had generated excellent input to the strategy process; three externally-led seminars primarily intended for the extended leadership team, Governors and the SU sabbatical team had also been held. Next steps would include discussion at UE then a report to Committee and Board in June on the structure of the Strategy, with a first draft of content to be considered in September/October. The Committee noted the update.</p> <p><u>Annual Quality and Standards Report</u> [SPC22/25]
 The Committee considered at the request of Board of Governors; key areas of focus included the impacts of the changed Assessment Regulations for Northumbria Awards on degree outcomes, and the annual Student Appeals and Complaints report. The issue relating to the impacts of the changed Assessment Regulations for Northumbria Taught Awards (ARTA) on degree outcomes had arisen from changes introduced in 2019/20 in response to OfS requirements to counter perceived grade inflation; OfS guidance had now changed to returning “good honours” rates to pre-pandemic levels, which Northumbria would achieve without the implementation of the full set of 2019/20 changes. Education Committee and Academic Board had agreed to reverse most of the changes to allow the continued managed return to pre-pandemic levels. Student Appeals and Complaints were generally in line with expectations and the wider sector experience of an increase, with no large-scale group complaints received at Northumbria.</p> |

	<p>The Committee noted that the re-adjusted ARTA should result in good honours levels in line with the pre-pandemic sector position. Student appeals that had been upheld on the grounds of new evidence in general reflected the emergence of evidence such as a medical diagnosis or other information that had genuinely not been available for the original decision; work would be carried out with students to ensure that the appeals and complaints procedures were properly understood.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p><u>Performance Monitoring</u> <u>University Strategy 2018-24 Performance Report</u> [SPC22/26] The Committee considered the performance of the University Strategy as at period 7 (28 February 2023). Performance for KPIs was six at green, two at amber and three at red; 14 Business Outcomes were defined as 'complete', 15 were 'on track' and 14 had some issues that were being managed and were 'off-track'. The Committee noted the report and that the equivalent of business outcomes for the new Strategy would be framed more clearly to facilitate measurement and monitoring, and would include the relevant outcomes of the current strategy that had not been achieved.</p> <p><u>Student Experience and Learning Outcomes – Q2 2022/23</u> [SPC22/27] The Committee considered developments relating to Student Experience and Learning Outcomes. Internal continuation data showed a decline from 2020/21 to 2021/22, but withdrawals data from 2022/23 indicated that this position was improving. On-campus in-person attendance by students had not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. In recent appeals and complaints students were less likely to reference the impact of Covid-19 as affecting their academic progress; it was anticipated that cost of living and industrial action issues would begin to feature. NSS completion rates were likely to be in line with last year. The Committee noted the report and that multiple cost of living support campaigns were in progress in partnership with the Students' Union, with reducing withdrawal rates indicating some positive impacts; students who were considering withdrawing were offered individual discussions and support packages, mostly focused on course changes.</p> <p><u>Student Recruitment 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25</u> [SPC22/28 and Presentation] The Committee received an update on student recruitment for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25. The Committee noted the report.</p>

Richard Elliott
Assistant Secretary to Strategic Performance Committee
April 2023