Recruitment and Admissions Committee (RAC)

17 April 2024 at 3:30pm
Online meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Present Members:
Professor Paola Lettieri, Vice-President (Strategy) (Co-Chair); Marie Gallagher (Co-Chair); Professor Ibrahim Abubakar; Aimie Chapple; Shaban Chaudhary; Sarah Cowls; Daniel Farrell; Clare Foyle; Liz Griffith; Katy Hamilton; Martin Howells; Katja Lamping; Joe Lay; Blathnaid Mahony; Bella Malins; Bryony Merritt; Alison Parker; Katy Redfern; Professor Eloise Scotford; Professor Gail Taylor; Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker; Donna Williamson; Jessica Yuille.

Apologies:
Professor Stella Bruzzi; Ciaran Moynihan; Professor David Shanks; Professor Nicola Walshe.

In attendance:
Kate Belshaw (on behalf of Professor Nicola Walshe); Stephanie Esuola (Programme Director, Recruitment and Admissions); Emma Gutteridge-Xu (on behalf of Professor Stella Bruzzi).

Officer(s):
Alex Brace; Olivia Whiteley.

Part I: Preliminary Business

1. Chair's Introduction

1.1. Marie Gallagher, Co-Chair, welcomed members to Recruitment and Admissions Committee (RAC) and Alex Brace as Secretary.

1.2. Marie Gallagher, Co-Chair, provided a brief introduction to the newly formed Committee. She noted the breadth of the Committee's membership and its purpose, which was to provide oversight and management of risks in the admissions process, following a financial gap in student recruitment last year within the international postgraduate market.

1.3.   RAC noted that the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee had been formally stood down.

2.   Terms of Reference and Constitution (1-01)

2.1.   RAC approved the Terms of Reference, which had previously been presented to UMC and Academic Committee, subject to the following amendments:
   a.   Correction of Katy Redfern's job title to Director of Widening Participation and Student Funding;
   b.   Correction of Professor Eloise Scotford's title;
   c.   Additional representation from the Student Recruitment Team, with the Head of International Student Recruitment and the Head of UK/Europe to be added to the constitution;
   d.   Representation from the Centre for Languages & International Education (CLIE), as the risk around international student recruitment may impact upon their recruitment;
   e.   Deepan Banati, Director of Finance Business Partnering (Academic) to be added to the constitution.

2.2.   Aimie Chapple, Vice-President (Operations), suggested that some RAC meetings should be more strategy focused and others more operations focused. RAC noted that this may mean additional members attend the strategy focused meetings, such as the Director of Student Experience in the Students' Union.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

3.   Faculty Recruitment and Admissions Groups Terms of Reference (1-02)

3.1.   Marie Gallagher, Co-Chair, introduced the paper and advised that UMC had approved Faculty Recruitment and Admissions Groups (FRAGs) to ensure a connection between the Faculties and Recruitment and Admissions Committee. The FRAGs would report up to RAC.

3.2.   RAC approved the FRAG Terms of Reference, subject to the following amendments:
   a.   Recognition of the link between Recruitment and Admissions and Faculties with a note on its importance;
   b.   Alignment with the RAC Terms of Reference in ensuring financial targets are met.

3.3.   It was suggested that the FRAGs operate in the same way as RAC whereby some meetings would be more strategy focused and others more operations focused, and that Heads of Departments (or deputies) regularly attend meetings.

3.4.   RAC agreed to keep the FRAG terms of reference under review for the remaining meetings of 2023-24. RAC noted that some Faculties had well-established FRAGs, whereas others would be newly formed. The Deans' Nominees agreed that the FRAGs would align with the Terms of Reference as approved by RAC.

3.5.   RAC discussed how the FRAGs would report up to RAC and the content of these reports, noting:
   a.   RAC would have an overarching responsibility from an institutional perspective, whereas the FRAGs would be responsible for reviewing performance at programme level.
   b.   The FRAGs would be granted access to live data on admissions and be charged with the responsibility to identify and escalate any potential risks both at the Faculty-level and at an institutional-level Aimie Chapple, Vice-President (Operations), suggested that an agenda item should be added for future RAC meetings to confirm the questions to be asked of the FRAGs.
   c.   It would be helpful to create a SharePoint site or similar to foster an informal dialogue between RAC and the FRAGs to support formal reporting between these groups.
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4.   Sub-Committees

4.1.   RAC noted that when the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee (StRAFC) was in operation, there were a number of Sub-Committees under it which included Fees, Academic Requirements and Scholarships.

4.2.   RAC agreed to review proposed Sub-Committees at their next meeting, noting that one of the suggested Sub-Committees was Scholarships, for which the governance route needed to be determined.

5.   Confidential: Draft Recruitment and Admissions Principles (1-03)

5.1.   Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

5.2.   Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

5.3.   Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

5.4.   Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

6.   Confidential: Update on latest recruitment position

6.1.   Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

6.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

7.   KPI Tracking – Tableau Dashboard

7.1. Martin Howells, Director of Data and Insight, presented an overview of the Tableau Dashboard which focused on risk factors for use by RAC and the FRAGs.

7.2. Marie Gallagher, Co-Chair, thanked Martin Howells and his team for their work on the Dashboard.

7.3. RAC agreed to nominate a small group of members to review the Dashboard and determine what data is useful to report to RAC.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

8.   Any Other Business

8.1. There was none.

9.   Date of the next meeting

9.1. RAC noted the date of the next meeting, 20 May 2024 at 4.30pm.

Alex Brace, Secretary to Recruitment and Admissions Committee
April 2024