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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd September 2024

PRESENT: Dr P Haughan (in the Chair), Professor D Bolt, Ms U Boote, Professor S Kelly, Ms S Murray, Dr L Owens, Dr L Palumbo, Prof N Rao, Assoc Prof A Ridge-Newman, Ms Alex Toomath, Assoc Prof K Wagner, Dr C Walsh

Secretariat: Mr D Dykins

Invitees: Helen McGarry

Apologies: Ms V Seddon

The meeting was convened to consider documentation relating to the University's APP submission.

1. Access and Participation Plan

Members received and consider the University's APP submission. Dr Haughan expressed thanks to Dr Walsh, Ms McGarry and Associate Deans for their work in drafting the documentation. Dr Walsh explained that this was the fifth template provided, and prescribed, by the OfS and once accepted will run from 2025-2026 to 2028-29 academic years. Completing the templates has involved several months of data analysis to understand requirements. The OfS were clear that there needs to be an honest statement about where students are subject to inequality of opportunity. The approach needs to be realistic and should not attempt to tackle everything, but focus on areas that will capture the largest number of students.

Annex A gives information on identification and prioritisation and Annex B gives information on the rationale, assumptions and evidence for each intervention strategy. Ms McGarry advised that the team had analysed a large amount of data and compared different characteristics to identify key differences between LHU and the rest of the sector. The OfS had also identified "at risk" students and these were used as a starting point. The main areas where LHU is different to the sector are: deprivation; free school meals; low participation neighbourhoods; ethnicity; disabilities; and previous qualifications (non-traditional). There were also gaps in students with LGBTQ+ backgrounds, and age which were added to the areas concentrated on.

In reviewing the data, the team looked at continuation, completion, attainment (good degrees) and progression into graduate level employment. Certain groups, such as IMD and BTEC students had issues across all categories. Where several categories were present in a particular group, this magnified risk of non-completion. The four main areas chosen are:

- Attainment for black and global majority students.
- Deprivation and low participation for continuation, completion and attainment
- Progression for students with mental health concerns.

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- BTEC entry qualifications, low tariff and course type are interrelated and increase the risks to equality in continuation, completion, attainment and progression

The particular challenge the OfS have identified in all groups are around money and finances.

The OfS originally requested that all gaps be reduced to zero, but it was agreed that it would be more realistic to aim to close gaps as much as possible. Dr Walsh said that the Plan would require a University-wide commitment if these aims are to be realised. The document requires the University to define the problem, strategise interventions, describe how LHU will know the strategies are successful and, importantly, how the impact of strategies will be evaluated. Each input requires costing and Ms Beecroft is currently working on this.

Dr Walsh stressed that a key element will be evaluation as the OfS lead is committed to improving this; an organisation called TASO has been contracted to analyse all evaluations.

Members discussed different aspects of the proposal and **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL TO SENATE** the APP.

2. Course Matters

- i) PGT course suspensions: Dr Haughan said that since papers had been distributed it had become apparent that the list required further consideration of certain courses, and she would be finalising the list as soon as possible.
- ii) Dr Haughan noted the withdrawal of BAC Stage Design and Scenography
- iii) Dr Haughan noted the approval of the following:
 - CAPA Foundation Programme
 - BA Education
 - PGCE Suite
- iv) Dr Haughan advised that the British Computing Society accreditation had lapsed and is need of renewal. In applying for renewal, matters have been raised regarding the curriculum and a proposal is being put together to ensure the accreditation continues next year. She noted that the University will not apply for CEng accreditation. There is a small cohort of students who have fallen between the old and new accreditation who will graduate without the accreditation and work is ongoing to ensure that these students are treated fairly. Further details on this will follow.