



Council effectiveness review

Outcome requested:	Council is asked to note this update on progress with the Council effectiveness review.
Executive Summary:	<p>The Governance Committee has commissioned David Fletcher to undertake the Council effectiveness review. The review will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [a] a desk-based review of Council papers and other relevant documentation; [b] an online survey of Council members and others who regularly attend Council meetings; [c] meetings with Council members, QMSE members and QMSU sabbatical officers.
QMUL Strategy:	Effective governance supports the achievement of all strategic aims.
Internal/External reference points:	The CUC Code of Practice recommends that governing bodies should undertake a formal and rigorous evaluation of their effectiveness not less than every five years.
Strategic Risks:	N/A
Equality Impact Assessment:	N/A
Subject to prior and onward consideration by:	N/A
Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA:	No
Timing:	The external reviewer will report to the Governance Committee in January 2015. Key recommendations will then be considered by Council in March 2015.
Author:	Jonathan Morgan, Academic Registrar and Council Secretary
Date:	05 October 2014
Senior Management/External Sponsor:	Sir Nicholas Montagu, Chairman of Council

Council effectiveness review

1. Queen Mary will be undertaking a review of Council's effectiveness between October 2014 and January 2015. This is a routine process which governing bodies in higher education typically undertake every five years. The Senate will be undertaking a review of academic governance in parallel.

Selection of the external reviewer

2. At its meeting on 18 June 2014 the Governance Committee considered a long list of potential reviewers drawn up from recommendations from other higher education institutions, members of Council and QMSE. Five individuals were invited to participate in a competitive tendering process which resulted in three proposals.
3. After considering the proposals by circulation, the Governance Committee commissioned David Fletcher to undertake the review. David has worked in the higher education sector for over forty years and has held senior management positions at Loughborough and the University of Sheffield, where he was Registrar and Secretary. For nine years he was also Secretary of the Committee of University Chairs. He is a recognised authority on governance in higher education and has conducted numerous effectiveness reviews.

The review method

4. The review will include:
 - [a] a desk-based review of Council papers and other relevant documentation;
 - [b] an online survey of Council members and others who regularly attend Council meetings;
 - [c] meetings with Council members, QMSE members and QMSU sabbatical officers.
5. The external reviewer will report to the Governance Committee in January 2015. Key recommendations will then be considered by Council in March 2015.

Scope of the review

6. The review will cover the corporate governance arrangements of Queen Mary through consideration of the work of the Council and its sub-committees (Finance and Investment Committee; Audit and Risk Committee; Governance Committee; Remuneration Committee; Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee) and their relationship to QMSE and the Senate.
7. The review will make reference to the CUC Guide for Members of Higher Education Governing Bodies in the UK and will benchmark the arrangements at Queen Mary against governance practice elsewhere in the UK higher education system.
8. Broadly the review will examine the effectiveness of Council in fulfilling its Statement of Primary Responsibilities. Specific areas to be addressed include:
 - [a] the size, composition and terms of reference of the Council and its sub-committees;
 - [b] the skills, experience and diversity of the membership of Council and its sub-committees;

- [c] the induction, training and support that are provided to the members of Council and its sub-committees;
 - [d] the dynamics and strength of relationships between the members of Council and its sub-committees;
 - [e] the suitability of the information that is provided to the Council and its sub-committees;
 - [f] the effectiveness of Council at ensuring that the values and issues of which it is the owner are reflected in the practices of Queen Mary, without losing strategic focus;
 - [g] the effectiveness of Council at providing constructive support and challenge for QMSE, and the responsiveness of the Executive, especially in relation to financial sustainability, investment strategies, monitoring risks, conformity to ethical standards and measuring institutional performance;
 - [h] the boundaries between governance and management, and between corporate and academic governance, and the extent to which these are underpinned by shared understanding of roles and responsibilities;
 - [i] the impact and visibility of the Council to the wider community of Queen Mary and key stakeholder bodies.
9. Council is asked to **note** this update on progress with the Council effectiveness review.

Jonathan Morgan
Academic Registrar and Council Secretary
05 October 2014