

**Fylde College**  
**Minutes of the Syndicate**  
**3 November 2015**

Present: Heather Willes, Denise Rutledge, Daniel Barcroft, Jean Bennett, Kirsty Thornton, Kelly Robinson, James Smith, Suzy Wild, Laura Richardson, Hanaa Ashraf, Matt Storey, Natalie Lucas, Jack Machell, Njay Sharpe, Enya Anderson, Sue Summers, Louise Fielding, Ludo Harley, Taryn Whitford

**1. Apologies**

Paloma Garcia, Lauren Elliott

**2. Matters Arising and Last Minutes**

The minutes of the last Syndicate Meeting were agreed to as a true record of the meeting.

The Principal noted that the item on College Constitutions in the last minutes needed clarification:

**College Constitutions** – these have now been standardized across all colleges and formally agreed upon. It should be noted that there is some scope for emphasis of individual college identities within the opening statements of college purposes to allow for constitutions to reflect the character of their colleges.

It was noted that final completion of this action was yet to happen with all colleges in that only County was submitting at this Senate for approval. Fylde would probably submit at the next Senate in February.

**3. Fylde at the start of 2015/16 academic year**

The Principal thanked the college for the warm welcome that she had received as she has taken over from Frank Wareing who retired in July. A farewell event was held for Frank last month and it was hoped he would return for certain events (and indeed photography duties!)

The College can report on some positive issues at the start of this academic year:

**College Advisor Team** – Fylde welfare is now concentrated in a small team of advisors, headed by our new Senior Advisor, Dan Barcroft. The team is dealing with student issues referred from the college office, academic departments and students themselves in a speedy and effective way. A confidential record is being created of all issues encountered and this will assist with general observations about trending problems and should allow better planning of welfare initiatives in the college.

**College Welfare Officer** – Fylde is enjoying the benefit of having a .5 'on the spot' welfare officer who can assist the CAT especially with mental health issues. Fylde has welcomed Taryn Whitford to the college and she alongside the CAT is also working to run wellbeing initiatives (the first of these would be held that evening and would involve several relaxing activities such as origami and zen colouring as well as just chatting over pizza).

**Deanery** – Fylde new assistant deans, Elliott Swallow, Grant Helm and Darren Mason under the guidance of Stacey Spencer the Dean had settled well and enthusiastically and had been praised especially by Fylde porters for their dedication to keeping Fylde in good order!

**Residences** – under the care of Denise Rutledge the new students had settled well into residences and were being encouraged not to seek accommodation 2016/17 too early. The college would be running a residences information session on November 16<sup>th</sup> to guide (especially first year) students to the options available for accommodation for the following academic year.

**Our Porters** – The Principal thanked the Porters for all their assistance during the first few weeks of term noting that they would often go over and above their role in helping the students.

**Welcome Week** – It was discussed that this week had gone very smoothly thanks to the hard work of the JCR and Fresher Reps. There would naturally be some changes made as a result of observations made this year when planning for the next Welcome Week gets underway in the middle of next term.

The college welcomed in 411 new students in this term. Of these 350 are full time undergraduate students, the rest are Foundation Students (52) and a few Visiting students from Exchange /Erasmus courses (9). Again, the college has an almost 50/50 split of UK and Overseas category students which makes Fylde a truly international college.

**University Open Day** – Fylde was one of the showcasing Colleges at the open day on 5th September. The Principal was very pleased to welcome back some Fylde Alumni who were able to speak to prospective students and parents with great enthusiasm

about the college system. Fylde will probably be hosting on two dates next year, one in term time and the other at the end of the summer vacation.

The Principal said that she would be taking forward a couple of major objectives:-

Firstly it was hoped to **increase SCR involvement** in the college both by having a welcome lunch for new staff and by encouraging existing staff to engage perhaps by sharing skills with the students. It was also hoped to introduce some different social activities such as Crown Green Bowling in the spring. The JCR said that they would be willing to raise a team for this.

Secondly, bearing in mind that Fylde has always been proud of its **sporting heritage**, she would be taking forward an Alumni Friends bid to provide an outdoor fitness area between the bar and old Engineering building. It was also still possible that the college would be home to an outdoor Table Tennis table just off the spine as part of the rejuvenate the spine project.

#### 4. Senate

##### **Last Senate 23 September 2015**

The Principal reported that there was a special meeting of Senate just before the start of term and a couple of items were possibly of interest to the colleges.

*The strategic implementation plan* – The Principal of Bowland noted that the plan did not reflect the highest level strategic aims that could be seen in other sections but was more operational in outlook. *S2015/54 – Increase in support for English as second language and also second language for English Speakers* – no mention how this might happen. The Principal said that this would be something that the college would be interested in given the theme of increasing support for International students in colleges. The Vice Principal explained the role of the Language exchange programme run in the Confucius Centre whereby students learning mandarin could be paired with a native speaker for informal sessions where they teach each other. All saw the advantages of running similar initiatives with other languages.

#### V-C Reports

- **Prevent** – It was explained at the meeting that all educational institutions now had responsibility of putting guidelines into place regarding being aware of possible radicalisation of students and student activities. Obviously given the importance of freedom of speech and expression, particularly at University, such activity would be low level and it was assumed that the University was at low risk from such activity. It would just be an awareness raising issue. Many staff had already undergone Prevent training sessions.
- **Globalising the Student Experience** – there was a working group being set up which includes Provost of Colleges.
- **Improving Undergraduate Student Retention** – Lancaster performs worse than its key competitors. (Not better as was suggested in the meeting) The report seems to focus on Academic areas but clearly Colleges will have a role here as experienced regularly with the welfare team activities in college.
- **Employability** – It was likely that new college initiatives would feature in this report.
- **Learning Support Action Group** – until a few years ago learning support was all housed in one central suite of offices. Currently the support is de-centralized in to Faculties. There may be the suggestion that the group re-centralizes. The report mentions potential changes in reporting lines and associated structures and also mentions the increased demand for English language support and the general need for increased capacity in learning support.

#### UMAG Business:

Forward Schedule of Business:

**Repeating the UG First Year Proposal.** This is a proposal from Provost and Head of Registry reflecting the relatively high number of withdrawals with progression between Parts 1 and 2. Currently a student who wishes to intercalate must restart a calendar year to the agreed date of withdrawal. The proposal is to allow a complete retake of the year from the start. There would not be the ability to carry forward credits previously gained. FHM does not support this proposal as it would be seen to place the student at an unfair advantage. There needs to be some clarification on dates and timing.

Items for discussion:

### **Proposal to Establish a Lancaster Education Committee**

- Of some interest to the college, but not a direct impact

### **Review of Statutes and Ordinances**

Statute 14 – Delete from Statutes and move to Ordinances – aspect of internal organisation so more relevant to Ordinances

There had been some discussion amongst the College Principals as to any impact on the running of the colleges this might have. It was agreed that although some of the wording was a little confusing (and had probably been so for some time) that in principle it made sense not to have to wait for a decision from Privy Council for internal issues.

Syndicate agreed with these thoughts.

### **Items for decision unlikely to require discussion**

**County College constitution** would be presented as now conforming to agreed guidelines from last Senate. The Principal said that the Fylde constitution is already very close to the University approved model and if necessary she will adapt and bring to next meeting before senate.

**Academic Dress Code.** An increasing number of new degrees has meant an increase in graduation hood colours. It was proposed to limit this variation by sticking to a few agreed colour schemes for all future Lancaster degree schemes.

**QAA.** The Vice Principal explained to Syndicate that every 6 years the Quality Assurance Association was invited to the University to check that all teaching process and procedures were up to standard. The QAA were currently present on campus and a report would be expected in the next few weeks. All hope for a favourable result!

### **5. Format of Syndicate Meeting**

The Principal asked if all felt that the Syndicate Meeting had a useful format and noted that other colleges included more 'domestic' issues (that Fylde would include in Management Meetings).

It was noted that some colleges had fewer Syndicate Meetings and therefore a more inclusive format would not seem so repetitive and unnecessary as it would in Fylde. Fylde had always held Syndicate Meetings before each Senate as this was the way that the college would have a voice to be represented at Senate.

It was jointly discussed and suggested that may be an annual report – such as item 2 in these minutes would be sufficient, or indeed just a written report from these areas :

- ❖ JCR
- ❖ College (– SCR events, other events and initiatives excluding welfare)
- ❖ Welfare
- ❖ Deanery
- ❖ Residences

This would then be available for all to see on the shared minutes on the Secretariat area of the website.

**(The Senate papers were available for current staff to view at:**  
<https://gap.lancs.ac.uk/Committees/senate/sms/meetings/default.aspx>)

Next Syndicate: 23 February 2016