**School of Law and School of Social Sciences**

**Minutes of the Working Group**

**09 July 2018**

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| **Summary** | Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2018 |
| **Present** | Keith Brown (Chair), Vikki Goddard, Carolyn Abbott, Claire Alexander, Ken Clark, Rachel Dodd, Brian Heaphy, Chris Orme, Toby Seddon, Catherine Tann, Georgina Waylen, Marianne Webb, Alison Wilson, David Gadd, Claire McGourlay, Chris Thornhill, Lisa McClare (secretary) |
| **By invitation** |  |

1. **Apologies**

No apologies received.

1. **Minutes from meeting held on 25 June 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2018 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

1. **Matters arising**

School Board meetings have been conducted to help address staff concerns. Much of the feedback received has not been in opposition to the potential of the merger; rather concerns have been expressed about the current engagement timeline being scheduled over the summer months and the fear that there would be job losses. It was reiterated at the meetings that there are no plans for any discussion of voluntary or compulsory redundancy.

The engagement timelines were always contingent on progress of the development of the process. It was important to consider whether the timescales should be relaxed to ensure that a coherent paper can be constructed without rushing and to allow for further face to face engagement with staff.

It was agreed that there were always busy periods at the university and no time would be ideal but allowing for an extension to circulate the position paper will be in line with the feedback received from staff. The Working Group agreed that the timelines should be extended and a final position paper should not be submitted to Senate any earlier than February 2019, recognising that Senate had requested an update in October.

What, if anything, should be circulated to staff over the summer given this change in timeline was discussed, as it had previously been announced that a high-level paper would be available by 16 July. It was agreed that this paper should be put on hold to allow for amendments to be made, and one coherent paper distributed when it is available. This will aim to avoid confusion and gain more valuable feedback. A new schedule will be drafted and circulated to the Working Group members.

It was noted that Trade Union representation is required only when a formal proposal has been submitted which now will be February 2019 at the earliest. Law and SoSS all staff communications will be ask for feedback in the engagement process which will include Law and SoSS Trade Union members.

1. **Review of summary for high-level position paper**

The group received high-level summaries for all of the areas of activity that had been previously identified.

All areas were requested to update summaries with mitigating actions for the identified risks and elaborate on opportunities relating to internationalisation.

1. **Research (including PGR)**

Research performance narrative needs to be elaborated and it was suggested that benchmarking data should be included.

Further information was given as to why branding for research was an issue and it was discussed that this was more specifically about a coherent school web presence.

It was noted that REF2021related questions, including UoA submissions, will be discussed regardless of school structures. The challenge relating to REF2021 should be removed.

1. **Teaching Learning & Student Experience (including the Legal Advice Centre)**

Entry grades and/or any useful additional metrics should be added to this section.

Benchmarking reference points to our key competitors should be added including TEF subject levels.

It was discussed that there are opportunities to expand the courses offered that include a year studying abroad. A single school could allow expansion to the organisations currently involved. It was noted that these programmes have proved very popular in Law with over 400 applications from high-quality students.

1. **Social Responsibility**

It was noted that the largest difference in approach to SR was the support provided for external relations in Law. This was seen an opportunity to be developed in SoSS.

1. **Structure and Management**

It was requested that the statements around additional PSS staff posts that might be required should be qualified to understand the roles of these additional staff.

The options for the different organisational structures were presented to provoke a rethink completely across a merged school. It may be more appropriate not to design a new structure completely and allow departments to develop more organically.

The appendices show that both schools are very similar on a pro-rata basis with the exception of non-pay (4 times higher in SoSS) and research income (1/3 lower per FTE in Law).

It was noted that E&D information was being prepared.

1. **Professional Support Services**

It was noted that the PSS support provided at a faculty level should also be included in this section.

The previous largest risk identified was the uncertainty of the Student Lifecycle Project (SLP) outcomes. Now that an extended timeline has been agreed, the outcomes of SLP should be clearer and the paper can be updated to reflect this.

1. **External Branding**

If The University of Manchester School of Law was to be used as a title it would mean minimal risk regarding search engines. It is perceived that students identify themselves with a ‘School of Law’ regardless of the internal naming convention.

1. **Communications and Engagement**

Working Group members should continue to receive feedback from colleagues and face to face meetings should be scheduled where possible.

An update will be sent to staff as soon as possible to inform them of the agreed timeline changes.

It was requested that all members on the Working Group feedback their completed sections to Vikki Goddard by 8 August. The position paper will then be developed and be circulated towards the end of August, for consideration and sign-off. Due to Working Group members’ availability during August, it is anticipated that agreement will have to be given by correspondence.

1. **Date of next meeting**

TBC

**Action Points from the Working Group 9 July 2018**

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| **Description** | **To be actioned by** | **Date of Action** |
| Engagement timetable and mechanisms to be developed further for consideration at next Working Group meeting. | Head of C & M | Was 4 July 2018.  Updated timetable to be developed by 31 August 2018. |
| Working Group meeting scheduled for 23 July to be cancelled | Gemma Keaveney | ASAP |
| August/September dates for Working Group to be scheduled | Gemma Keaveney | By 31 July 2018 |
| Updates to high-level position paper contributions, including mitigating actions for the identified risks and identification of opportunities relating to internationalisation, to be made and sent to Vikki Goddard. | Working Group | By 8 August 2018 |
| Incorporation of all Working Group contributions into one position paper. | VG | By 17 August 2018 |
| Agreement of position paper for circulation | Working Group | By 31 August 2018 |

**Decision points from the Working Group 9 July 2018**

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| **Description** | **Date of decision** |
| Engagement timetable to be extended. A proposal paper, if there is a decision made to proceed, will be submitted to Senate no earlier than February 2019 | 9 July 2018 |