

## Levies Panel

### Terms of reference

#### 1. Purpose

The Levies Panel was set up in 2016 to replace the Joint Advisory Committee as the principal body of the Colleges to monitor the levels and purposes of intercollegiate spend and spend allocation between the Colleges. The purposes of the Panel are currently:

- a. to review annually the level of levies on the Colleges previously agreed by the Bursars' Committee for ongoing (annual) payment, and to keep under review the allocation methodology of the levy between the Colleges and other bodies;
- b. to consider proposals for new (one-off or annual) levies and advise the Bursars' Committee and the Senior Tutors' Committee appropriately on their introduction and management;
- c. to identify areas of financial transaction common to the majority or all of the Colleges and to discuss ways to re-formulate such transactions into an intercollegiate levy; and
- d. to consider any other matters referred to it by the Bursars' Committee or the Bursars' Business Committee.

#### 2. Standing

The Levies Panel is constituted primarily from the Bursars' Business Committee. Business is conducted on a confidential basis.

The Panel has no power to make decisions binding on, or to represent the views of, any College: equally, the Panel is not subject to the direction or control of the Colleges, either jointly or severally.

In addition, the Panel does not have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Bursars' Committee, except where the Committee expressly delegates its authority in a specific circumstance.

All recommendations shall be provided to the Bursars' Committee in the form of written minutes and/or a written report for discussion and approval at the next convenient meeting of the Committee, providing that the Chair has discretion to allow for formal decisions to be made by circulation.

Any advice provided to Colleges and other institutions, either through members of the Panel, or through staff of the Office of Intercollegiate Services or subsequently through the Bursars' Committee, is provided on the basis that the advice is offered without any warranty as to its accuracy and that no liability shall fall on the Committee or any of its officers or members for such advice.

#### 3. Membership

The Levies Panel includes in its membership:

- a) a member of the Bursars' Business Committee specifically elected by the Bursars' Committee for the remit of this committee (Chair);
- b) the other members of the Bursars' Business Committee *ex officio*;
- c) the Secretary and Associate Secretaries of the Senior Tutors' Committee *ex officio*.

The Sub-Committee may propose to the Bursars' Committee for its membership to include other members from other bodies, either on a fixed term or permanent basis.

### Officers

The Chair of the Panel shall be elected by the Bursars' Committee and shall serve for a term of four years. The Head of the Office of Intercollegiate Services shall serve as Secretary to arrange and record the meetings.

### Attendees

The Chair and/or Secretary of the Panel, at his or her or their discretion, may permit other persons to attend all or part of one or more meetings, providing that permission has been sought in advance of any meeting. Attendees do not have any formal rights.

It is expected that the Presidents of the students' unions will be invited for the consideration of levies that directly relate to the quality of the student experience.

The accountant for the Office of Intercollegiate Services will normally attend all meetings.

## **4. Meetings of the Levies Panel**

Meetings are convened by the Secretary: the Panel meets as business requires, but it is anticipated that it will meet during the Lent Term in any one year to consider levies approved on an annual academic year basis, and in the Michaelmas Term to consider levies approved on an annual calendar year (i.e. a February/March 20xx meeting for a levy for 20xx-20(xx+1), and an October/November 20xx meeting for a levy for 20(xx+1).)

Notice of the date, time and place of meetings, and agenda and papers, is provided by the Secretary, in a manner to be determined by him or her.

The Panel shall be considered quorate if it includes four Bursars and one Senior Tutor present at the meeting.

Attendance at the Committee may include remote attendance through teleconferencing or other mechanisms, providing it is clear that the members can contribute effectively to any discussion and vote.

In the absence of the Chair, the Chair will nominate another member of the Committee to chair that particular meeting. Otherwise, the Panel determines amongst those members present who chairs the meeting as its first item of business: this may be agreed by circulation in advance. In the absence of the Secretary, the Chair will appoint another member of the Panel to record the meeting.

In the consideration of any individual levy, the Panel will normally expect the budget-holder or other key representative(s) to be present to explain the levy request, any spend in the previous year, and the reasons for any request for a levy increase. The Chair and/or Secretary may waive the expectation of attendance if either the levy amount and/or increase is small (< £5,000 and/or <(RPI+1)% increase) relative to any previous request.

Recommendations of the Panel are made by consensus. Where a consensus is not reached, and where a recommendation is nevertheless taken forward, the circumstances of any dissent shall be recorded with the recommendation and transmitted to the appropriate Committee(s).

## **4. Conduct of business outside of meetings**

The Panel may agree to conduct business by circulation, particularly if it is not quorate at a meeting. Any decision agreed by circulation shall require a minimum number of four responses from Bursars and one response from a Senior Tutor.

The Panel may also agree which matters it may wish to delegate to a single member of the Panel, to take forward on its behalf. Any item of delegated business is reported on at its next meeting.

The Panel may, at its discretion, set up (and otherwise suspend or disband) Working Groups, providing that these relate directly to the purposes of the Panel outlined above. The Committee may establish the membership, terms of reference, and duration of the Working Group, and shall report on these at least annually to the Bursars' Committee.

## **5. Reserved business**

The Panel's business shall include the consideration of reserved business. Matters which are deemed to be reserved business include:

- information for note or discussion relating to the individual salaries of persons employed by the University or one or more of the Colleges;
- information for note or discussion relating to the performance on individual persons employed by the University or one or more of the Colleges;
- any other matter at the discretion of the Chair and/or Secretary (but normally limited to matters of commercial sensitivity).

Where matters have been identified as reserved business, no junior members may normally be in attendance, but attendees may remain present at the discretion of the Chair.

Papers and minutes of reserved business shall be circulated only to members of the Panel, and shall not be published.

## **6. Terms of reference**

The terms of reference of the Panel are agreed by the Bursars' Committee on the recommendation of the Bursars' Business Committee. The Panel shall receive the terms of reference at least annually for review.