



## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held at 3.00pm on Tuesday, 18 May 2010 in the Dartington Suite, Wallscourt Farmhouse, Frenchay campus

Present: Gillian Camm (Chairman), Bob Barnett, Rosamund Blomfield-Smith, Prof Paul Gough, Iain Gray, Dr Jane Harrington, John Laycock, Sonia Mills, Katy Phillips, Rt Rev Barry Rogerson, Lise Seager, Prof Graham Upton, Graham van der Lely, Prof Steve West

Apologies: Chris Booy, Wil Harris

In Attendance: Bill Marshall, Colin Offler, Katie Owen-Jones, John Rushforth, Gail Wilson (for minutes G10.5.4 - 6)

### **MEMBERSHIP**

G10.5.1 The Chairman welcomed Colin Offler, who had been elected SRC President for 2010/11 and would therefore join the Board from July 2010.

### **MINUTES**

G10.5.2 The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2010 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **IT PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS**

G10.5.3 Further to minute G10.3.6 and the briefing note provided at the awayday, it was reported that discussions were continuing with Hewlett Packard on the various strands of the proposed partnership and proposals would be brought to the July meeting. A briefing on the draft specification would be arranged for the review group, which could also be opened for other Governors.

### **STUDENTS' UNION CONSTITUTION**

G10.5.4 Received, Paper G10/5/1, the new draft constitution for the Students' Union. The SRC (Student Representative Council) Vice-President presented the constitution and the main changes, the aims of which were, firstly, to improve the structures and student involvement and, secondly, to comply with the new Charities Act under which the Union would have to register as a charity in its own right. She was seeking comments and advice from the Board at this point to inform the final version. The main changes were: to arrangements for the Board of Trustees, the Executive and the Student Council; and, the proposal for a fifth sabbatical officer. The SRC had voted in favour of an additional officer some time ago to enable the executive team to be even more effective in representing and supporting students, especially in the context of increased student numbers and the student village. The Union was seeking an increase in the block grant to finance the position. The SRC Vice-President emphasised the good work and range of activities carried out by the Union.

G10.5.5 The Vice-Chancellor endorsed the view of the strength of the Union and commented on its national reputation and good track record in innovating and delivering activities. However, in the context of cuts in funding the challenge for both the Union and the University was to find a sustainable and affordable model to ensure that the Union was financially stable and secure. The Assistant Vice-Chancellor Finance and Commercial Developments reported that, following the budget meeting, his recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor and the Finance and IT Committee would be that the Union's block grant should be frozen, rather than suffer the cuts imposed on others. It was also noted that there were other legal forms that the Union might take and which should be considered. The SRC Vice-President reported that the Union had looked at other options and had decided to use the model provided by the NUS and the Charity Commission, but would keep this under review.

G10.5.6 The Board thanked the SRC Vice-President for presenting the paper and the work that had been done, and welcomed the opportunity to comment at this point. Any detailed comments should be sent to the Clerk. The Board delegated further consideration of the additional post to the Finance and IT Committee alongside the block grant for 2010/11. The Chairman thanked the Union officers for the work that the Union did to support students.

### **INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY**

G10.5.7 Received, Paper G10/5/2, a revised Strategy for international recruitment. The Board was being asked to endorse the level and scope of the ambition set out in the Strategy. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor recognised that the plans were ambitious and there were risks involved, but the University's processes were robust and would ensure that those risks were managed. Furthermore, the approach suggested was staged so that the strategy and timing of progression could be modified on the basis of experience.

G10.5.8 Issues discussed:

- the experience of international students: both the Union and the University accepted that more needed to be done and both had plans in place to enhance the support they provided. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported on enhanced language support and cultural experiences that would be made available in 2010/11;
- the choice of countries for particular types of activity, the data to support those decisions, and whether they were viable. In particular, the limited opportunities now available in China and how that had affected the proposals for developments there;
- the costings set out and other resources required, such as management time and input, to fulfil some of the plans;
- the potential impact on UWE's reputation. Ensuring the quality of provision and hence the University's reputation was of primary concern. There was a balance to be achieved between quality and expansion, and the expansion set out would be controlled and sensible. The processes underpinning developments and the management capacity and capability to develop sound relationships with partner organisations, were essential to that;
- the targets appeared to be largely appropriate, though the target of 10,000 transnational students by 2014 seemed ambitious. It was stressed that the longer term targets were indicative only and would not be the only factor driving the policy.

G10.5.9 The Board endorsed the approach set out in the Strategy and, subject to the clarification of longer term targets above, agreed that the University should:

- set a target of increasing the number of full-fee paying, on-campus international students from 1300 to at least 2150 by 2015;
- aim to increase the average fee collected per student to £8000 for undergraduate and £9000 for postgraduate (at 2009/10 values) over the next three years;
- establish strategic partnerships for delivery of transnational education provision with a target of 10,000 students pursuing UWE programmes overseas by 2014/15;
- aim for the HEFCE target of 10% of annual turnover from international sources.

G10.5.10 It was also agreed that: one of the Student Forum meetings in 2010/11 would focus on the international student experience; and, a briefing session on the Taylors College relationship and how that had been developed would be provided to Governors at a future meeting.

### **GOVERNANCE**

G10.5.11 A paper setting out recommendations from the Nominations and Governance Committee relating to a revised committee structure, frequency of meetings, a schedule of delegations from the Board to committees, and the roles of Governors, was received (Paper G10/5/3). The Chairman commented on: the recommendation to retain a Human Resources Committee at present; the staff forum; and, her intention to include a few informal meetings for specific purposes during the year. The revised committee structure and other changes set out were **APPROVED**, subject to minor alterations to the composition of the Finance Committee (for reserved business) and the quorum for the Audit Committee.

### **KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE STRATEGY**

G10.5.12 Received, Paper G10/5/4, a Knowledge Exchange Strategy which built on work previously considered by the Board. The Pro Vice-Chancellor introduced the strategy, focussing on the different types of engagement and how those were defined in the document. Central to the Strategy was the University's civic role which was already a major aspect of its activity, but which needed to be built up so that it was more widely recognised and contributed to the University's reputation.

G10.5.13 The civic role was explored further in the discussion that followed. Although government focus might move away from, for instance, widening participation, the University should not therefore abandon activities that it regarded as fundamental to its role and purpose, such as community engagement, and should find other ways of funding that type of work. There were opportunities for involving staff in new and different ways, for instance through the University's involvement in the national co-ordinating centre on public engagement. Other points discussed were: the development of KPIs for knowledge exchange that were being worked on, and the shift in culture that had taken place since the notion of 'knowledge exchange' was introduced at UWE in 2007. The Board **APPROVED** the Knowledge Exchange Strategy.

### **HARTPURY COLLEGE**

G10.5.14 The Academic Agreement and related financial arrangements between the College and the University were received for approval, Paper G10/5/5. They would be presented to Hartpury College's governing body for approval the following week. Declarations of interest: Graham van der Lely as Chairman

of the College; Rosamund Blomfield Smith and Bob Barnett as Hartpury Governors.

- G10.5.15 The Vice-Chancellor reminded the Board that the new agreement had been under discussion for a considerable time, but he was pleased that a conclusion had now been reached which would help to stabilise the relationship for the next few years and fully recognised the nature of the relationship. He commented in particular on the context, governance and management of the relationship, arrangements for monitoring of performance, and the schedule of finance. The agreement was considered robust enough to accommodate future changes. Finalisation of the agreement was welcomed by Governors, and particularly by those on the College's Board. The Board **APPROVED** the Academic Agreement and related Schedules between the University and Hartpury College.

### **ACADEMIC REGULATIONS**

- G10.5.16 Received, Paper G10/5/6, changes to the Academic Regulations for ratification of Academic Board's approval. The changes related to regulations for: the Shell Award Framework; work-based learning; postgraduate research degree programmes; and the Professional and Postgraduate Certificate in Education awards. The Board **ENDORSED** the changes set out in the paper.

### **REVIEWS OF SUBJECT AREAS**

- G10.5.17 The Vice-Chancellor presented the reports of recent reviews of subject areas: Politics, Philosophy and International Relations (Paper G10/5/7); Sociology, Criminology and Social Policy (Paper G10/5/8). He explained the background, described the process and outlined the recommendations and action taken to date.

- G10.5.18 Governors welcomed the reports and asked various questions. Most of the discussion was around the number of awards with a small number of students, the viability of award routes within a modular structure, and the work undertaken within the portfolio review to reduce the number of modules and awards available. It was necessary to take this further to consolidate the range of awards offered and review the degree of flexibility and coherence within them, though that would be more difficult in a time of funding cuts as the effects for staff could not be offset by significant programme development. Deans would be expected to lead on this using the management information now available to them, which included the National Student Survey results and other qualitative as well as quantitative data. Although these reviews and two others had been undertaken as Vice-Chancellor initiated projects, in future they would be embedded into a faculty-based process for academic review, driven by the Dean and Executive. It was suggested that there might be an adverse perception of the value of awards that were discontinued which could be detrimental to graduate recruitment: it was thought that the strength of the UWE brand could be used to help counteract any adverse effect if necessary.

### **VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

- G10.5.19 A report summarising matters recently considered by the University's Senior Management Team and not appearing elsewhere on the agenda was received (Paper G10/5/9).

Minutes G10.5.20-21 are confidential to the Board.

## **FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

G10.5.22 Received, Paper G10/5/10, the monthly financial report for March 2010. The Board noted: that auditors would be looking carefully at asset values in the current situation; the pension risk; the reasons for the significant cash and debt positions; the need to monitor carefully how the cash balance was invested and to achieve a balance between security and high interest rates. The University Treasurer invited comments and feedback on these regular reports to be sent to him as it was important to know if they were not meeting the needs of the Board.

Minutes G10.5.23- 25 are confidential to the Board.

The Board received a number of items for information only.

### **ACADEMIC BOARD**

G10.5.26 Received, Paper G10/5/11, a report on the meeting of Academic Board held on 24 March 2010.

### **AWARDS OF HONORARY DEGREES**

G10.5.27 Received, Paper G10/5/12, a list of the honorary degrees conferred by the University during 2009.

### **CORPORATE SEAL**

G10.5.28 Noted, documents sealed since the last meeting of the Board, Paper G10/5/13.

### **DATES OF MEETINGS 2010/11**

G10.5.29 A calendar of dates of meetings for the Board and committees had been circulated separately to Governors.

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

G10.5.30 6 July 2010.

Minute G10.5.31 is confidential to the Board.

### **DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

G10.5.32 The Chairman invited nominations or expressions of interest in the role of Deputy Chairman of the Board, to be sent to her as soon as possible.

### **SRC PRESIDENT**

G10.5.33 The Chairman noted that this was Katy Phillips's last Board meeting. On behalf of the Board, she thanked Katy for her contribution, especially for representing the student experience in Board discussions, and wished her well for the future.

Meeting closed 5.35pm.