



University of the  
West of England

**CONFIRMED**

## **ACADEMIC BOARD**

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board Committee held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2006.

**Present:** Sir H Newby (Chair), M Adams, Professor A Bensted, Professor M Boddy, J Bradley, Professor G Channon, N Clough, Professor R Cuthbert, P Dowdall, Professor C Fudge, R Gillibrand, Professor P Gough, S Grive, A Habib, T Harrison, B Hawkins, W Jones, M Keppel-Palmer, N Khurana, R Lawton, G Mann, Dr S Newby, D Passfield, K Phillips, C Rex, Professor R Ritchie, Dr J Rogers, J Rushforth, B Senior.

**Apologies:** Professor J Duffield, Dr K Foreman, D Francombe, Professor S Hagen, Professor S West.

**In attendance:** R Bond (representing Professor S Hagen), C Croudace, K Hicks, K Owen-Jones (for minute AB06.11.8), M Wheeler.

### **AB06.11.1 WELCOME**

The Vice Chancellor welcomed members to the second meeting of the academic year, and particularly new members.

### **AB06.11.2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2006**

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006, subject to one amendment:

AB.06.10.11 (f) – replace “student representatives” with “student representative coordinators”.

**Action: Clerk**

### **AB06.11.3 VICE CHANCELLOR’S REPORT**

**11.3.1 Recruitment:** The Vice Chancellor reported that recruitment to full-time undergraduate HEFCE-funded programmes was 8% lower than in the previous year, but remained within the HEFCE tolerance band. Recruitment overall to UWE was down by 5-6%; however, conversion rates had improved, mainly attributed to the availability of the Student Village. Fewer students had registered for postgraduate taught programmes, probably due to the impact of fees. However, the numbers of postgraduate research students and of overseas students had increased, bucking the national trend. Preparation was under way for the next recruitment round and would be informed by discussions within the Student Experience Programme, including Welcome Weekend 07 and the reviews of the academic portfolio and curriculum content.

**11.3.2 Planning:** The Vice Chancellor reported that planning meetings

were under way, with further meetings scheduled to take place in December 2006. Members of UMG would review with Deans and Heads of Service the data and indicators required to inform business decisions in the future, thus avoiding the generation of unnecessary paperwork. Consideration would also need to be given to the possibility of ceasing some activity in order to facilitate emerging plans.

**Action: UMG, Deans, Heads of Service**

- 11.3.3 Faculty restructuring: The Vice Chancellor confirmed that the advertisements for the four Executive Deans would be published immediately, with a view to making appointments early in 2007. A consultation document covering a range of issues which needed to be addressed would be made available in December.

**Action: Deputy Vice Chancellor**

- 11.3.4 Professional services restructuring: The Deputy Vice Chancellor confirmed that the Head of CRIGS had made a number of proposals for the way forward for the Service. He also confirmed that a paper outlining the proposed future approach of Library Services would be submitted to the December meeting of the Board.

**Action: Deputy Vice Chancellor**

- 11.3.5 Academic Board representation on University Committees: The Vice Chancellor sought the Board's view in principle about the possibility of his nomination of a representative of Academic Board being a non-member of the Board. Members welcomed this proposal and agreed that any such nominee should become a co-opted member of the Board. In light of this endorsement, the Vice Chancellor would nominate Academic Board representatives to the Professorial and Honorary Degrees Committee, the Joint Diversity Committee and the Joint Student Affairs Committee.

**Action: Vice Chancellor**

AB06.11.4

#### **INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AT UWE**

A paper was tabled by the Dean of HLSS.

- 11.4.1 The paper was a summary preview of a proposal to create a Centre for Intercultural Communication (CICC).

- 11.4.2 The Centre would engage with the University's values and vision and its priority areas of the student experience, knowledge exchange, diversity, research and the UWE Federation. It would be a main component of the internationalisation of the University and its strategic, comprehensive and unique approach to intercultural communication would be a distinctive feature for the University.

- 11.4.3 Members agreed to endorse the proposal, inviting the Dean of HLSS to include in further discussions: communication between socio-economic groups; the possibility of contributing to the second and third years of the Round Table module and to the Widening Participation strategy. The student representatives envisaged benefits for the student population.

- 11.4.4 The Dean of HLSS would submit to the December 2006 meeting

of the Board a fuller proposal for a Centre for Intercultural Communication, including identified activities and services that would be required to realise the proposal.

**Action: Dean of HLSS**

AB06.11.5

#### **STUDENT EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME**

Paper AB/06/11/2 was tabled.

11.5.1 The Dean of Students spoke to the paper, giving an update on SEP activities. A major planning meeting for "Welcome 07" would be held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2006. A joint event for the Round Table and Employability Projects had been held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2006; the resultant suggestions and ideas had been published on the SEP Sharepoint website.

11.5.2 A workshop would be held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006 with participants from the faculty Round Table pilots to learn from experiences to date.

11.5.3 Consultation with employers over the developments in the Employability project would be progressed in the near future.

11.5.4 The Dean of Students would submit to the December 2006 meeting of the Academic Board a further update on developments, including detailed project plans for all projects. This would include work on the development of the Student Handbook.

**Action: Dean of Students**

AB06.11.6

#### **NSS 2007**

11.6.1 The Dean of Students reported that communications were being drafted to send to all relevant students and staff with details of the survey which would take place between 5<sup>th</sup> February and April 2007, and would include NHS-funded students for the first time. The Board agreed to ask the Dean of Students to survey faculties via Deans about the way faculties managed the 2006 survey, with a view to highlighting and disseminating good practice.

**Action: Dean of Students**

11.6.2 The Academic Registrar reported that the HERO TQI/NSS web site would be undergoing significant development and would be frozen between 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006 and July 2007. The Board referred this matter to Learning, Teaching And Assessment Committee to discuss the implications of this.

**Action: Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee**

AB06.11.7

#### **RAE 2008**

The Pro Vice Chancellor reported that all submissions in the latest phase of preparation for the RAE 2008 would now be sent to internal and, where identified, external reviewers. He reminded members of the Board of the 60 studentships currently available and highlighted the recent adjustment to regulations governing these studentships, which had facilitated the involvement of SMEs.

AB06.11.8

#### **DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME**

Paper AB/06/11/3 was received.

The Vice Chancellor welcomed the Clerk to the Board of Governors to the meeting for this item.

11.8.1 The Assistant Vice Chancellor reported that the Disability Equality Scheme had been drafted in response to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 2005) requirement that public authorities promote disability equality, bringing the disability equality legislation into line with race equality legislation. This Scheme was deemed to be the first step towards creating a Single Equality Scheme for the University, which would be submitted to Academic Board before the end of the 2006/2007 academic year, following wide consultation.

11.8.2 The Clerk to the Board of Governors confirmed that the latest version of the draft document would be published on the intranet over the next few days; she would notify members of the URL. She invited comments on the draft, and particularly the identification of any gaps in the document and any priority issues.

11.8.3 Members made the following suggestions for consideration during the next phase of consultation:

- (a) the feasibility of links between targets and the bursary scheme
- (b) the scope of the scheme to include all students
- (c) the advisability of referring in this document to the proposed Single Equality Scheme
- (d) the addition to the Action Plan of "Identification of Current Good Practice".

11.8.4 The Clerk to the Board of Governors invited members to draw the attention of faculty Diversity Committees to the current consultation, and particularly sought feedback on timeframes and prioritisation.

11.8.5 The Board agreed to broadly endorse the draft.

AB06.11.9

#### **DRAFT KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE POLICY**

Paper AB/06/11/4 was received.

11.9.1 In the absence of the Head of CRIGS, the Deputy Vice Chancellor confirmed that the draft paper set out the issues facing UWE in line with the University's Mission as a leading Knowledge Exchange University, providing a possible framework for a university knowledge exchange policy. The paper had received broad support from the Student Affairs Committee and from a meeting of Deans and Heads of Service. The paper would be presented to meetings of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and of the Joint Policy and Resources Committee.

11.9.2 The Board broadly endorsed the paper, with the following comments:

- (a) the University must be able to respond quickly to new developments
- (b) more emphasis should be given to the existing CPD accreditation in the University
- (c) more robust reference should be made to epistemology
- (d) the use of the word "community" should be reviewed.

11.9.3 The Board agreed to broadly endorse the draft.

AB06.11.10

### **INSTITUTES**

The Board received an oral report from the Deputy Vice Chancellor. Invitations had been sent to Deans to nominate possible areas for consideration and discussions had commenced with possible funding bodies. HEFCE would provide some start-up funding. In response to a request from one Dean, the Deputy Vice Chancellor confirmed that he would accept up to three submissions from any one faculty, with an indication of priority.

AB06.11.11

### **REPORTS FROM FACULTY BOARDS**

11.11.1 The Board received brief oral reports from Deans.

11.11.2 All Faculty Boards had discussed the First Destination Statistics, and some concerns were raised about the accuracy of some of the data and also about the lack of a longitudinal survey of graduates.

11.11.3 Issues discussed at individual Faculty Board meetings included:

- (a) the NSS 2006 survey (Law)
- (b) excellent progress made with Federation Colleges; faculty restructuring and the position of the Environmental Scientists (FAS)
- (c) the new method for annual reporting on research; the faculty's record earnings of £3.7m in research and knowledge exchange (CEMS)
- (d) good financial outturn; the European CPD contract with Bosnia; the appointment of four new Professors; the success or otherwise of the new faculty board structure (BBS)
- (e) NSS 2006; review of induction; report on Supervised Postgraduate Research; assessment offences (EDU)
- (f) major refurbishment of Bower Ashton site; recruitment; the conduct of face-to-face interviews; monitoring and evaluation processes (AMD)
- (g) faculty restructuring; endorsement of planning papers (HLSS)
- (h) recruitment; endorsement of Diversity Strategy and of planning papers; welcomed Joint bid to RAE of Geography and Environmental Studies (FBE)
- (i) TQI website; organisational culture (HSC)

AB06.11.12

### **STUDENT MATTERS**

Two tabled papers were received.

11.12.1 The SRC President introduced the new student representatives to the Board. He reported on the following activities

- (a) in the recent referendum, 89% of those voting had indicated their wish to remain in the NUS
- (b) the recent National Demonstration led by the NUS on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2006 had been deemed to be successful.

11.12.2 The SRC President reported that faculty student representatives had raised several issues at the first SRC meeting of the academic year, and particularly:

- (a) access to UWEOnline
- (b) late publication and quality of teaching timetables
- (c) public transport
- (d) car parking
- (e) the inconsistent approach to reading weeks; it was agreed to refer this issue to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee.

**Action: Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee**

11.12.3 The SRC President reported on the process for electing student representatives in each faculty, which highlighted a number of inconsistencies in the approach taken by faculties. He invited the Board to consider introducing a standard agreed process, particularly in light of the forthcoming faculty restructuring. The Board agreed to ask the SRC President to take the matter to faculty boards, and from there to the Student Affairs Committee.

**Action: SRC President**

**AB06.11.13 SU OUT-TURN, ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

Paper AB/06/11/5 was received and noted.

**AB06.11.14 UNIVERSITY RESPONSE TO BURGESS GROUP**

Paper AB/06/11/6 was received and noted.

**AB06.11.15 MEETINGS OF SUB COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES**

**AB06.11.16 ANNUAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Paper AB/06/11/7 was received and noted. The paper identified priorities for the enhancement of learning and teaching to inform University strategic planning and the LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE business plan for 2006/2007.

AB06.11.17 Paper AB/06/11/8 (minutes of the Joint Policy and Resources Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2006) and tabled paper AB06/11/9 (minutes of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2006) were received and noted.

AB06.11.18 The Board noted that the following Committees would report to the December 2006 meeting:

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee  
 Joint Student Affairs  
 Programme Approval Committee  
 Joint External Affairs Committee  
 UWE Federation  
 International Group

**AB06.11.19 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

2.00 pm, 20<sup>th</sup> December 2006 room 3D36  
 2.00 pm, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007 room 3D36  
 2.00 pm, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007, room 3D36  
 2.00 pm, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2007 room 3A22  
 2.00 pm, 13<sup>th</sup> June 2007 room 3A22  
 2.00 pm, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2007 room 3D36