



CONFIRMED

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Wednesday 17th October 2007

Present: Professor S West (Chair), Professor C Aitchison, Professor M Boddy, J Bradley, Professor A Chandler, Professor G Channon, A Cheshire, Professor R Cuthbert, R Danes, Dr T Davies, Professor P Gough, Professor I Gow, Professor P Hampson, T Harrison, T McGoldrick, D Passfield, C Rex, Professor R Ritchie, J Rushforth, J Thomas, Dr S Watson.

Apologies: J Askew, P Blatchford, P Catley, Professor J Duffield, Professor C Fudge, S Grive, Professor S Hagen, Dr J Harrington, K Owen-Jones.

In attendance: K Hicks, Dr E Smith, M Wheeler.

AB07.10.1 MEMBERSHIP

The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of the academic year. The Chair confirmed that elections were taking place in faculties and in the SRC for the vacant places on the Board.

AB07.10.2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 13TH JUNE 2007

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 13th June 2007.

AB07.10.3 SERVICE ENHANCEMENT MANAGER

The Board noted the appointment of Jenny Wills to the post of Service Enhancement Manager, based in the Academic Registry.

AB07.10.4 ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPLAINTS

Paper AB/07/10/2 was received.

AB07.10.4.1 The paper was withdrawn. It was agreed that a revised paper should be submitted to the December 2007 meeting of the Board, setting out the process for handling complaints in Accommodation Services, and identifying trends in the complaints received.

Action: Clerk to the Governors

AB07.10.5 GOVERNANCE

Paper AB/07/10/3 was received.

AB07.10.5.1 The Board noted the following modifications to the Committee Handbook:

- (a) tenures for SRC representatives would expire on 30th June 2008
- (b) Hartpury should be represented on Academic Board, the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee and the Programme Approval Committee
- (c) the Committee structure diagram would be revised, to include the

new Collaborative Provision and Partnerships Committee, and to show the reporting lines to this Committee from the new UWE Federation and International Management Groups.

AB07.10.5.1.1 The Board approved the proposed changes to the terms of reference of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

AB07.10.5.1.2 The Board noted that the Academic Registrar would progress discussions on the composition and terms of reference of the UWE Federation Management Group.

Action: Academic Registrar

AB07.10.5.1.3 A revised version of the Committee Handbook would be circulated to all members and to key colleagues.

Action: Academic Registrar

AB07.10.5.2 Paper AB/07/10/4 was received.

AB07.10.5.2.1 The Board approved the proposal that the Joint Policy and Resources Committee should continue to operate and to have the same purpose and terms of reference as at present, but with an adjusted membership, to allow the Executive to work more effectively with the Chairs of the Board of Governors' Committees. The Board approved the membership as: Chair of Governors; Deputy Chair of Governors; Chairs of Finance and IT, Estates, Personnel, and Joint Student Affairs Committees; Vice Chancellor (Chair) and Deputy Vice Chancellors or their alternates nominated by the Vice Chancellor.

AB07.10.5.2.2 The Board approved the disbandment of the External Relations Committee, and the replacing of it with the establishment of an Advisory Board in each Faculty designed to explore with Executives the way in which Faculties connected with the region and wider agendas, identifying significant stakeholders who may be able to advise and support the University in a number of different ways. There would also be a forum for representatives of the Advisory Boards, the Board of Governors and the Vice Chancellor's Executive Team to discuss future direction and strategies. A series of themed dinners would also allow the Board of Governors and the Senior Management Team to engage with regional, local and national stakeholders.

AB07.10.5.3 The Board approved the Chair's nomination of Professor Cara Aitchison as the Academic Board representative on the Professorial and Honorary Degrees Committee.

AB07.10.5.4 The Board noted that Academic Board nominations to the Joint Student Affairs Committee and the Joint Diversity Committee would be confirmed following the appointment or election to all places on the Board.

Action: Academic Registrar

AB07.10.6 **ACTING VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**
Paper AB/07/10/5 was received.

AB07.10.6.1 The Board noted updates on the Employability Strand of the Graduate Development Programme, the Research Strategy, Faculty Restructuring, Professional Services Restructuring and Personal Contacts.

AB07.10.6.2 The Board discussed the proposed tenure for Heads of Department of "fixed-term for 3 years with the possibility of a 2 year extension". The

Board welcomed the development, and highlighted the need for energy and enthusiasm to be brought to the roles in taking forward a vision for the Departments. The following modification was suggested: “fixed term for *up to 3 years*”, to allow for the standing down from the position at an earlier stage in the tenure if desired.

AB07.10.6.3 The Chair would take forward members’ comments to discussions with the Trades’ Unions and the Board of Governors.

Action: Chair

AB07.10.6.4 In the absence of Professor Fudge, the Chair reported that preparations for RAE 2008 were progressing according to schedule. Twenty one submissions had been reviewed by the RAE Working Party and feedback was being given to RAE Champions. All submissions had been considered individually, bearing in mind the reputation versus volume model. The Board noted that volume had increased, to allow for the inclusion of early researchers.

AB07.10.7 **COMBINED PROGRAMMES**
A revised paper AB07/10/8 was tabled.

AB07.10.7.1 The Chair welcomed Adrienne Mason, the Joint Honours Programme Director, to the meeting.

AB07.10.7.2 The presentation highlighted to the Board the need to review the strategy for the University’s Combined Programmes, in order to enhance the student experience by removing unpopular combinations, and by investigating more attractive market-led combinations.

AB07.10.7.3 The Board was concerned that the results of the UWE Student Satisfaction Survey demonstrated that students on Combined Programmes were more dissatisfied than other students. With 38% of half awards recruiting fewer than 10 FTEs in 2006/2007, and providing only 7% of the total students on the Combined Programmes, the Board agreed that urgent consideration should be given to a new strategy, to enhance the student experience.

AB07.10.7.4 The Board agreed to:

endorse the proposal to take forward discussions with faculties about the discontinuation of individual combinations with low recruitment

AB07.10.7.5 endorse the proposal to discontinue half awards with low recruitment, proposing that this should apply to all half awards recruiting fewer than 20 FTEs.

AB07.10.7.6 invite the Working Group to review the 3-block timetable.

AB07.10.7.7 progress urgent consideration of support for and management of any vulnerable discipline areas resulting from the review.

AB07.10.8 **UWE FEDERATION**

AB07.10.8.1 Assistant Vice Chancellor Channon’s oral report referred to the achievements of the UWE Federation to date: partnerships had been formalised with 12 partner colleges; 5 Federation Academic Agreements had been signed; 22 Foundation degrees had been validated; 191 of 321 funded places had been filled. Although the speed of developments had

placed greater strain than anticipated on staff, the Board was assured that the University's reputation had not been damaged by the rapid development of the UWE Federation.

AB07.10.8.2 The experience of the last academic year had highlighted the need to review core aspects of the UWE Federation, including the definition of the Federation as a collective, internal communication and coordination, engagement with the initiative across the institution, the level of HE experience in partner colleges.

AB07.10.8.3 Consideration would need to be given to how to disseminate excellent practice, evident in both UWE and some of the partner colleges.

AB07.10.8.4 The first meeting of the new UWE Federation Management Group would be a brainstorming session to

- (a) clarify the UWE Federation Strategy, including a clear definition of the Federation
- (b) agree the concept of the UWE Federation, including geographical boundaries, preferred membership, benefits for all involved
- (c) codify the individual partnerships
- (d) consolidate existing operational and governance arrangements.

AB07.10.8.5 Consideration of operational aspects of the UWE Federation would include discussions about ownership, responsibilities, possible shared services, a transparent and clear funding model.

AB07.10.8.6 A UWE Federation Office would be created in the Academic Registry, with new posts to be advertised shortly.

AB07.10.8.7 The Assistant Vice Chancellor placed on record his thanks to the many colleagues whose considerable efforts were very much appreciated, and particularly Di Francombe (Admissions and International Recruitment), Neil Larsen (Environment and Technology), Alastair Osborn and Pauline Hume (Academic Registry).

AB07.10.8.8 The Board endorsed the approach being taken by the Assistant Vice Chancellor and would welcome a written report on progress at a future date.

Action: Assistant Vice Chancellor

AB07.10.9 **UWE AT SWINDON**

AB07.10.9.1 Deputy Vice Chancellor Rushforth reported that following encouragement from the Regional Development Agency and discussions with Swindon Borough Council, the University had signed an exclusive Memorandum of Understanding with Swindon Borough Council to jointly propose a Higher Education enterprise, which would be demand-led, with up to 3,000 students.

AB07.10.9.2 The University had commissioned a major Demand Study of 40 large employers in Swindon Borough, with a reporting deadline of January 2008. Subject to the outcome of the report, a business plan would be submitted for funding from the RDA and Funding Councils.

AB07.10.9.3 Deputy Vice Chancellor Rushforth further reported that the University had that morning hosted a visit from Honda, to discuss a possible partnership for knowledge exchange and for upskilling of employees.

- AB07.10.10 **ETHICS POLICY**
Paper AB07/10/9 was received.
- AB07.10.10.1 The Board noted that the Board of Governors had endorsed the paper for University-wide consultation.
- AB07.10.10.2 Subject to further consideration of the composition of the Ethics Advisory Panel and to the inclusion of further case studies when available, the Board approved the next stage in the consultation process, ie consultation in faculties, professional services, the Students' Union and Trades' Unions.
- AB07.10.10.3 The Board would receive the outcome of such consultations at the April 2008 meeting.
Action: Deputy Vice Chancellor Cuthbert
- AB07.10.11 **STUDENT EXPERIENCE**
- AB07.10.11.1 **STUDENT EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME**
Paper AB07/10/6 was received.
- AB07.10.11.2 **STUDENT MATTERS**
Paper AB07/10/7 was received.
- AB07.10.11.2.1 The Board noted progress made relating to the Graduate Development Programme, Employability, the Student Representative Support Team and Transport.
- AB07.10.11.2.2 Two papers were tabled showing the results of a survey of students concerning timetabling issues. The survey had elicited about 2000 responses, demonstrating the level of dissatisfaction among students over the timely availability of timetables. The Board endorsed the students' concerns; however, members felt that factors impacting on the distribution of timetables should be included in a survey. The Students' Union would submit a full report to the December 2007 meeting of the Board.
Action: Students' Union President
- AB07.10.11.2.3 Deputy Vice Chancellor Rushforth reported that he had convened a Project Group to review the data from the survey. Consideration would be given to all aspects of timetabling, with a view to resolving the situation. The Project Group would report to the December 2007 meeting of the Board.
Action: Deputy Vice Chancellor Rushforth
- AB07.10.11.2.4 The students had highlighted a problem with the availability of ID cards. The Academic Registrar confirmed that the issue was being investigated and arrangements for appropriate reimbursement of students put in place.
- AB07.10.11.2.5 The difficulties relating to UWEOnline would be referred to the Portal Group.
- AB07.10.12 **REGULATORY FRAMEWORK REVIEW**
Paper AB07/10/10 was received.
- AB07.10.12.1 The Board noted Chair's action to approve:

- AB07.10.12.2 (a) a proposal for a variation to Academic Regulation B9.3 (“two thirds rule”)
- AB07.10.12.3 (b) the revision of the non-MAR assessment regulations applying from September 2007 to:
Postgraduate Certificate in Education:
 PGCE Secondary Education
 PGCE Primary Education
 PGCE Primary Education (Early Years)
 PGCE Post Compulsory Education and Training
- and the introduction of a parallel set of non-MAR assessment regulations applying to:
Professional Graduate Certificate in Education:
 ProfGCE Secondary Education
 ProfGCE Primary Education
 ProfGCE Primary Education (Early Years)
 ProfGCE Post Compulsory Education and Training
- AB07.10.12.4 The Board approved the revised DPhil regulations.
- AB07.10.12.5 Paper AB07/10/10 (Cert ED (Learning and Skills)) was tabled.
- AB07.10.12.5.1 The Board approved
- (a) the move of assessment regulations into MAR
- AB07.10.12.6 (b) the amended List of Awards in the School of Education.
- AB07.10.12.7 (c) the new award title of Doctor of Health and Social Care (DHSC) for the professional doctorate.
- AB07.10.12.8 The Board endorsed the recommendation of LTAC with regard to entry requirements (Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) and Heading Higher Passport).
- AB07.10.12.9 The changes would come into immediate effect and would be incorporated into the new regulations.

Action: Academic Registrar

AB07.10.13 **REPORTS FROM FACULTY BOARDS**

- AB07.10.13.1 The Board noted that October meetings of all Faculty Boards had discussed the National Student Survey results, faculty structures, quality management and enhancement, reading strategies, UWE Federation, timetabling, monitoring and evaluation and assessment feedback. They had received presentations from the Student Experience Programme and the Services Enhancement Manager.
- AB07.10.13.2 The Board noted that Assistant Vice Chancellor Ritchie would lead a scoping group to consider assessment feedback issues.
- AB07.10.13.3 The December meeting of Academic Board would receive a report on responses to the Student Satisfaction Survey results. Individual faculty responses would be coordinated into an overarching report produced by the Dean of Students.

Action: Dean of Students and Executive Deans

AB07.10.13.4 The Board congratulated the Faculty of Environment and Technology on a number of recent successful bids for EU funding.

AB07.10.14 **PROFESSORIAL APPOINTMENTS**

AB07.10.14.1 Paper AB07/10/11 was received.

AB07.10.14.1.1 The Board congratulated the new appointees.

AB07.10.14.2 Paper AB07/10/12 was received.

AB07.10.14.2.1 The Board congratulated Susan Weil on her appointment to Emeritus Professor

AB07.10.14.3 The Chair reported that a number of Readers had been appointed through a recent internal promotion round. There would be a round of PL promotions shortly.

AB07.10.15 **WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND DIVERSITY**

Paper AB07/1013 was received.

AB07.10.15.1 The Board noted the executive summary of progress made in the area of widening participation and diversity in 2006/2007.

AB07.10.16 **MEETINGS OF SUB COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES**

The Board received the following for information:

AB07.10.16.1 Unconfirmed minutes of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee of 18th May 2007 and 13th July 2007

AB07.10.16.2 Unconfirmed minutes of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee of 11th May 2007

AB07.10.16.3 Confirmed minutes of the Joint Policy and Resources Committee of 21st May 2007 and 21st June 2007

AB07.10.16.4 Unconfirmed minutes of the Joint Diversity Committee of 23rd May 2007.

AB07.10.17 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Wednesday 5th December 2007, 2.00 pm,

Wednesday 27th February 2008, 2.00 pm,

Wednesday 23rd April 2008, 2.00 pm,

Wednesday 11th June 2008, 2.00 pm,

AB07.10.18 **BUSINESS OF THE MEETING OF 5TH DECEMBER 2007**

The Board noted that the business of the meeting would include:

A response to NSS 2007

Preparation for NSS 2008

Regulatory Framework

Annual Monitoring and Evaluation