



ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of Academic Board held on Wednesday 27th February 2008

Present: Professor R Cuthbert (Chair), J Askew, M Bishop, P Blatchford, Professor M Boddy, J Bradley, P Catley, Professor A Chandler, Professor G Channon, Dr T Davies, Professor J Duffield, Professor C Fudge, Professor I Gow, S Grive, Dr J Harrington, T Harrison, A Hart, G House, W Jones, Professor J Longhurst, D Passfield, C Rex, Professor R Ritchie, J Rushforth, J Thomas, Dr S Watson, Professor S West.

Apologies: Professor C Aitchison, Professor J Arthurs, R Danes, Professor P Gough, R Griffiths, Professor S Hagen, Professor P Hampson, T McGoldrick, R Miles, G Wilson.

In attendance: K Hicks, D Lennard (for minutes AB08.02.9.2-AB08.02.9.2.1), K Owen-Jones, Dr E Smith, M Wheeler.

AB08.02.1 **MEMBERSHIP**

In the absence of the Chair at the beginning of the meeting, Deputy Vice Chancellor Cuthbert took the chair for the meeting and welcomed members to the third meeting of the academic year.

AB08.02.2 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 5TH DECEMBER 2007**

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 5th December 2007.

AB08.02.3 **MATTERS ARISING**

AB08.02.3.1 Unistats Website (AB07.12.7.4.1):
The Board noted that a report would be made to the April 2008 meeting.

AB08.02.3.2 Lecture Slot (AB07.12.13.2(a)):
The Board noted that the unofficial understanding was that time would be given to allow students and staff travel time of five minutes either side of a teaching activity.

AB08.02.3.3 Student Achievements (AB07.12.13.2(b))
The Board received a paper detailing an example of a student achievement. The Head of Marketing and Communications reported several achievements in the last year, including many prize winners. All achievements would be given a higher profile in future, in the Acting Vice Chancellor's Report.

AB08.02.3.4 Use of Social Network Sites (AB07.12.13.29f)
The Board noted that LTAC has commissioned a piece of work on the possible use of social network sites.

- AB08.02.4 **ACADEMIC BOARD GOVERNANCE**
- AB08.02.4.1 The Board noted that the 2007/2008 Committee Handbook was available on the members' Sharepoint site and on the Academic Registry's web page.
<https://sps.uwe.ac.uk/sites/ar/Committee%20Handbook/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.
- AB08.02.4.2 The Board noted Academic Board representation on committees as follows:
- Board of Governors – Professor Colin Fudge, Dr Jane Harrington
 - Joint Student Affairs Committee – Jonathan Bradley, Paul Catley
 - Joint Diversity Committee – Dr Terry Davies
- AB08.02.5 **ACTING VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**
Paper AB/08/02/2 was received.
- AB08.02.5.1 The Board noted that the management structure until August 2008 had been circulated. The Acting Vice Chancellor would reflect on the University's strategic plan beyond August 2008.
- AB08.02.6 **STUDENT EXPERIENCE**
- AB08.02.6.1 **STUDENT EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME**
Paper AB08/02/3 was received.
- AB08.02.6.1.1 The Dean of Students reported variable response rates to the National Student Survey. Strategies for future management of the survey would be considered.
- AB08.02.6.1.2 Discussions around the University Charter had progressed; a draft Charter was being developed.
- AB08.02.6.1.3 The Board noted that it was crucial to bear in mind the impact of the Student Experience Programme on the UWE Federation.
- AB08.02.6.2 **EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT**
Paper AB08/02/4 was received.
- The Board noted LTAC's endorsement of the principles contained in the report. The Board agreed with the recommendation that further thought should be given to the appropriate commitment of resources and to moving forward with the recommendations in the report. A progress report would be made to the April 2008 meeting of the Board.
- Action: Dean of Students**
- AB08.02.6.3 **STUDENT MATTERS**
- AB08.02.6.3.1 The Board noted developments with the Student Voices Project, particularly with regard to the Handbook and to Learning Spaces.
- AB08.02.6.3.2 The Board noted the forthcoming awareness campaign about social network sites, whereby the SRC would offer advice about use of the networks.
- AB08.02.6.3.3 Elections for officers in 2008/2009 would be held during the week beginning 3rd March 2008.

- AB08.02.6.4 **TIMETABLING**
Paper AB08/02/5 was received.
- AB08.02.6.4.1 The Board noted that UMG would respond in detail to the SRC report and noted UMG's initial thoughts: it was anticipated that the portal could significantly enhance the process; a specification to develop the ISIS Academic Infrastructure would be developed in the near future; and that LTAC would be invited to discuss the availability of module choices, particularly at Level 1.
- Action: Chair of LTAC**
- AB08.02.6.4.2 The Board endorsed the recommendations in the report: and agreed that discussions should take place urgently about the way forward. The Board noted that the recommendations were equally as relevant to staff timetables.
- AB08.02.7 **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION**
- AB08.02.7.1 **UWE/US STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**
Paper AB08/02/6 was received.
- AB08.02.7.1.1 The Board noted that the paper had been prepared by the VCU Implementation Group at the request of the Collaborative Provision and Partnerships Committee and set out developments relating to strategic partnerships between UWE and two US Universities, namely: Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). The Board noted LTAC's endorsement of the proposals and recommendations in the paper.
- AB08.02.7.1.2 The Board noted the long-standing relationship with VCU and the inclusion of UIC on UWE's list of identified strategic partners. The BBS representative reported concerns following a recent visit by BBS to VCU's Business School, but the Board concluded that the experience had been an anomaly: VCU's quality management systems were normally deemed to be robust and comparable to those of UWE; there had been very positive developments between VCU and colleagues in Social Sciences and Humanities and in Health and Life Sciences.
- AB08.02.7.1.3 Following a wide-ranging discussion, and subject to the production of a complete list of agreed partnerships and programmes at VCU, the Board agreed to approve in principle the following proposals:
- (a) a variation to Academic Regulation B10.5 to allow marks achieved at the two US universities to be counted towards UWE awards
- (b) the proposed VCU/UWE marks conversion table
- (c) the minimum criteria for determining eligibility to undertake the second year of study at UIC or VCU.
- AB08.02.7.1.4 The Board noted the process for approving an international variant to an approved award: submission of a form to Academic Registry setting out the proposal and for confirmation of approval of the institutional partnership; consideration and approval of the international variant by the Faculty Programme Approval Committee; notification of the approval to the University Programme Approval Committee.
- AB08.02.8 **UWE FEDERATION**
Paper AB08/02/7 was received.

- AB08.02.8.1 The Board noted and endorsed the UWE Federation Strategy and the strategic objectives for 2007/2008, namely Planning, Quality Management, Student Experience, Employer Engagement, HE Culture and Internal Coordination.
- AB08.02.8.2 The Board noted that the first UWE Federation annual conference would take place on 1st and 2nd May 2008.
- AB08.02.8.3 The Board noted that work was ongoing to develop a partnership with Cirencester College.
- AB08.02.9 **RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**
- AB08.02.9.1 **INSTITUTES/RESEARCH CENTRES**
- Deputy Vice Chancellor Rushforth reported on developments with three Institutes. A joint bid between the University of Gloucestershire and Hartpury College had been submitted to HEFCE for financial support for the Countryside and Community Research Institute. The Institute of Sustainability, Health and the Environment had attracted considerable interest from potential partners and would be launched very soon. It was anticipated that the Bristol Institute of Biosensing Technology would be launched in March 2008.
- AB08.02.9.2 **STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT (SM) STRATEGY**
Paper AB08/02/8 was received.
- AB08.02.9.2.1 The Board noted that the Strategy had been presented to the University Management Group and approved, subject to further review by Governors and by the Finance and Resource Committee. The Strategy was a response to the need to manage the multiplicity of relationships between UWE and external bodies.
- AB08.02.9.3 **SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**
Paper AB08/02/9 was received.
- AB08.02.9.3.1 The Board noted that the Strategy outlined UWE's strategic aims and objectives to continually improve its sustainability and corporate responsibility performance during the five years to 2012. The Strategy had been approved by the Sustainability Board. The Estates Committee had recommended the Strategy to Academic Board and the Board of Governors.
- AB08.02.9.3.2 The Board endorsed the Strategy, subject to a review of the KPIs, particularly concerning travel and GDP activity.
- AB08.02.10 **REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**
- AB08.02.10.1 **CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (AEROSPACE) (CPDA)**
Paper AB08/02/10 was received.
- AB08.02.10.1.1 The Board endorsed the proposal to formalise a partnership with Bristol University through the development of a joint institutional agreement for a joint CPDA award, for delivery from September 2008. The range of issues and initial consideration of the framework within which joint awards should operate would be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of

the VCU implementation group. An implementation group for the joint award, comprising academic and administrative staff from both Universities, would develop a business plan, an institutional agreement, a revised programme specification, a new set of regulations, transitional arrangements and the design of a joint certificate.

AB08.02.10.2 **CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION (LEARNING AND SKILLS) – APPROVAL OF A DIFFERENTIAL LEVEL OF AWARD**

Paper AB08/02/11 was received.

AB08.02.10.2.1 The Board approved the proposed modifications to MAR with immediate effect:

Modular Assessment Regulations Section 8 Undergraduate Awards: Pass and Distinction (Insert as new sub-section: “A Certificate in Education (Learning and Skills) with distinction shall be awarded where an average of 70% or more is achieved across any combination of modules at level 1 or above which are valid for the award and total 100 credits or more.”)

Modular Assessment Regulations 8.7 Undergraduate Awards: Pass and Distinction (To amend as indicated in bold: “For a Certificate of Higher Education, **Certificate in Education (Learning and Skills)** or a Diploma of Higher Education an award board or the University Award Board may at its discretion and having regard to a student’s overall profile of assessment under the Regulations award one level of differential award higher than that determined by the method set out above (i.e. a distinction).”)

AB08.02.10.3 **CITY AND GUILDS**

Paper AB08/02/12 was received.

The Board approved in principle the seeking of accreditation for delivery of a City and Guilds award in health and social care and delegated authority to the University Programme Approval Committee for approval of the application for accreditation. The process would be managed by the Academic Registry on behalf of the University.

AB08.02.11 **QAA INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT 2009**

AB08.02.11.1 The Board noted the following dates:

17th – 19th February 2009 – Briefing Visit
week commencing 23rd March 2009 – Audit Visit

AB08.02.11.2 The Board noted that Collaborative Provision would be an integral part of the Audit.

AB08.02.11.3 The Board would receive a briefing at the April meeting.

AB08.02.12 **REPORTS FROM FACULTY BOARDS**

AB08.02.12.1 The Board noted that February meetings of Faculty Boards had discussed issues relating to faculty restructuring, the planning round, the 14-19 education reforms, staff development and research, ethics.

AB08.02.12.2 The Board noted the following issues raised at individual Faculty Boards:
(a) delays in reaching conclusions over the University's branding: the Acting Vice Chancellor confirmed that a timetable had been set.

Action: Acting Vice Chancellor

(b) the future of St Matthias: the Acting Vice Chancellor confirmed that one of his first priorities would be to make a statement about the future of the campus

Action: Acting Vice Chancellor

(c) the possibility of scoping teaching-only contracts would be pursued

(d) the management of student complaints at an informal level should be clarified, including the role of the Students' Union

Action: Academic Registrar

AB08.02.13 **STATEMENT OF ACCREDITATION**
Paper AB08/02/13 was received.

The Board noted with congratulations the confirmation of the accreditation by the Higher Education Academy for:

- The Postgraduate Certificate Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (ADP)
- The Postgraduate Certificate Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (Experienced Route)
- The Mini Academic Development Programme.

AB08.02.14 **MEETINGS OF SUB COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES**

The Board received the following for information:

- AB08.02.14.1 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee – 23rd November 2007
- AB08.02.14.2 Research, Knowledge and Exchange Committee – 16th November 2007
- AB08.02.14.3 Joint Student Affairs – 1st October 2007
- AB08.02.14.4 Joint Diversity – 17th October 2007
- AB08.02.14.5 Faculty of Environment and Technology Faculty Board - 21 November 2007
- AB08.02.14.6 Creative Arts Faculty Board – 21 November 2007
- AB08.02.14.7 Bristol Business School Faculty Board – 21 November 2007
- AB08.02.14.8 Social Science and Humanities Faculty Board – 28th November 2007
- AB08.02.14.9 Health and Life Sciences Faculty Board – 28th November 2007
- AB08.02.14.10 The Board noted that the Research Degrees Examining Board met on 23rd November 2007.

AB08.02.15 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Wednesday 23rd April 2008, 2.00 pm,
Wednesday 11th June 2008, 2.00 pm,

AB08.02.16 **BUSINESS OF THE MEETING OF 23RD APRIL 2008**

The Board noted that the business of the meeting would include:
Acting VC's report
Academic Governance/Calendar

Student Experience Programme
Report from SRC
QAA Institutional Audit Spring 2009
Reports from Board of Governors, RKE, Faculty Boards, LTAC and
CPPC
Learning, Teaching and Assessment Action Plan
Singapore Institute of Commerce