

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Academic Board held on Tuesday 13th July 2010.

Present: Professor A Bensted, P Catley, Professor G Channon, A Cheshire, P Dowdall, M Frutos-Perez, T Goodhew, S Grive, Mrs T Harrison (secretary), P Jones, A Mathieson, T McGoldrick, P Nolan, C Offler, Professor P Olomolaiye, C Rex, Professor R Ritchie, J Rushforth, G Sandford, J Thomas, Professor S West (chair), G Wilson.

Apologies: D Allen, Professor J Arthurs, J Bradley, Professor P Gough, Dr M Grey, Dr J Harrington, D Hawes, Dr J Lanham, Professor S Neill, M Partington, R Scott, Dr S Waite.

AB10.7.1	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING Paper AB10/7/1 was received.
	The Board approved the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 9 th June 2010 subject to correcting C Offler's name.
AB10.7.2	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES
AB10.7.2.1	AB10.6.20.2 Academic Board nomination to the Board of Governors The Board noted that Dr Jane Harrington would continue as the Board's nomination to the Board of Governors.
AB10.7.3	ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE Paper AB/10/7/2 was received.
AB10.7.3.1	The Vice-Chancellor introduced the paper setting out proposals for revisions to the Academic Governance Framework for implementation from September 2010, noting that the proposals had been considered and supported by faculties and UWESU. The paper set out the framework for ensuring that academic governance arrangements aligned to the Strategic Plan, building on previous VC vision papers on the University's future. Lines of accountability needed to be clear; decision making processes needed to be robust and understood by all as the University moved further into a period of considerable change and turbulence.
AB10.7.3.2	The paper set out a number of principles underpinning the University's Academic Governance Framework and the objectives the University was seeking to achieve through the new framework. The importance of ensuring clear, concise and consistent communication with staff and student communities would be of paramount importance in moving forward.
AB10.7.3.3	During discussion the following observations were made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the paper as currently drafted seemed to be written primarily from the point of view of full-time students based at the University. The Framework should explicitly recognise the diversity of the University's student groups and the University should explore opportunities and

	<p>innovative solutions for engaging with them</p> <p>b. the paper should present a definitive and coherent position on the relationship between programmes and departments and awards and schemes</p> <p>c. any remaining inconsistencies between the paper and the new academic structures should be removed</p> <p>d. the framework should be articulated more precisely at departmental and faculty levels</p> <p>e. the frequency of meetings should be articulated</p> <p>f. potential changes in the University's QME structures should be aligned to the new Academic Governance Framework</p> <p>g. the importance of ensuring staff at all levels take responsibility in partnership with UWESU for student representation was noted. The Vice-Chancellor commented that he would be making explicit to programme leaders the University's expectations, and their responsibilities, in respect of student representation.</p>
AB10.7.3.4	<p>The Board <u>agreed</u> to welcome the proposals and to approve them as set out subject to clarifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the locus of responsibility for the University's staff development framework and initiatives - the name of the Participation Executive - making explicit the University's responsibilities in respect of equality and diversity in the Schedule of Delegation - the role of UWESU on the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Executive perhaps via a reconstituted Student Experience Management Group reporting to the LTSE Executive - the communication strategy for implementation of the new framework. <p>and subject to noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the executive groups listed were indicative; others may be required - curriculum approvals panels were one element of the implementation of the QME Framework.
AB10.7.3.5	<p>The Board congratulated the Academic Registrar and the Vice-Chancellor on the clarity of the paper. The Vice-Chancellor highlighted that the credit should go to the Academic Registrar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Academic Registrar/Vice-Chancellor</p>
AB10.7.4	REGULATORY FRAMEWORK : LATE WORK Paper AB/10/7/3 was received.
AB10.7.4.1	The Board received a paper setting out a proposal to amend Regulation F11 building on lessons learned from implementing the changes to regulations introduced in September 2009.
AB10.7.4.2	During discussion, concern was expressed about whether the revision to regulation F11 went far enough and whether students should be given more latitude around hand-in deadlines. Many complaints/appeals were from students who had missed deadlines by small amounts of times and more often

	<p>than not for good reason. It was, however, acknowledged that previous experience had indicated that there had been widespread abuse of the 24 hours deadline with students tending to gravitate towards the latest deadline available. The important issue was to change student behaviour in understanding that a deadline was a deadline. It was accepted that there would be benefits to the management of coursework when the University introduced on-line assessment and that whatever was put in place in the interim must be efficient and simple in terms of administration and clear to staff and students.</p>
AB10.7.4.3	<p>The Vice President of UWESU stressed that the frustrations expressed by the study body had been concerned with the perceived inequities in the current system. The Students' Union's view was that the University needed to support and equip students with the skills to manage and plan their time and to be able to learn about the consequences of their actions in a safer environment than they were likely to experience in the world beyond university. It was also stressed that in the main students managed to attend examinations on time and that it was therefore not unreasonable to expect the same standards in respect of coursework.</p>
AB10.7.4.4	<p>The Board <u>agreed</u> to approve the regulatory change subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. deleting F11.4R ii. ensuring an appropriate communication strategy was in place to inform staff and students of the change iii. clarifying the position regarding Pass/Fail modules in respect of spot values already used in certain postgraduate modules. <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Academic Registrar</p>
AB10.7.5	<p>PROPOSAL TO RENAME HOURLY PAID LECTURERS TO ASSOCIATE LECTURERS Paper AB10/7/4 was received.</p>
AB10.7.5.1	<p>The Board <u>agreed</u> to approve a proposal to change the title of hourly paid lecturers (HPLs) to Associate Lecturer. The proposal resulted from an ongoing review concerning the terms and conditions of employment for hourly paid lecturers.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: Director of HR</p>
AB10.7.6	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p>
AB10.7.6.1	<p>The Vice-Chancellor noted recent issues experienced in respect of the publication of results to students. The Director of ITS reported that an announcement had been circulated earlier in the day to staff and students confirming that the majority of results had been published and that any outstanding results would be published the following day. Daily updates had been made via MyUWE and the UWE homepage throughout the period.</p>
AB10.7.6.2	<p>Members from faculties and professional services reported that they hadn't experienced significant problems with students trying to get information additional to that which had been made available and that, in difficult circumstances, the situation had been well managed.</p>

AB10.7.6.3	The Director of ITS reflected on his concern that the situation had not been helped by the perceived complexity of the University's regulations. In response, the Vice-Chancellor noted that the underlying issue was the 'hard-wiring' of the University's Academic Regulations into systems to an extent that wasn't the case in other institutions. It was therefore difficult to undertake quick fixes or change the Academic Regulations without considerable and complex systems development.
AB10.7.6.4	The Vice-Chancellor thanked members for their contributions throughout the year.
AB10.7.7	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS To be confirmed.