

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of Academic Board held on Wednesday 26 October 2011.

Present: Professor G Atwood; Professor M Boddy; P Catley; A Cheshire; Professor P Gough; S Grive; Dr J Harrington; Dr L Harrison; Professor H Langton; Professor J Longhurst; Professor J McLeod; C Offler; Professor P Olomolaiye; Professor L Raphael-Reed; O Reed; C Rex; Professor R Ritchie; Professor K Ross; B Senior; F Tolmie; Dr S Waite; Professor S West (Chair); B Senior;

Apologies: D Allen; Professor O Doran; M Frutos-Perez; A Gilkison; T Goodhew; M Grey; P Hume; P Jones; Professor G Lyons; A Mathieson; T McGoldrick; Professor R Means; J Midgley; P Nolan; M Partington; J Rogers; J Rushforth; R Scott-Ward;

In Attendance: J Clark (for items AB 11.10.5 and AB11.10.6); S Sidhu (clerk);

AB11.10.1 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Paper AB11/10/1 was received.

The minutes of the meeting 15 June 2011 were approved.

AB11.10.2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

AB11.10.2.1 AB11.6.11.3 Terms of Reference

The Board noted that confirmed terms of reference for Academic Board's sub-committees were communicated to Chairs and Officers as well as being published on the website.

AB11.10.2.2 AB11.6.15 ASQC Chairs Oral Report

The Board noted that to increase the dialogue between the committees, ASQC Chairs would be routinely requested to provide a brief oral report to Academic Board.

AB11.10.3 REPORT OF CHAIR'S ACTIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Paper AB11/10/2 was received.

AB11.10.4 VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Paper AB11/10/3 was received.

AB11.10.5 GRADUATE FUTURES

Paper AB11/10/4 received.

AB11.10.5.1 The Assistant Director Student Services introduced the paper which provided an update on the pilot of a more intense form of careers support linked to Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) accreditation. The pilots in English, Business and Psychology had been positively received by the students. The strengths and weaknesses of the project and the recommendations to take forward were also introduced to the Board.

AB11.10.5.2 During discussion members noted that:

- i. embedding the principles of employability within curriculum redesign being undertaken at different parts of the University would be particularly important to ensure the impact of projects such as Graduate Futures was sustainable;

- ii. issues with retention on the project were identified as being due to timetabling clashes. These had been addressed and rather than 3 full-days, the model would now be to use half-days.
- iii. ILM was a known brand with increasing recognition with a wide variety of employers and students. This could be a unique selling point and needed to be related to GDP.

AB11.10.6 DESTINATION OF LEAVERS FROM HE 2009-10

Paper AB11/10/5 was received.

AB11.10.6.1 The Assistant Direct Student Services J Clarke introduced the report which outlined the destinations of graduates from 2009-10. The data provides a positive picture with UWE ahead of all key benchmark institutions for the first time. The positive results show improvement when relative to the national picture as well. The report also highlighted key recommendations to ensure maintenance and improvement of these results. A number of initiatives that have been recently started would also be expected to have a positive impact on the results for upcoming years.

AB11.10.6.2 During discussion the Board noted that:

- i. the positive report was particularly encouraging at a time when employability is high on the agenda of prospective students;
- ii. the University's work with Schools and College Partnership Service emphasised the importance the University places on excellent employability of it's students;
- iii. the data from the Graduate Destinations report would be particularly useful when broken down into departments. It was confirmed that work was being undertaken with CAS to supply this information in a web link to departments;
- iv. the recommendations from the report were focussed on building on initiatives such as the Graduate Futures Project (discussed in AB11.10.05), Student Enterprise Societies.

AB11.10.7 FACULTY OF ARTS, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE

Paper AB11/10/6 was received.

AB11.10.7.1 Associate Dean (Research, Enterprise and Public Engagement) at CAHE introduced the paper that proposed a change in the departmental structure of ACE. It would create from 1st January 2012 three departments that would match the name of the faculty namely:

- Department of Arts and Performance
- Department of Creative Industries
- Department of Education

AB11.10.7.2 During discussion the Board noted:

- i. that whilst there was overall support within the Faculty, there was continuing debate regarding the name of the 'Department of Arts and Performance'.
- ii. the proposal aligned with the Faculty's strategy of greater practice-based approach.

AB11.10.7.3 The Board **agreed** that the rationale for the new faculty departmental structure was appropriate and **endorsed** Chair's approval on resolution of the debate regarding the appropriate name for the proposed Department of Arts and Performance.

AB11.10.8 ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2012-13

Papers AB11/10/7 was received

AB11.10.8.1 The Board noted:

- i. that the assessment period immediately after the Christmas vacations may be too soon and could be a deterrent to retention.
- ii. Learning Teaching Student Experience Executive (LTSEE) had highlighted that it could be an issue for international students who have to return to campus early.
- iii. any changes to the Academic Calendar would need to be communicated to the Trade Unions.

AB11.10.8.2 The Board **agreed** that the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) would set up a subgroup of LTSEE to address the concerns raised and **endorsed** Chair's approval once the calendar was finalised.

ACTION: Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)

AB11.10.9 TOWARDS A COMMON CREDIT FRAMEWORK

Paper AB11/10/8 was received.

AB11.10.9.1 The AVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) introduced the paper proposing the 15/30/45/60 module credit structure to be in place across the University by 2013/14. The major curriculum review changes in FBL and FET were already working to this model. The required regulatory changes would be expected to come for approval to Academic Board at a later meeting.

AB11.10.9.2 The Board noted that:

- i. the value of the common credit framework was widely accepted in particular the potential to increase cross-faculty synergy;
- ii. there were some concerns regarding the execution of the common credit framework such as the workload this would require in those faculties not in midst of a curriculum refresh would be considerable. The implementation of the common credit framework may require a flexible timeframe.
- iii. certain professional bodies require re-approval of programmes when changes to provision are made. It would need to be established whether programmes such as these require negotiations with professional bodies to accept the changes without re-approval if possible.
- iv. in those faculties who were in the midst of moving to the 15/30/45/60 framework, no revalidation of programmes were being undertaken as the learning outcomes were being kept the same.
- v. the timing of the new framework would be crucial and it may be that some faculties could move faster as they have already begun the process.

AB11.10.9.3 Academic Board **approved** the principle of the common credit framework however there would need to be resolution regarding the timeframes for execution and any amendments to the Academic Regulations. The next Academic Board would consider the amendments to regulations at the meeting held on 7th December 2011.

ACTION: AVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)

AB11.10.10 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

Paper AB11/10/9 was received.

AB11.10.10.1 The AVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) introduced the paper which amalgamated three NSS reports – institutional performance, key target areas and partner institutions. The results had been positive with the University going up in most areas and regaining ground from last year. A key theme that showed improvement was Assessment Feedback. Departments were working on individual

action plans. The third section of the report regarding partner institutions is more recent information to the Board. Excellent improvements were seen in Hartpury College.

- AB11.10.10.**
2
- The Board warmly received the report and found it helpful and noted that:
- i. the importance of Programme Staff Student Liaison Groups are crucial to the University being a responsive institution and able to resolve matters at a local level before they become problems;
 - ii. timetabling should be based on the needs of the students first and having some central rules regarding this may be beneficial;
 - iii. regarding senior oversight of tracking partner institution action plans, the responsibility lies with AVC (Partnerships, Diversity and Civic Engagement) and the UWE Federation Director.

AB11.10.11 ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- AB11.10.11.**
1
- The Board received an oral update from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on the proposals for arrangements for the appointments of Associate Professors.
- i. The consultation was concluding and extensive feedback had been gathered from 25 readers and professors. The consultation is currently with the trade unions and expected to be finished by 28th October 2011.
 - ii. The responses gathered so far have been uniformly positive and regarded reform as an urgent need. Some concern existed about the process by which the transfer from existing Readers to the Associate Professors is going to be made. There was also a discussion regarding the title of Associate Professor.
 - iii. Extended FAQs were being produced to help answer the questions that the consultation has raised.
 - iv. Academic Board had agreed the proposal in principle previously and so had Vice Chancellors Executive Group and the Board of Governors. Once trade union consultation concluded, the report would be finalised. It was expected that phase 1 publication and invitation will be by Christmas 2011.

- AB11.10.11.**
2
- The Board warmly welcomed the update and noted that:
- i. the implementation of transfer from Reader to Associate Professor should be as light-touch as possible;
 - ii. H grade applications for Associate Professor may be possible, if they were to be Faculty Executive led. An academic business case would need to be made within the Faculty.

AB11.10.12 REPORT FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY COMMITTEES

- AB11.10.12.**
1
- Associate Faculty – Hartpury College: The Board received an oral report from the Chair of the Hartpury ASQC that the key matters being discussed were:
- i. ensuring core themes of the NSS are embedded;
 - ii. a review of external examiner reports and overall judgements;
 - iii. discussing the impact of the Key Information Sets and recent PSRB reports.

- AB11.10.12.**
2
- Faculty of Health and Life Sciences: The Board received an oral report from the Chair of the HLS ASQC that the key matters being discussed were
- i. engaging with the terms of reference of the Committee;
 - ii. aligning processes across the faculty;
 - iii. receiving PSRB reports, internal review reports;
 - iv. crucial upcoming work will be departmental NSS action plans.

- AB11.10.12.**
3
- Faculty of Business and Law: The Board received an oral report from the Chair of the FBL ASQC that the key matters being discussed were:

- i. student representation and whether the term of office runs through the right point of the academic year. A calendar year office was discussed as being a better alternative.

The AVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) with UWESU to discuss possibility of January to January term of office and then refer back to Academic Board for discussion and approval as it has been raised at LTSEE as well.

ACTION: AVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)

- AB11.10.12.4** Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education: The Board received an oral report from the Chair of the ACE ASQC that the key matters being discussed were:
- ii. ensuring that the good NSS performance are maintained and enhanced;
 - iii. curriculum change within the faculty;
 - iv. emphasising the importance of PSSLG to dealing with student concerns promptly.

- AB11.10.12.5** Faculty of Environment and Technology: The Board received an oral report from the Chair of the FET ASQC that the key matters being discussed were:
- i. nomination of a Learning and Teaching Fellow onto the Committee;
 - ii. thematic discussions regarding the student voice;
 - iii. PSRB and internal academic review reports.

AB11.10.13 REPORT FROM LEARNING TEACHING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE EXECUTIVE

- AB11.10.13.1** The Board received an oral update from AVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience) regarding the 5 key objectives for LTSEE:
- i. Learning Environment – the learning space in the G block area by the Library has been very successful and has provided a strong learning environment for students;
 - ii. UWE Learning and Teaching Fellowship Scheme – the 2011/12 run of the scheme is ready to launch;
 - iii. Student Surveys
 - iv. Implementing the online assessment project
 - v. Compliance – HEA Report and Key Information Sets

AB11.10.14 REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UWESU

- AB11.10.14.1** O Reid (UWESU VP Education) provided an oral update on the current activities and priorities at UWESU including:
- i. Operational Marketing toolkits for student representatives to help engage with their roles
 - ii. Actively promoting representational feedback opportunities to students such as PSSLGs
 - iii. Assessment feedback – to work with NUS and the University to further refine policies that work for students and lecturers
 - iv. Engaging with Governors regarding NSS results.
 - v. thanking the library team for extended Christmas opening hours.
 - vi. Student led teaching awards

AB11.10.15 QAA INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT – MID CYCLE FOLLOW UP

- AB11.10.15.1** The Board noted that the University would be submitting in April 2012 a report on progress since the 2009 QAA Institutional Audit. The Board would receive a report on arrangements at its next meeting on 7th December 2011.

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

AB11.10.16 GRADUATE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Paper AB11/10/10 was received

AB11.10.16.1 Professor Boddy outlined the discussion paper and the proposals made within it regarding Graduate School Governance to the Board. In addition, Professor Boddy updated the Board regarding the appointment of the Graduate School Director now confirmed to be Professor Neil Willy and the Graduate School Manager, Vicky Nash. Transitional governance arrangements highlighted in the paper allowed for the option of continuing with Faculty Committees if required, however it was not anticipated to be needed. The Board was asked to comment and endorse the governance arrangements to be in place by 1st January 2012 and concurrently dissolve any Faculty-based Graduate Schools.

AB11.10.16.2 The Board welcomed the proposals and during discussion noted that:

- only 2 post-graduate research students were on the Graduate School Committee membership and whether it would be appropriate to have one from each Faculty. It may be onerous to ask 4 student reps to give university-wide representation;
- regarding Professional Doctorates - in some cases the taught component runs alongside the research component which would need to be clarified as to which Award Board they would fall under;
- Academic Board agenda should have a place for Report from Research and Knowledge Exchange including CPD;
- a library representative would need to be added to the Committee membership.

AB11.10.16.3 Academic Board **agreed** the proposals regarding governance of the Graduate School were appropriate with amendments to be made regarding lines of governance and student representation. The Board **endorsed** Chair's approval once refined to accept the proposals and dissolve any existing faculty-based graduate schools at the same time.

AB11.10.17 PROVISION OF INFORMATION ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION

Paper AB11/10/11 was received.

AB11.10.18 PROFESSORIAL APPOINTMENTS

The Board further noted the Professorial appointments of:
John Dwyfor Davies – professor emeritus
Saville Kushner – professor emeritus

AB11.10.19 MEETINGS OF SUB COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES

Paper AB11/10/12 was received.

AB11.6.23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None received.

AB11.6.24 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

7 December 2011;
22 February 2012;
4 April 2012;
13 June 2012.