

CONFIRMED

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of Academic Board held on Wednesday 7 December 2011.

Present: D Allen; P Catley; A Cheshire; Professor O Doran; M Frutos-Perez; A Gilkison; Professor P Gough; S Grey; J Griffiths; Dr L Harrison; P Jones; Professor J McLeod; P Morgan; P Nolan; C Offler; Professor P Olomolaiye; O Reid; C Rex; Professor R Ritchie; J Rogers; Professor K Ross; J Rushforth; B Senior; F Tolmie; Dr S Waite; Professor S West (Chair);

Apologies: D Allen; Professor G Attwood; T Goodhew; P Hume; ; Professor H Langton; Professor J Longhurst; Professor G Lyons; T McGoldrick; Professor R Means; Professor L Raphael-Reed; R Scott-Ward;

In Attendance: J Briddon; J Clark (for item); A Osborn; Dr A Rudd (clerk);

AB11.12.1 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Paper AB11/12/1 was received.

The minutes of the meeting 26 October 2011 were approved, subject to an amendment to the report of Chair's actions which should have included reference to correspondence with the HKCAAVQ in Hong Kong requesting an amendment to the NCR1 form regarding the UWE Professional Doctorate (HSC) and the number of visits to the UK by registered students that would be required as part of the programme.

AB11.12.2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

AB11.12.2.1 AB11.10.8 Academic Calendar

Paper AB11/12/2 was received.

The Board noted that:

- i. The proposal to amend the Academic Calendar had been discussed at LTSEE.
- ii. The amendments to the Academic Calendar to push back the assessment period for January 2013 would result in a 3 week Christmas vacation and therefore a 2 week Easter vacation.
- iii. The 2 week Easter vacation would be co-terminous with school holidays.
- iv. HR would be sending the proposal to the Trades Unions for information.

The Board **agreed** the Academic Calendar

AB11.12.2.2 AB11.10.8.2 Terms of Office for Student Representatives

The PVC Learning Teaching and the Student Experience reported on discussions with the Students Union regarding a review of current timings of selection and recruitment of student reps. A paper would be presented to the next meeting of LTSEE outlining 3 proposals regarding the timing of recruitment: January, or November, or keeping the status quo with the added provision of ensuring a handover by asking existing reps to attend the first meetings of the new academic year. The latter option was favoured by the Students Union and this was supported by the Board. An update would be provided to the next meeting of Academic Board.

Action: PVC Learning Teaching and the Student Experience

AB11.12.2.3 AB11.10.15.1 Arrangements for the QAA Mid Cycle follow up of the 2009 Institutional Audit

The Board noted that confirmed arrangements for the QAA Mid Cycle report due in April 2012 would be presented to the next meeting by the Director of Corporate and Academic Services.

Action: Director of Corporate and Academic Services

AB11.12.2.4 AB11.10.16.3 Governance of the Graduate School

The Board noted that the University Graduate School had now been established. Amendments to the Terms of Reference had been agreed by RDAB.

AB11.12.3 REPORT OF CHAIR'S ACTIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

The following Chair's Actions were reported:

- i. Variant to the regulations for programmes delivered in partnership with Emirates Aviation College that would allow the development of dual degrees at an unspecified time in the future;
- ii. Following a recommendation from the programme approval panel, the designation of Northshore College of Business and Technology (NCBT) as an Affiliated Institution of UWE;
- iii. The proposed Department of Arts and Performance within the Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education has now been named Department of the Arts (minute AB11.10.7.3 refers).

AB11.12.4 VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Paper AB11/12/3 was received.

- AB11.12.4.1** With regard to item 1 on Student Number Planning 2012-13, The Vice Principal of Hartpury College expressed concern that there was a perception that because Hartpury College was bidding for its own numbers that this would mean an end to the formal agreement with UWE. The Board noted that the students would still be UWE students and that there were benefits in partnership for both parties.

AB11.12.5 FUTURE COMPOSITION OF ACADEMIC BOARD

- AB11.12.5.1** Group discussions took place to discuss the following questions:

1. How does Academic Board discharge its responsibility to ensure the academic quality and standards of the University's awards?
2. How effective is Academic Board in discharging that responsibility and what brings you to that conclusion?
3. What should Academic Board add to UWE and how?
4. Who needs to be on Academic Board?
5. What 3 words would you use to describe the Board as it is?

- AB11.12.5.2** The Board noted the following discussion points:

- i. Membership could be more flexible to draw on a wider range of opinion – adjusted for thematic discussions
- ii. Membership could be widened to be more representative – this would be more challenging but could also be more transparent
- iii. Important membership is representative of both staff and students
- iv. Importance of Academic Board's deliberative function – promoting discussion of the big issues
- v. Promoting a culture of challenge and debate

- vi. Thematic debates could be useful, especially if aligned to University strategy
- vii. Manage business differently – papers for approval plus items for debate e.g. 30-40% reports and approval vs. 60-70% discussion and debate
- viii. Further clarity needed regarding interface between Academic Board and its committees and executive groups
- ix. Improve communication from Academic Board to the rest of the University
- x. Longer lead in time for paper circulation to allow wider consultation with colleagues. Feedback prior to the meeting would leave more room for debate.

AB11.12.5.3 The Board agreed that a focus group be established to look in more depth at some of the suggestions and prepare a set of proposals for the next meeting of Academic Board

Action: Vice-Chancellor

AB11.12.5.4 The Board agreed to **APPROVE** the extension of tenure for the rest of the academic year for members whose tenure had expired.

AB11.12.6 **QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT FRAMEWORK (QMEF)**
Paper AB11/12/5 was received.

AB11.12.6.1 The Director of Corporate and Academic Services/Academic Registrar presented the paper. The Board noted that:

- i. The framework had been developed in order to provide a streamlined approach to the University's core business of learning and teaching;
- ii. The QMEF would be supported by Sharepoint processes
- iii. There had been consultation with Stakeholder meetings and discussion at ASQCs;
- iv. Work was continuing in consultation with regard to M+E business analyses that would be available to all so that the enhancement cycle would be put at the heart of all activity.
- v. Faculty QME Account Managers had been appointed and would be working closely with colleagues. Any issues could be reported to them so as to improve processes;
- vi. It was accepted that the processes were complex and would evolve over time, particularly during the initial implementation;
- vii. A review of the implementation of the QMEF would therefore be carried out to report to the July meeting of Academic Board.

Action: QMEF Project Team

AB11.12.6.2 In terms of the principles of the QMEF the Board noted broad agreement, although there was acknowledgement that they would be tested in practice. The Board noted that reference to the Single Equality Scheme could be made more explicit so as to embed the SES into practice.

Action: QMEF Project Team

AB11.12.6.3 In terms of the Terms of Reference and membership for the Curriculum Approval Panels, there was discussion regarding the balance of membership between Faculty and University. It was explained that discussion had taken place between the QMEF Project Team and the PVC Learning Teaching and the Student Experience and the proposed membership had been agreed in order to balance rigour and externality with a more streamlined process. It was noted that the proposal to classify changes to modules and programmes in terms of major and minor changes should assist the flow of business. The Chairs for the CAPs would

be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor.

- AB11.12.6.4** The Board noted that the QMEF Handbook had not made explicit the process for discussion of curriculum developments at Department level. It was agreed this would be amended.

Action: QMEF Project Team

- AB11.12.6.5** The Board noted transitional arrangements for the approval of modules and programmes moving to the new 15/30 credit structure and for programme and module specification storage.

- AB11.12.6.6** Academic Board agreed to **APPROVE** the following, subject to actions by the QMEF Project Team:
- i. principles of the QMEF Framework;
 - ii. composition of curriculum approval panels; and
 - iii. terms of reference and composition of the Hartpury College Curriculum approval panel
 - iv. transitional arrangements for the approval of curriculum, including changes as a result of the move to harmonise module sizes.

AB11.12.7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AT UWE

Paper AB11/12/5 was received.

- AB11.12.7.1** The PVC Partnerships. Diversity and Civic Engagement introduced the paper, which outlines the Single Equality Scheme, an important document for the University as it moves towards becoming fully inclusive. The consultation process is extensive and all are encouraged to engage with the proposal and feedback through a variety of means until 9 January 2012.

- AB11.12.7.2** The Board noted that an e-learning module on equality and diversity has been developed, which all staff will be encouraged to undertake. There was a discussion regarding whether the module should be mandatory. The Equality and Diversity staff networks had indicated that they would prefer the module to be mandatory; it was acknowledged that this would be difficult to implement. It was **AGREED** however, that the module should be mandatory for managers and recruitment and selection panels.

AB11.12.8 LEARNING TEACHING AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

AB11.12.8.1 Student Feedback

The Student Representatives reported on the following:

- i. UWESU had received a grant from the NUS for the introduction of staff teaching awards. These would be incorporated into the SU Reps Awards.
- ii. UWESU AGM had passed 11 motions, 2 of which were presented to Academic Board for support in implementation (paper tabled);
 - a. Student Support Services on MYUWE
 - b. Accessibility to Information

The Board noted that there was a commitment from Student Services under OUA to ensure more explicit support for disabled students. While there is currently a University commitment to make reasonable adjustments, feedback from students would be welcomed, particularly to ensure consistency across the University..

AB11.12.8.2 Risks to the Student Experience

Paper AB11/12/7 was received.

- AB11.12.8.2.** Members considered the risks to the Student identified within the corporate risk register and agreed that ensuring the process for connecting, Faculty, Service, Executive and Corporate risk registers would be the key to both identification of risks and the implementation of the appropriate actions to mitigate the risks identified.

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The Board noted that the Vice Chancellor's Executive Group would review the process.

Action: Vice Chancellor's Executive Group

AB11.12.8.3 Implementation of M+E Actions Arising from Student Surveys

Chairs of ASQCs provided an oral update on their Student Survey Action Plans: issues and progress.

- AB.11.12.8.3** Faculty of Health and Life Sciences: The Board noted that the key issues and actions were:

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- i. Timetabling, especially at Glenside;
- ii. Feedback to students;
- iii. Methods for students to contact academic staff;
- iv. BlackBoard – access and functionality
- v. Staff development especially for module and programme managers.

- AB11.12.8.3.** Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education: The Board noted that the key issues and actions were:

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- i. Performance had not been consistent across all Departments.
- ii. The Student Experience Management Group had held a useful discussion with the Dean of Students Office regarding the NSS and SES response rates.

- AB11.12.8.3.** Faculty of Business and Law: The Board noted that the key issues and actions were:

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- i. Action Plans were still being progressed within Departments;
- ii. The Action Plan for Law had been received and ASQC would be interested in disseminating the good practice identified;
- iii. The Faculty would be working towards ensuring action plans were translated from Faculty to module and programme levels.

- AB11.12.8.3.** Faculty of Environment and Technology: The Board noted that the key issues and actions were:

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- i. Organisation and management – impact of various factors on part time students;
- ii. Black Board – staff access to student view;
- iii. Employability of students – working with Careers and professional accreditation.

- AB11.12.8.3.** Hartpury College: The Board noted that the key issues and actions were:

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- i. Organisation and communication – ensuring consistency;
- ii. BlackBoard – the way it is structured could be improved;
- iii. Student feedback and student feed forward so that students know what to expect from assessment
- iv. Resources: The new HE Centre has improved resources

AB11.12.8.4 REVISED STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Paper AB11/12/8 was received

AB11.12.8.4. The Assistant Director of Student Services introduced the revised policy, which aims for an approach to non-academic disciplinary matters, both on and off campus that is consistent, transparent and timely. The policy aims to align with other regulatory frameworks, including criminal law and existing policies and has been commented on in terms of structure and wording by legal experts.

AB11.12.8.4. There was discussion regarding the interface between the revised Student Discipline Policy and the Professional Conduct and Professional Suitability Procedure (item 7.4 Paper AB11/12/9) as they appeared to be related. For example, non-academic disciplinary issues could have an impact on professional suitability required by some PSRBs it was unclear how links would be made. Both papers refer to suspension, but it was not clear which policy would take precedence. The following questions/comments were put forward:

- i. The paper refers to informing students in writing: would email be sufficient?
- ii. The timeline appears to be extremely tight: suggest adding a maximum or practical time limit.
- iii. Re: level 2 penalties: how would the University enforce community service?
- iv. Re: written warnings: what happens if students do not respond?
- v. If a student is suspended, but there it is found there is no case to answer, will they be able to submit ECs? There may be a timing issue.
- vi. Re: informal level: is programme leader the right level: should this be AHoD? Academic Board agreed that an accountable officer would be required.

It was confirmed that both papers would be required for implementation by the end of December. Important themes had arisen from the discussion with regard to joining up the two papers and an Executive lead would be required.

ACTION: Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic

AB11.12.8.5 **PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL SUITABILITY PROCEDURE**
Paper AB11/12/9 was received.

AB11.12.8.5. The Board noted that the procedure would be considered in light of the discussion regarding the revised Student Discipline Policy. [See minute AB11.12.8.4.2 above.] The Chair invited comments specifically on the Professional Conduct and Professional Suitability Procedure to be forwarded direct.

Action: All

AB11.12.8.6 **PROPOSAL FOR A NEW FIELD OF STUDY**
Paper AB11/12/10 was received.

AB11.12.8.6. Academic Board **APPROVED** the proposal to create a new Field of Study in the Faculty of Business and Law entitled: *Business and Management Cross Disciplinary*

AB11.12.9 **RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**
The DVC Academic provided an oral report on activities.

AB11.12.10 **PROGRAMME STAFF STUDENT LIAISON GROUPS**
The Board noted that UWESU in consultation with the PVC Learning Teaching and Student Experience had considered a change of name. The proposed name of Student Reps/Staff Forum was **APPROVED** for implementation from January 2012.

AB11.12.11 **UWE ETHICS FORUM**
THE Board noted that at the September meeting the Board of Governors had

approved terms of reference and composition for a corporate ethics forum which would include provision for three academic members nominated by Academic Board. Members were asked to encourage colleagues that wished to be considered for these posts to email Alastair Osborn, Deputy Clerk to Governors in the first instance.

AB11.12.12 MEETINGS OF SUB COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES

Paper AB11/12/11 was received.

AB11.12.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None received.

AB11.12.14 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

22 February 2012;

4 April 2012;

13 June 2012.