

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Wednesday 22 February 2017.

Present: Steve West (Chair), Hadi Abulrub, Jenny Ames, Sarah Bennett, Martin Boddy, Lucy Dumbell, Ahmd Emara (SU), Manuel Frutos-Perez, Georgina Gough, Jane Harrington, Nina Higson-Sweeney, Catherine Hobbs (until AB17.02.6.13), Jamie Jordon (SU), Lynne Lawrance, Fiona Lawrence, James Lee, Mandy Lee, Lamine Mahdjoubi, Stuart McClean, Jo Midgley, Steven Neill, Paul Olomolaiye, Darren Reynolds, Jackie Rogers, Jeanette Sakel, Rachel Sales, Rosie Scott-Ward, Donna Whitehead.

In attendance: Jodie Anstee, Jason Briddon, Rachel Cowie, Chris Gledhill (Clerk), Derek Norris (for T Willis), Maggie Westgarth.

Observers: Elizabeth Cleaver.

Apologies: Samira Abokor, Tracy Chalk, Jon Dovey, Alex Franklin, Sarah Green, Dylan Jones-Evans, Alastair Osborn, Glenn Parry, Tracy Willis.

AB17.02.1 Membership

AB17.02.1.1 Elected Faculty Board Representative
Academic Board **ratified** the nomination of Fiona Lawrence as the elected Faculty Board representative for the Faculty of Health and Applied Science (HAS).

AB17.02.2 Minutes and Matters Arising

Paper AB17/02/01 was received

AB17.02.2.1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held Wednesday 7 December 2016 were **approved**.

AB17.02.2.2 Min AB16.12.4.8 refers: Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Submission to HEFCE

Paper AB17/02/02 was received

Members noted the University's recent TEF submission to HEFCE and in particular the metrics to which the response was aligned.

AB17.02.2.3 Members also noted that the metrics were concerned only with undergraduate provision and institutional arrangements, although these would be extended to discipline level and postgraduate taught (PGT) provision. It was anticipated that the proposed PGT metrics would be shared with the sector in the coming months.

AB17.02.2.4 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost expressed her thanks to all who had contributed to the submission.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

AB17.02.3 Vice-Chancellor's Update

Paper AB17/02/03 was received

AB17.02.3.1 Members received an update from the Vice-Chancellor and noted the following:

AB17.02.3.2 *Student Recruitment – Applications for 2017/18*

- i. Strong year-on-year increase in applications, with a 10% increase in UCAS applications – against a sector drop of 5% and a competitor set that was down 9%;
- ii. There were some challenges in some areas of UWE, particularly nursing, midwifery and allied health programmes – a reaction to the shift to student loan funding;
- iii. The University would continue its efforts to maximise applications.

AB17.02.3.3 *Strategic Planning Update*

- i. Strategic planning meetings for the Faculties had taken place and the plans would be presented to all senior managers at a strategic planning session the following week;
- ii. Professional Services' planning meetings would be held in March and the visions for both Faculties and Professional Services would be shared on the intranet;
- iii. Budgets would be finalised in April, before sign-off by the Board of Governors in July;
- iv. The University was also looking to release posts early to ensure that these were established in good time for the start of the new academic year.

AB17.02.3.4 *Strategic Risks Update*

1. Tactical risk registers were being updated and the University's risk appetite had been tested with staff and would also be tested with the Board of Governors' at the Away Day event in March.

AB17.02.3.5 *External Engagements*

Members noted the importance for the University to hold a position to influence outside of the institution, via the external engagements of the Vice-Chancellor.

Members also noted that the Vice-Chancellor had recently engaged with key stakeholders from various sectors, all of whom had recognised the convergence of different disciplines.

AB17.02.3.6 *Strategy 2030*

The Vice-Chancellor remarked upon the progress made towards 2020 and the benefits of the strategic initiatives and continuous improvement activities being driven.

AB17.02.3.7 Members noted the importance of now considering the University's strategy for the following 5-10 years and that a full engagement plan for Strategy 2030 was being developed.

AB17.02.3.8 The Vice-Chancellor then invited Academic Board Members to form several groups and to consider creatively possible opportunities of Strategy 2030 and in particular:

1. How could we be faster, more creative and flexible, how could we successfully collaborate and converge disciplines?
2. What were the 'big questions' and opportunities that Members would like to consider in more detail at future sessions?
3. What expertise could Members share in a future session that would inform horizon scanning?
4. Were there others who may be able to contribute?

AB17.02.3.9 Strategy 2030 – Initial Feedback

Members were invited to share highlights of their discussions.

AB17.02.3.10 Feedback included:

- The need to assess:
 - where the University was at the start of Strategy 2020 and where it was now
 - objectives that had been achieved and those that had not;
- narrow down the number of priorities for the University;
- highlight the activities and achievements of which the University was proud;
- Strategy 2020 – be more creative with what the University was already doing; “focus on doing things differently than doing different things”;
- A focus on projects would break down silos and help to bring different areas of the University together – e.g. the Vice-Chancellor’s Grand Challenge Fund – such ‘global’ challenges can unite people to make a difference;
- Harness advances in digital technology;
- Create an Institute of Ideas/Ideas Factory which allows innovative thinking – the ‘real’ university may have less of a role;
- UWE Bristol was able to engage with a city that was dividing; there was a need to recognise this and to have a role in addressing social inequality. Social inequality could be an Ideas session in itself;
- Connect, Collaborate, Catalyse and Champion;
- The University could focus on just 3 or 4 key themes and its flagship undergraduate programmes, using structures that were already in place and break down Faculty-funded activities;
- There was already collaboration across the Faculties – research, enterprise, etc. – we should learn from that activity in taking the institution forward;
- There was a need for a concrete vehicle to facilitate collaboration and break down Faculty barriers:
 - Provide a physical space for informal interaction outside of Faculty buildings
 - Encourage collaboration and a move away from Faculty KPIs
 - Learn from industry’s collaboration – we need to equip students for the international market – how we cost things may stifle innovation;
- Collaborate more between campuses – use Skype more effectively. We are spatially quiet:
 - invite all campuses to collaborate and work together to tackle challenges: local, regional and global
 - dismantle vertical structures – these were programmatic and influenced student behaviours
 - bring in industry and integrate it into the UWE Bristol environment;
- digitisation – the current model for education could be outdated; industry wanted people who could move between areas, so students needed to have the ability to collect information and act upon it;
- Academic Board’s role could focus more on the ‘why’ of what the University was doing, rather than the ‘how’;
- It was important to attain a balance between the creation of the specialist and generalist – UWE students needed to be able to speak the appropriate language in order to collaborate with other sectors;
- There should be an ‘open’ vision for all, with no ceiling for staff or students;
- Competition was changing with the emergence of private providers; the University needed to think hard about what made it distinctive, what were we offering that was new?

AB17.02.3.11 The Vice-Chancellor thanked Members for their comments.

AB17.02.4 Enhancement Framework for Academic Programmes and Practice

Paper AB17/02/04 was received

- AB17.02.4.1 Members noted the contents of the position paper and in particular the six core guiding principles of the framework, namely:
1. Programmatic by design
 2. Discipline and practice-oriented
 3. Scholarly and enquiry-based
 4. Inclusive and international
 5. Graduate attribute enabling
 6. Transformative for staff and students.
- AB17.02.4.2 Members also noted that the new framework had adopted these principles from Learning 2020 and the University's broader strategy in order to take academic practice forward and, whilst allowing local variations to flourish, it provided clarity of direction of travel and brought together local relevance with institutional resonance.
- AB17.02.4.3 Members further noted that the framework was an end-to-end streamlined process from the development of academic practice to graduate attributes and that it translated into 3 key areas of work:
1. Co-design of curricula and programmes of study
 2. Planning and delivery of academic practice activities (within and beyond learning environments)
 3. Review, evaluation and enhancement programmes and academic practice.
- All of which would be undertaken using a dialogue-based approach.
- AB17.02.4.4 Members also noted the following:
- i. The intention to move away from bureaucratic, paper-based processes and that the new approach would involve programme teams, students, alumni and employers in both design and review stages;
 - ii. Pilots would be established in each of the 4 Faculties when reviews were due, e.g. a new degree apprenticeship;
 - iii. There would be no self-evaluation paperwork before a review;
 - iv. This was a process of continuous improvement and a shift away from retrospective annual process, to ensure timely engagement with programme teams as soon as data came in, thereby raising the level of agility and the granularity of information.
- AB17.02.4.5 Members welcomed the new approach and questioned whether there was an opportunity for wider consultation. The Director of Academic Services confirmed that this had already been shared with Heads of Departments as part of the Programme Enhancement Review and discussions were about to start with Assistant Heads of Department and Programme Leaders.
- AB17.02.4.6 Members acknowledged that this would be a change in culture for the University and that it was important to manage staff expectations and to support and coach staff through that change.
- AB17.02.4.7 Members noted that work was underway to explore a new curriculum management tool to replace Curriculum Approval and Review (CAR) and underpin the new Enhancement Framework.
- AB17.02.4.8 Members also noted that the University's Business Intelligence team was already working on how the 6 principles would feed into the TEF metrics.

AB17.02.4.9 Academic Board **agreed** to endorse the proposed framework.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

AB17.02.5 **Learning 2020: Enterprise Framework**

Paper AB17/02/05 was received

AB17.02.5.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean, FBL led Members through the detail of the paper, highlighting the following in particular:

- i. The aspiration for the University to have an international reputation for enterprise and entrepreneurship;
- ii. The rationale for Enterprise 2020:
 - a. The need for students to be agile
 - b. To ensure that enterprise skills were embedded within every course
 - c. To incorporate enterprise within the work stream priority “work-ready and able graduates”
 - d. To ensure UWE Bristol’s distinctiveness
 - e. To ensure a full entrepreneurial offer to all students on graduation;
- iii. Enterprise 2020’s two sub-projects:
 - a. Student Enterprise Academy, led by the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean, FBL, which had:
 - i. a focus upon embedding key enterprise skills within every undergraduate course curriculum
 - ii. created a matrix against to assist course teams in mapping enterprise skills to their curriculum
 - iii. developed extra-curricular activities from induction to postgraduate for students on an enterprise pathway
 - iv. the objective of all UWE Bristol students graduating with core enterprise skills;
 - b. Graduate Enterprise Academy, led by the Head of Research and Business Development Team:
 - i. aimed to ensure that a recognised integrated route for support to UWE Bristol’s entrepreneurial graduates was in place post-graduation;
 - ii. opportunities were focused around the new Enterprise Zone, where incubation space was providing tech start-ups time and space to develop;
- iv. the project was about to be extended to examine an entrepreneurial offer for existing students;
- v. a bank of videos had been created to share how the project was interpreted, including:
 - a. an introduction to Enterprise 2020
 - b. embedding enterprise in the undergraduate curricula
 - c. graduate entrepreneurial opportunities and the Enterprise Zone
 - d. FET’s approach to embedding enterprise.

AB17.02.5.2 Academic Board **approved** the framework and plans for Enterprise 2020.

AB17.02.6 **University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee**

AB17.02.6.1 Annual Report 2015-2016

Paper AB17/02/06 was received

AB17.02.6.2 Members received an outline of the annual report’s highlights from the Pro Vice Chancellor, Research and Business Engagement.

AB17.02.6.3 Members noted the following in particular:

Research Income

- i. Increase in external research income by more than £1m to over £12m (excluding the HEFCE research grant);
- ii. 192 research bids were successfully made during the 2015-2016 academic year, which amounted to £22m in funding. Details of some of the larger examples of these bids were shared with Members;

AB17.02.6.4 *Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise*

- i. Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise were key to University research activity;
- ii. The University had successfully submitted the UWE Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2016/17-2020/21 to HEFCE, which had been approved without requests for further amendment and had secured HEIF funding up to 2020/21;
- iii. Accommodation in the Enterprise Zone – including Future Space and incubation facilities – was being taken up very quickly, building links with the core work of the University and creating opportunities for students;
- iv. Three EU Regional Growth Fund projects had been secured, including the Centre for Graduate Enterprise and Innovation for Growth 3, which will sit alongside ‘real life’ companies;

AB17.02.6.5 *URKEC Business*

- i. The UWE Research Strategy, research metrics and the Research Impact Strategy were providing direction and focusing investment to ensure that UWE Bristol was moving towards its research objectives;

AB17.02.6.6 *Research Investment*

- i. Vice-Chancellor’s Early Career Research Scheme – 30 applications had been received and 18 awards made;

AB17.02.6.7 *Research Excellence Framework (REF)*

- i. The introduction of a REF CV for research-active staff had been introduced and an impact repository launched to provide information for REF and for the University’s wider objective of producing research with impact;
- ii. Confirmation that a research excellence exercise would take place by 2021;
- iii. The University would continue to follow closely the outcomes of the Stern Review;

AB17.02.6.8 *Graduate School*

- i. At the end of July 2016 there were 555 PGRs, including 181 Professional Doctorates;
- ii. The improvement in completion rates and the increase in PGR numbers.

AB17.02.6.9 Members noted with pleasure that 2015-2016 had been a successful year for research at UWE Bristol and that the successful bids and awards reflected an external recognition of this success.

AB17.02.6.10 Members discussed the need to examine how best to signpost these achievements within the University and noted that this was one of four key priorities for Strategic Communications this year.

AB17.02.6.11 Members discussed at length a number of ways different departments were publicising their success.

AB17.02.6.12 Members noted the concerns raised by the PGR Student Representative regarding the condition of some accommodation for postgraduate students. The Associate

Dean, Research Innovation and Partnerships responded that she would take up the matter outside of the meeting.

Action: Associate Dean, Research Innovation and Partnerships

AB17.02.6.13 Members also noted the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research & Business Engagement's hope for a central space for all postgraduate students.

Ms C Hobbs left the meeting.

AB17.02.6.14 Members acknowledged the University's remarkable achievements in relation to research when considered within the national context and noted that whilst the Stern Report would bring challenges to the alliance group of universities, it would also bring opportunities. Members noted the example of the Industrial Challenge Fund which championed cross-disciplinary research to support industry and that UWE Bristol was well-placed to capitalise on the initiative.

AB17.02.6.15 Members also noted that although PhD completion rates had increased over the last couple of years, there was a need to improve these further.

AB17.02.6.16 Members questioned the seemingly low number of PGR students that were funded by research councils and whether more could be done to support students in their bids for such funding. Members noted that all research councils categorised their funding into separate entities and that a research council may not exist for some areas of academic study.

AB17.02.6.17 Members also noted that Professor Julie Kent had stepped down as the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee.

Academic Board formally recorded its thanks to Professor Kent.

AB17.02.6.18 Academic Board **confirmed** that UKREC had appropriately discharged its duties for the 2015-2016 academic year.

AB17.02.6.19 Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee
Paper AB17/02/07 was received

AB17.02.6.20 Members noted the terms of reference of this recently-created sub-committee of the URKEC.

AB17.02.6.21 Members also noted that the sub-committee had been formed due to the rise of wildlife and ecology awarded being offered at the University and the associated increase in increasingly complex research projects.

AB17.02.6.22 Members further noted that the University did not carry out any animal experiments.

AB17.02.6.23 Members suggested that the following be taken into consideration:

- i. Whether there was sufficient expertise within the membership of the committee and its external representation;
- ii. To revise the language so that the terms of reference are explicit in that no animal experiments were carried out at the University;
- iii. Whether the remit of the sub-committee could be rolled out for undergraduate teaching and how this would affect programmes.

AB17.02.6.24 Members also commented that staff feedback had indicated a request to streamline the research application process and for feedback on unsuccessful applications.

AB17.02.6.25 The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research & Business Engagement welcomed Members' comments and it was **agreed** that these be relayed to the URKEC.

Action: Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research & Business Engagement

REPORTS AND UPDATES

AB17.02.7 Curriculum Approvals Panel Annual Report 2015-2016

Paper AB17/02/08 was received

- AB17.02.7.1 Members noted the range of activity undertaken by the Curriculum Approvals Panel (CAP) during the year and that areas of good practice identified by the External CAP Reviewers in their annual reports would be taken forward as part of the Enhancement Framework activity.
- AB17.02.7.2 Members also noted that the CAP was engaging with and had responded to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidelines on Universities' obligations to registered students under Consumer Law.
- AB17.02.7.3 Members **confirmed** that the Panel had discharged the responsibilities assigned to it by Academic Board.

AB17.02.8 Update from UWE Student Representatives

Paper AB17/02/09 was received

- AB17.02.8.1 The VP Education provided Members with the key highlights of the report.
- AB17.02.8.2 Members noted in particular:
- i. Positive Impacts – including FET computer access collaboration and ticket pricing for Graduation Ceremonies, the latter having reduced from £35 to £15;
 - ii. The SU had worked closely with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost and the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Experience to develop a pilot to enhance collaboration between academic societies and student and department representatives. The pilot would be evaluated in the summer with a view for implementation for the 2017-2018 academic year;
 - iii. The VP Education had signed off on the TEF submission and would continue to work closely with the University to ensure the best experience for its students;
 - iv. NSS – the SU recognised that opinion on this was varied and the student idea recently submitted to boycott the survey had been unsuccessful;
 - v. NHS Bursary – the SU recognised the Vice-Chancellor's work on a national level in relation to the funding changes;
 - vi. Course Costs and Resources – the SU was currently compiling feedback and sought the endorsement of Academic Board to continue work in partnership with Academic Services to address areas for improvement.
- AB17.02.8.3 Academic Board **endorsed** this approach.
- AB17.02.8.4 Members noted the Vice-Chancellor's remarks in relation to the funding changes and that his attention was focused upon:
- i. Ensuring that the University communicated the funding position effectively to its applicants and within the institution;
 - ii. Communicating what access to support students would receive
 - iii. Transitional funding:
 - a. Communicating this effectively
 - b. Provide a positive picture because the NHS still needed good graduates
 - c. Recognise that some students would require additional support – it was possible that this could be available from the NHS and the University was exploring the means by which to gain access to that;
 - d. New UWE Bristol students would continue to have access to Hardship Funds.

AB17.02.8.5 The VP Education confirmed that this information would be shared with the SU Campus Officers.

AB17.02.9 Updates from Faculty Boards

AB17.02.9.1 *Faculty of Environment and Technology (FET)*

The Faculty Board had discussed:

- i. The draft Faculty Plan – and in particular, the number of objectives within that plan. Following discussions, the Faculty Board had agreed that the high number of objectives reflected the diversity of the Faculty and the rationale for retaining these was communicated;
- ii. The new PDR process – the Faculty Board had welcomed being part of the pilot process;
- iii. Issues from Faculty staff that had been passed to Faculty Board Members – this was a useful process in ensuring issues that had fallen between the gaps of other fora were captured, minuted and actions assigned and communicated, and that staff were reminded of the University's processes and procedures in tackling such issues. There had been no issues of significance brought to the attention of the Faculty Board.

AB17.02.9.2 *Faculty of Arts & Creative Industries and Education (ACE)*

The Faculty Board had taken the opportunity to hold a business meeting and had concentrated on the Faculty's priorities, which included:

- i. 10% growth in numbers – this in turn fed into a discussion of planning numbers, space constraints at Bower Ashton, the development of an Integrated Masters in Fine Art, apprenticeship opportunities and teaching resources;
- ii. 'Rebalancing' the Faculty: Education and Creatives – this had been incorporated into the planning process shared with the Directorate;
- iii. Enterprise activity that was taking place.

AB17.02.9.3 *Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences (HAS)*

Discussions had focused upon:

- i. The purpose and remit of the Faculty Board and its role in making recommendations to the Faculty Executive;
- ii. Enterprise 2020;
- iii. Race Equality Task Force – examining in particular the disparity in achievements of BME students;
- iv. An excellent presentation on Athena Swan from Jackie Rogers, Associate Dean, Learning, Teaching and Student Experience, FET.

AB17.02.9.4 The Chair requested that the Faculty share the findings of the Race Equality Task Force exercise across other Faculties.

Action: Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean, HAS

AB17.02.9.5 *Faculty of Business and Law (FBL)*

The Faculty Board meeting was due to take place the following week; however, Members noted that:

- i. the Faculty was holding a number of consultation sessions on its strategic plan;
- ii. work was ongoing with the Marketing team in relation to external messaging on social media with a key focus on the new Business School.

AB17.02.9.6 *Hartbury College*

Members noted that the Faculty Board had focused its discussions on the future direction of the College and taught degree awarding powers.

ITEMS TO NOTE

AB17.02.10 Academic Board Chair's Actions

- AB17.02.10.1 Members noted that on behalf of Academic Board, the Chair had approved the Bristol Community Trust as an affiliated institution, with effect from 6 January 2017.

AB17.02.11 Minutes of Sub-Committees

Members noted that the latest available minutes of subcommittees were available from the SharePoint Site.

AB17.02.12 Any Other Business

There was no further business.

AB16.12.23 Dates of future meetings

All meetings scheduled to be held from 14:00 - 17:00, venue to be confirmed.

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| Wednesday | 17 May 2017 | to be confirmed |
| Wednesday | 5 July 2017 | to be confirmed |