

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Wednesday 28 February 2018.

Present: Jane Harrington (Chair), Hadi Abulrub, Sarah Bennett, Martin Boddy, Alex Franklin, Manuel Frutos-Perez, Nadine Fry, Georgina Gough, Catherine Hobbs, Jamie Jordon, Lim Yang Kit, Lynne Lawrance, Fiona Lawrence, James Lee, Mandy Lee, James Longhurst, Lamine Mahdjoubi, Giang Nguyen, Paul Olomolaiye, Glenn Parry, Adam Pinfold, Darren Reynolds, Gerry Rice, Jeanette Sakel, Ben Weir, Donna Whitehead.

In attendance: Alastair Osborn (secretary), Rachel Cowie, Mark Davis, Lizzie Johnson (Minute AB18.02.04)

Apologies: Lucy Dumbell, Alex Franklin, Jo Midgley, Steven Neill, Nicholas O'Regan, Jane Roscoe, Rachel Sales, Rosie Scott-Ward, Steve West, Tracy Willis, Aylwin Yafele.

AB18.02.1 **Minutes and Matters Arising**
Papers AB18/12/01-02 were received

AB18.02.1.1 The minutes of the meeting held Wednesday 6 December were **approved**.

AB18.02.1.2 *AB18.02.7.5 refers:* The Chair thanked The Students' Union for providing the full results of their wellbeing survey. Members further noted that percentage of students referred to within the report related to the survey sample, not the wider UWE student population.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

AB18.02.2 **Vice-Chancellor's Update**

Members welcomed a brief update from the Chair including:

- i. confirmation that the Office for Students had earlier in the day released the new regulatory framework for higher education;
- ii. acknowledgement of recent press coverage of the University. The Chair reassured members that neither the Vice-Chancellor or any other member of the University held an "expense account" or used a chauffeur service. The Chair noted that international travel was fully funded by the partnerships and activities it supported.

AB18.02.3 **Strategy 2030 Horizon Scanning – Estates**
The Presentation from the Director of Estates and Facilities was postponed to a later meeting.

AB18.02.4 **Mental Wealth Strategy**
Paper AB18/12/03 was received

AB18.02.4.1 The Chair welcomed the Health and Wellbeing Manager, Lizzie Johnson, to the meeting and informed members that the strategy document would shortly be developed into a briefing for staff and students on the importance of the strategy.

AB18.02.4.2 During extensive discussion with the Health and Wellbeing Manager members noted that:

- i. The strategy had been developed with reference to the UUK Step Change Framework on mental health which UWE and the Vice-Chancellor had played a pivotal role in the development of;
- ii. As part of the development of the strategy, a rapid audit had identified over two-hundred existing activities being undertaken to support mental health, with a similar amount of new initiatives planned in the near future;
- iii. The strategy sought to identify, consolidate and develop evidence-based interventions at all levels which connected to, and supported, the University's strategy. An example of this approach could be seen in the work with schools to develop pupils' resilience and support their transition into higher education. This work would be extended to cover support for transitions within and out of University, for example in relation to placements, some of which were highly remote from the Bristol area;
- iv. A launch was planned for mid-April and this would recognise and celebrate work to date and highlight areas of future focus;
- v. Alongside the development of the mental wealth strategy, Student and Academic Services were closely considering the wider student policy environment to address contributing factors (e.g. drug and alcohol abuse). This would be coupled with an evolving approach to wellbeing service to support students to develop approaches that support them to succeed within, and beyond their studies.

AB18.02.4.3 Members welcomed and endorsed the draft strategy and suggested that the wider emphasis on mental *wealth* would support increased openness about the issues through mitigating against more medical models/approaches to mental health.

AB18.02.5 Industrial Strategy

Paper AB18/02/04 was received.

AB18.02.5.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Business Engagement introduced the industrial strategy and highlighted that it presented significant opportunities for the University with the Government boosting R&D funding significantly over a four-year period.

AB18.02.5.2 During discussion members noted that:

- i. Sector deals were largely led by industry, but had already begun to see funding provided with HEIF funding also having been increased to support the Government's industrial strategy;
- ii. The Challenge Fund would be the main route of funding, although the precise details/target of the challenge fund projects continued to morph. UWE had already won an award as part of the robotics agenda and *wave three* was currently under consultation. This would include opportunities around key skills and apprenticeships;

- iii. There would be an opportunity to work with the West of England Combined Authority and the Local Enterprise Partnership to develop a local strategy;
- iv. To support institutional engagement within a fast-paced environment RBI would offer colleagues the opportunity to sign up for regular updates;
- v. There was a clear affinity between the industrial strategy and the University's own strategy, taught and research portfolios, and this could be further encouraged. Connecting existing initiatives including the health-tech hub and being fleet of foot would also be critical in maximising the University's opportunity to benefit;
- vi. Overall there would be an opportunity to leverage work with employers to improve and articulate the value chain that could be provided through partnership with the University.

AB18.02.6 Update on Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021

Paper AB18/02/05 was received.

- AB18.02.6.1 Members welcomed an update from the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Business Engagement on preparations for the next round of REF highlighting that:
- i. REF was one of three key external measures of the University and alongside the Teaching Excellence Framework and nascent Knowledge Exchange Framework held significant reputational and financial opportunities for UWE;
 - ii. Work had been undertaken to establish sustainable systems to gather REF information and periodic snap-shots were now possible. As a result, UWE was well positioned to respond to the process;
 - iii. All staff with research in their contract would be eligible. Within that group, those that could be submitted must have a significant responsibility for research on the census date and must have had time and resources made available to them.
 - iv. One output per person would be required, as opposed to four in the past. Everyone who is deemed to be eligible must be submitted;
 - v. the Impact weighting had been increased and would be measured by case studies;
 - vi. Guidance would be converted into a UWE code of practice which would need to be approved by Research England.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

AB18.02.7 Revised Criteria for Centres of Excellence (Research Centres)

Paper AB18/02/06 was received.

Following clarification that the "significant" aspect of defining membership of Centres of Excellence was primarily designed to ensure that core membership was clearly understood, and that the removal of the requirement to align with a defined department provided increased flexibility for interdisciplinary, members **approved** the revised criteria for Centres of Excellence.

AB18.02.8 Variant Regulation for PGCert Academic Practice

Paper AB18/02/07 was received

Members **approved** a variant regulation to permit the Award to be made on a pass/fail basis.

AB18.02.9 Nominations for Emeritus Professor

Papers AB18/02/08 was received.

Academic Board **approved** the nominations for emeritus/a professor for Professor Steve Fleetwood in recognition of their outstanding reputation.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

AB18.02.10 Updates from UWE Student Representatives

Paper AB18/02/09 was received

AB18.02.10.1 The VP Education presented an update of the Students' Union activities and ongoing initiatives including:

- i. The Students' Union Leadership race would take place in the next week. Each full-time post had at least five candidates with a mix of genders.
- ii. The recent vote of no confidence in the President was inquorate and therefore unsuccessful.
- iii. UWE Bristol had been selected to host the highly anticipated British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Conference 2018 in July;
- iv. The Students' Union 2018-2022 Strategic plan would be ready to launch in the spring;
- v. Accompanying the successful student experience and sports awards programmes, the Students' Union planned to introduce welfare awards for the first time in 2018;
- vi. Students had not reported any concerns about the recent press coverage.

AB18.02.10.2 Following previous discussion (AB17.12.14.2), and in recognition of the University's outstanding reputation for sustainability, the Vice President (Education) asked if the University would be using the optional sustainability questions as part of the National Student Survey. The Chair confirmed that the University's current approach was not to use the optional banks available as previous experience had been that responses dropped significantly for the optional questions.

AB18.02.11 Updates from Faculty Boards

AB18.02.11.1 Faculty of Arts Creative Industries and Education

The Faculty were exploring strategic priorities as part of the planning round. This had resulted in positive discussions and consideration was being given to how best to share the priorities more widely. Members also carefully considered the developing discussion on mental health and how it's supported throughout Faculty activities and how Academic Personal Tutors could contribute to the agenda, and what support might be required for them to do so effectively.

AB18.02.11.2 Faculty of Business and Law

The focus of discussion had been on the staff survey action plan and progress against it, together with staff feedback on engagement on staff development opportunities. The Faculty had also held a feed forward lunch with senior staff on how to devolve and promote autonomy in faculty decision making to further empower academic colleagues.

AB18.02.11.3 Faculty of Environment and Technology

Highlighted that stemming from staff survey discussions a faculty expectations document had been developed with staff. This would be taken to departmental

exec teams and will be taken to faculty forum for discussion. The document highlighted the need for faculty management to be highly visible. Reception of the expectations had been very positive to date. Expectations of visibility of management will be important. Response has been very positive.

- AB18.02.11.3 **Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences**
Colleagues had considered the alignment of staff career and personal aspirations with core faculty business development and strategic planning; this sought to identify challenges and dilemmas in the future and what are ways that these could be tackled.
- AB18.02.12 UWE Registration with the Office for Students (OfS)**
Paper AB18/02/10 was received.
- AB18.02.12.1 Members welcomed an update on preparations and noted the importance of timely registration with the OfS. Registration conditions were split into initial conditions that are required to be demonstrated to be placed on the Register and on-going conditions which (in addition to the initial conditions) will need to be satisfied to maintain registration. Where a provider is considered at risk of breaching a condition the OfS can impose additional and bespoke specific conditions on providers (e.g. restricting recruitment).
- AB18.02.12.2 As part of the registration process UWE would be required to submit, a detailed access and participation plan (successor to the OFFA agreement), a self-assessment on compliance consumer protection legislation (CMA guidance) and another on governance and management, and a detailed student protection plan.
- AB18.02.12.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost had established a steering group to develop the registration submission. Due to the tight timelines for registration, it would be likely that members would receive sight of the application for registration after its submission.
- AB18.02.13 Update on the Progress of the Review of Academic Governance**
- The Secretary noted that following interviews and focus groups in the early part of the year, the external consultant's report on, and recommendations for, academic governance would be brought to the next meeting.

ITEMS TO NOTE

- AB18.02.14 Academic Board Chair's Actions undertaken since the last meeting**
Paper AB18/02/11 was received and noted.
- AB18.02.15 Agreement Review Report of the Collaboration Between UWE Bristol and The British College, Nepal**
Paper AB18/02/12 was received and noted.
- AB18.02.16 Minutes of Sub-Committees**
Members noted that the latest available minutes of sub-committees were available from the SharePoint Site.
- AB18.02.17 Any Other Business**
- AB18.02.19.1 Members congratulated the Director of Learning and Teaching and the Academic Practice Directorate on successfully obtaining HEA accreditation for the University.

AB18.02.19.2 Members noted it would be the Secretary's last meeting of Academic Board and congratulated them on their new position.

AB18.02.20 Dates of future meetings

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

Wednesday	16 May 2018	Dartington
Wednesday	4 July 2018	Dartington