



ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of Academic Board held on 18 December 2013.

Present: Martin Boddy, Clayton Davies, John Deane, Paul Dowdall, Manuel Frutos-Peres, Alex Gilkison, Paul Gough (Chair), Sarah Green, Bernhard Gross, Jane Harrington, Lynne Lawrance, James Lee, Mandy Lee, Katie McFadden, Julie McLeod, Paul Olomolaiye, Nicholas O'Regan, Richard Parnaby, Adam Pinfold, Darren Reynolds, Gerry Rice, Charlie Roper, John Rushforth, Jeanette Sakel, Rachel Sales, Rosie Scott-Ward, Tommy Van-Steen, Aniko Varadi, Harry Winser.

Apologies: Elizabeth Apap-Bologna, John Dovey, Benjamin Drew, Megan Edmunds, Catherine Hobbs, Dylan Jones-Evans, Helen Langton, Jackie Rogers, Steve West, Tracy Willis.

In Attendance: David Allen, Jodie Anstee, Rachel Cowie (Secretary); Jim Longhurst, Jo Midgley, Helen Millican (Clerk), Cathy Rex, Mark Webster.

MINUTES

MEMBERSHIP

AB13.12.1 The up-to-date membership was noted which included the outcome of recent elections.

APOLOGIES

AB13.12.2 Apologies as listed above were noted.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

AB13.12.3 The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2013 were confirmed as an accurate record subject to amending minute 13.10.14 to read "Five priority programmes were highlighted ..." (rather than five priority subject areas).

MATTERS ARISING

Systems integration (Minute AB13.06.7 refers)

AB13.12.4 John Rushforth DVC reported that an Assistant Director was due to join IT Services in early January 2014 with the brief to bring forward a long term plan for the University's IT infrastructure. This tied in with the conversations happening about a new student record system. The Acting Director of Corporate & Academic Services reported that she was undertaking an 'open conversation' through a number of forums including Staff/Student Representative Forums (SRSFs) and staff stakeholder groups eliciting views

on ways to move forward with this.

Word Count Policy (Minute AB13.10.8 refers)

- AB13.12.4** It was noted that revisions to the Word Count Policy had been approved. Julie McLeod, PVC Learning, Teaching and Student Experience would be working with Associate Deans in the new year to look at how it would impact across the curriculum.

STUDENTS' UNION REPORT

- AB13.12.5** The report from the Students' Union (AB 13/12/2) drew on feedback from the first two rounds of SU Forums and the first Student Rep Committee (SRC) of the 13/14 academic year. Emerging themes were car parking, resources and timetabling. Timetabling had been chosen as the main focus of the SRC and representatives from Facilities: Central Examinations and Timetabling Service (CETTS) had been invited to attend. Academic Board commended the SU for working in partnership with the University in this way. The Board noted that, whilst in principle it was desirable to have earlier timetables, student expectations about this would need to be handled carefully as timetables are part of the wider curriculum design and approval process, whilst the complexities of maintaining accurate and up-to-date timetables were being addressed by the Timetabling Working Group.

- AB13.12.6** Julie McLeod welcomed feedback from students on the use of Blackboard across the University. It was noted that the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Strategy would be focusing on templates for Blackboard to help improve the learning environment for students. It was confirmed that discussions were taking place within Faculties about how to leave previously taken module information on Blackboard and that the IT Director was addressing the issue of extending storage space to allow students to download more materials from Blackboard. Julie McLeod would request an update on the TEL Strategy for Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee (AQEC) and any developments would be reported to Academic Board in due course.

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

- AB13.12.7** Paper AB 13/12/3 was received providing an update to Academic Board on issues considered by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) not featured elsewhere on the agenda. It covered: the first round of performance and accountability review meetings with Faculties and Professional Services; follow-up of the outcomes of reviews of subject areas in 2012-13; annual refresh of strategic plans (Faculties after Christmas, Professional Services in Spring, outcomes available in May); update on VCE matters from October to December; visit from Number 10 Downing Street; removal of student number controls (ref: Chancellor's Autumn Statement 5 December 2013).

- AB13.12.8** There was discussion about the implications of removing the cap on student numbers and consequent expansion. Although it was too soon to predict what it might mean for the University, the Board recognised that the market would become more volatile and that UWE was currently too exposed to clearing. Changes to admissions targets would be discussed with Faculties and it was likely at this stage that domestic target numbers would be reduced and international numbers increased. The quality of the University's engagement with enquirers would be key.

FACULTY BOARDS

- AB13.12.8** Feedback in the form of an executive summary from Faculty Boards would be received as a standing item. Paper 13/12/4 included feedback from the Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences (HAS) and the Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education (ACE). The Executive Dean Faculty of Business and Law (FBL) reported that the focus of discussion had been practice oriented learning, UWE Library Services strategic direction, the new build master plan and addressing the National Student Survey (NSS) results. ACE Executive Dean reported that the Faculty Board had focused on the theme of practice orientation and the next meeting would focus on research. The HAS Faculty Board Chair reported that Faculty Board had been a useful forum for discussion of pressing issues such as workload. The Executive Dean Faculty of Environment and Technology (FET) explained that the Faculty Board had taken time to establish and the first meeting would be held in January 2014. It was reported that Hartpury Associate Faculty had agreed the terms of reference for its Faculty Board and would provide feedback to Academic Board in due course.

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (REF) SUBMISSION

- AB13.12.9** Martin Boddy, PVC Research and Business Engagement, updated the Board on the work that had been undertaken to complete the REF submission for the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), which included adapting to requirements introduced mid-way through the process to evidence research with impact. Seventeen different subject groups had been submitted involving 314 staff. There had been a strong performance of 375 research degree completions. Over 50 impact case studies had been submitted from research staff. Panels would now look at the evidence through a thorough process ending in early 2015 and the outcome would influence the University research strategy. Academic Board thanked all staff who had been involved in the exercise and acknowledged that it had taken place against the backdrop of great institutional change.
- AB13.12.10** There was discussion about the scale of the University's research ambition, how to maximise research impact, and how research can impact on outstanding learning, ready and able graduates and the student experience. The range of research activity around subject-led research and pedagogic research was considered. The key objective was considered to be reputation rather than income and the depth and quality of the University's research output rather than its quantity.

ACADEMIC RISK: MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

- AB13.12.11** Paper AB 13/12/5 was received setting out the academic risks identified by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive. The Board considered whether the risk register remained an accurate reflection of the risks facing the institution and advised on mitigating actions and made a number of comments, including those below, which would be reflected in a revised version of the register at a future meeting of Academic Board to be scheduled:
- AB13.12.12** Risks to the student experience could be made more explicit and included in the 'Quality' section; the re-negotiation of the Health Education England national contract could impact on areas wider than undergraduate student recruitment; a number of mitigating actions had been taken to lessen the risks to Education which could reduce the risk score; research funding was very likely to reduce, therefore this had become an issue rather than a risk, and the risk should now be about our ability to build our reputation; it was felt that the University was exposed to greater risk under external partnerships than indicated by the current score and that more could be added to this section about strategic business partnerships.

- AB13.12.13** Academic Board considered the dashboard approach to monitoring movement in the risk quality indicators. It was felt that whilst the data presented provided a good description of activity, without the addition of some external benchmarks it was difficult to judge what the trends in the data meant for the University. There was agreement that in-year updates to complement annual quality monitoring would be useful if these could be made available.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

- AB13.12.14** Academic Board in May 2012 approved the academic calendar for 2013/14 to 2015/16. As part of the Board's discussions it was agreed that a working group should consider the implications of moving to a three teaching block model of delivery. The report from the sub-group was received (paper AB13/12/6) detailing the staffing implications. It was noted that a number of Departments (in particular within the Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences) already worked in this way and others may wish to move to this model. The paper highlighted that workloads and contractual agreements would need to be kept under review if there was a significant increase in the number of January starting programmes. Also considered in the paper were the opening hours of the Library, the reliance of the summer period to undertake estates work, the availability of catering facilities and the impact year-round delivery might have on summer schools activity, all of which would need consideration in a 3 teaching block model.

- AB13.12.15** Academic Board welcomed the proposed model, which would help to stop the 'standard/non-standard' polarised way of thinking about programmes and approved the adoption of the calendar.

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS NAME CHANGE

- AB13.12.16** Paper AB13/12/7 was received detailing a proposal to change the name of the Department of Arts in the Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education (ACE) in light of changes to the Department's portfolio towards practice led-aims and objectives. Following consultation with staff it was proposed to rename the Department "Department of Arts and Cultural Industries". Academic Board approved the name change with immediate effect.

CHANGES TO UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE (AQEC) MEMBERSHIP

- AB13.12.17** Paper AB 13/12/8 was received and Academic Board approved changes to membership as follows: Associate Heads of Department (Student Experience) to be changed to "Executive Deans nominee" to better reflect the varying Faculty structures and ensure the most appropriate membership; addition of Learning for All Hub Leader to membership; change of working in the first term of reference from "University Academic Strategy" to "University's academic 2020 Strategy".

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

- AB13.12.18** Professor James Longhurst, AVC Environment and Sustainability, and Mark Webster, Sustainability Manager, were in attendance to present the draft Sustainability Plan 2013-2020 (paper AB13/12/9) on behalf of the University Sustainability Board. The purpose of the Sustainability Plan was to ensure that the operation of the University and the delivery of the University's 2020 Strategy generated a net positive sustainability footprint.

- AB13.12.19** The Sustainability Plan detailed:
- the University's sustainability aims for the period 2013-2020;
 - the mechanisms by which sustainability was embedded within the University's day-to-day operation and effective decision making;
 - contribution to UWE's 2020 Strategy ambition by advancing a healthy and sustainable environment for UWE students, staff and the wider community;
 - contribution to UWE's strategic priorities through the delivery of ready and able sustainability literate graduates;
 - the development of sustainable estates infrastructure.

AB13.12.20 The Board considered this an impressive strategy dealing with some very challenging topics such, as smoke-free campuses. There was a recommendation to engage the University's architecture academics in the debates around meeting the targets for campus development.

AB13.12.21 Academic Board strongly endorsed the Plan and congratulated the Sustainability Board on its production. The Plan would be further considered by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive and the Board of Governors before a final plan would be presented to Academic Board for approval.

HARTPURY COLLEGE

AB13.12.22 John Deane, Vice-Principal of Hartpury College updated the Board on transitional plans being put in place in light of the College's application for taught degree awarding powers. The College was managing its own admissions with effect from September 2014 and other transitional plans were being put in place to manage the relationship between the College and UWE. The College was scheduled for Institutional Review in July 2014 and the outcome would be reported to the Board in due course.

EMERITA AND EMERITUS APPOINTMENTS

AB13.12.23 Academic Board ratified the appointment of Norma Daykin as Professor Emerita; the appointment of Professor Adrian Chandler as Professor Emeritus; and the renewed appointment of Jem Thomas as Emeritus Senior Fellow.

ACADEMIC AGREEMENTS

AB13.12.24 The Board noted that Academic Agreements had been signed with the following partners: Holborn College Limited (brand name for marketing purposes "Kaplan Holborn College"; and The British College PVT Ltd Nepal.

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND LAW RESEARCH CENTRE NAME CHANGE

AB13.12.25 The Board received a proposal to change the name from 'Centre for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Enterprise' [CENTIENT] to 'Bristol Enterprise and Innovation Centre' [BEIC] (paper AB13/12/10). The current name was considered to have lost meaning to external stakeholders. The proposal was to change the name of the Centre to one that focuses on the core activities of enterprise and innovation. The Board approved the change of name.

MINUTES OF COMMITTEES OF ACADEMIC BOARD

AB13.12.26 The minutes of the meeting of Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee (AQEC) held on 23 October 2013 were received (paper

AB13/12/11).

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

AB13.12.27

On behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, Paul Gough, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic was thanked by John Rushforth, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for his contribution to the University over the past 20+ years. Paul was moving to Australia in January 2014 to take up a new role as Pro-Vice Chancellor and Vice-President at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and would be greatly missed by UWE

ACADEMIC BOARD - ACTION SHEET FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2013

Minute	Substance	Actioning Officer	Reporting\other deadline
AB13.12.6.2	JMcL requested update to TEL Strategy for AQEC	Julie McLeod	Any developments will be brought to a future Board
AB13.12.10.1	Revised version of risk register to future Board	Jodie Anstee	As scheduled
AB13.12.11	Approved academic calendar	Rachel Cowie	Timely publication of the academic calendar

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the meeting of Academic Board on 18 December 2013 the following was reported

- An Assistant Director of IT Services has been appointed to assist with future plans for the University's IT infrastructure
- Students' Union feedback from the first two rounds of SU Forums and the Student Rep Committee (SRC) of 13/14. Emerging themes were car parking, Blackboard resources and timetabling. Timetabling had been chosen as the main focus of the SRC and representatives from Facilities: Central Examinations and Timetabling Service (CETTS) had been invited to attend.
- Noted that: the first round of performance and accountability review meetings with Faculties and Professional Services; follow-up of the outcomes of reviews of subject areas in 2012-13; annual refresh of strategic plans; update on VCE matters from October to December; visit from Number 10 Downing Street; removal of student number controls
- That the Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission had been completed. Academic Board thanked all staff who had been involved.
- The Sustainability Plan 2013 – 2020 was considered in final draft stage and was strongly endorsed by the Board.

Academic Board approved

- the clarification of a three teaching block academic calendar from September 2015
- The change of name of the ACE Department of Arts to 'Department of Arts and Cultural Industries' with immediate effect
- Changes to Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee (AQEC) membership with immediate effect
- The change of name of the FBL Research Centre for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Enterprise [CENTIENT] to 'Bristol Enterprise and Innovation Centre' [BEIC] with immediate effect

Academic Board noted that Academic Agreements had been signed with the following partners

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- The British College PVT Ltd Nepal.