



University of the
West of England

CONFIRMED

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board Committee held on Wednesday 31st January 2007

Present: Sir H Newby (Chair), M Adams, Dr G Attwood, Professor G Channon, Professor R Cuthbert, P Dowdall, Professor J Duffield, Dr K Foreman, R Gillibrand, S Grive, Dr J Harrington, T Harrison, W Jones, N Khurana, R Lawton, Professor J Longhurst, T McGoldrick, F Mertens, D Passfield, K Phillips, Professor R Ritchie, Dr J Rogers, J Rushforth, B Senior, Professor S West.

Apologies: Professor C Aitchison, Professor A Bensted, Professor M Boddy, J Bradley, N Clough, Professor C Fudge, Professor P Gough, A Habib, B Hawkins, M Keppel-Palmer, G Mann, Dr S Newby, C Rex.

In attendance: R Conlon (for minute AB07.01.4.1), C Croudace, Dr T Davies (representing Professor C Fudge), D Francombe, Professor S Hagen, K Hicks, Professor S Neill (for minute AB07.01.4.1), E Smith, M Wheeler.

AB07.01.1 WELCOME

The Vice Chancellor welcomed members to the fourth meeting of the academic year, and particularly Professor Cara Aitchison, Dr Gaynor Attwood, Dr Jane Harrington and Professor Jim Longhurst, who had been co-opted to the Board.

AB07.01.2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 20TH DECEMBER 2006

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 20th December 2006.

AB07.01.3 VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Paper AB/07/1/2 was received.

AB07.01.3.1 Student Numbers and the UWE Federation: The Vice Chancellor reported that, assuming no changes to the funding mechanism, the University was proposing to recruit in 2007 broadly the same number of HEFCE-funded undergraduate students as in 2006, and to transfer numbers through the UWE Federation to partner Colleges, facilitating an increase in their HE work, thus increasing the unit of resource available to faculties, and creating the potential to redeploy faculty resources to develop the four strategic aims adopted by the University. The Vice Chancellor confirmed that the University was currently in negotiations with partner colleges, to agree realistic recruitment targets

AB07.01.3.2 Pay Equality Project: Deputy Vice Chancellor West reported that progress was being made with negotiations.

AB07.01.3.3 Continuing Professional Development: Deputy Vice Chancellor West confirmed that the Faculty of Health and Social Care had been successful in its bids for NHS CPD contracts at both pre- and post-registration levels. The contracts had been awarded based on the flexibility and innovation of the programmes and on the faculty's engagement with employers. The Board congratulated the Dean of Health and Social Care and his colleagues on this excellent achievement.

AB07.01.3.4 HEFCE funding: The Vice Chancellor reported that details of priorities and funding for higher education for 2007/2008 had been set out in a letter from the Government to HEFCE in January 2007. The funding details called for efficiency savings across the sector, and, taking into account the net effect of inflation, there would be no uplift for teaching. The Vice Chancellor highlighted the emphasis in the letter on work-based learning co-funded by employers and it was anticipated that UWE should benefit from this emphasis. The impact of the funding priorities would be explored in the current planning round, with a focus on the University's vision and mission and on new developments.

AB07.01.4 **STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

AB07.01.4.1 **STUDENT EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME**

A paper had been e-circulated on 30th January 2007. Professor Steve Neill and Roger Conlon were welcomed to the meeting for this agenda item.

AB07.01.4.1.1 The paper was a summary and overview of a proposed Graduate Development Programme (previously referred to as 'Round Table'), which aimed to improve the student experience through the development of process-based approaches to teaching and learning, anchored in academic programmes, and to develop a distinctive UWE Graduate. The Programme would be certificated. The proposal had received unanimous support from the Student Experience Programme Group and UMG. Further discussions would take place in parallel with other discussions about the student experience, including the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, the Student Charter and the Employability Strategy.

AB07.01.4.1.2 The Board's attention was drawn particularly to the fact that the GDP would focus on learning skills, personal development, employability and academic achievement, supported through the pedagogy of "facilitated learning". The GDP would provide graduates with the opportunity to demonstrate that they had engaged with the processes of personal and graduate development by validating this development through the award of a UWE Certificate stating that the student has successfully completed the UWE GDP.

AB07.01.4.1.3 The Board welcomed the proposals in principle, noting that the Programme would be likely to be attractive to students, employers and other stakeholders. Members raised the following issues for further consideration at the implementation stage:

- (a) Replacing the existing point 1 on the "What it is" page with the wording in Appendix 1 point 2, to create a more powerful effect
- (b) implications for staff workload and staff development requirements for facilitation
- (c) mechanisms for the monitoring of minimum attendance requirement
- (d) possibility of experimenting with different teaching and learning models, including possible periods of intensive study, eg at weekends or during the summer after graduation

- (e) the implications for placements
- (f) the opportunities provided by the internationalisation of the curriculum
- (g) timetabling implications for staff and students
- (h) assessment methods.

AB07.01.4.1.4 Members were invited to forward further suggestions to Steve Neill and Roger Conlon, to inform the next iteration of the document. A final version of the document would be submitted for approval by the March 2007 Academic Board meeting.

Action: Steve Neill and Roger Conlon

AB07.01.4.2 **STUDENT MATTERS**
Paper AB07/1/3 was received.

AB07.01.4.2.1 The Board noted that there had been an increase in attendance of student representatives at meetings, that identified issues were being addressed by LTAC and that discussions were under way with the Academic Registrar to address the implications of the faculty restructuring for the internal student representation scheme. The Board congratulated the Student Representative Council on the positive improvements in student representation, which resulted from the good working relationships between the SRC and faculties.

AB07.01.5 **RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**

AB07.01.5.1 **INSTITUTES**
Paper AB07/1/4 was received.

AB07.01.5.1.1 The paper recommended progressing four of the proposed Institutes as a major component of the University's approach to knowledge exchange. It also proposed the submission of bids for funding to both HEFCE and the RDA to assist with the development of the Institutes. Institutes would ultimately be required to achieve sufficient income streams to ensure sustainability.

AB07.01.5.1.2 In response to questions from members, Deputy Vice Chancellor Rushforth confirmed that the next iteration of the business plan would include (a) the flow of income between the Institute, involved faculties and other partners; (b) the nomenclature of the Institutes.

AB07.01.5.1.3 The Board agreed to approve the recommendations to:

- (a) develop one institute connected with sustainability, for inclusion in the bid to HEFCE
- (b) discuss with HEFCE and the RDA the possibility of a Creative Technologies Institute, to include a Bristol Design Laboratory
- (c) approach faculties for funding for next steps for the Biosensing and Participatory Development and Global Ethics Institutes; and explore with the RDA their level of interest in a Biosensors Institute
- (d) encourage the Faculty of Environment and Technology to bring about the integration of research centres for Advanced Computing and Health Care Technologies.

Action: Deputy Vice Chancellor

AB07.01.5.2 **PROFESSOR EMERITUS**
The Board noted the changes to the process by which the title of Professor

Emeritus would be awarded, such that the title be accorded honorifically by Faculty Boards to any professor retiring in good standing, without the need for applications. Faculty Boards would be required to report such awards to Academic Board.

Action: Clerk to notify Faculty Administrators

AB07.01.6 UWE FEDERATION

The Vice Chancellor declared an interest in agenda item 7.3, "Carter and Carter", and withdrew from the meeting. Deputy Vice Chancellor Rushforth took the chair for this item.

AB07.01.6.1 LEITCH REPORT

The tabled paper, "Leitch Review of Skills: Implications and key issues for the University", was noted. The Academic Registrar invited members to submit any comments on the document to Pauline Hume, Senior Assistant Academic Registrar, by the end of 1st February 2007, for incorporation into a redrafting of the paper for UMG on 5th February 2007. Further iterations of the implications of the Leitch Report for the University would take place across the University.

Action: All

AB07.01.6.2 EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS AGREEMENTS

The item was withdrawn.

AB07.01.6.3 CARTER AND CARTER

Paper AB07/1/5 was received.

AB07.01.6.3.1 The paper set out a proposal to enter into a work-based learning collaboration with Carter and Carter plc, a major provider of learning to private industry, which was in receipt of substantial funds from LSC for vocational learning and was heavily engaged with Train to Gain. Carter and Carter would be willing to enter into an exclusive agreement with UWE. This would be a significant opportunity for the University to respond to the important policy area of increasing engagement with employers identified by the Government and by the Leitch Report.

AB07.01.6.3.2 The Board noted that initial discussions had taken place with Carter and Carter, the DfES and HEFCE, with positive feedback from all. Initial discussions had been reported to the Policy and Resources Committee.

AB07.01.6.3.3 During a wide-ranging discussion, members raised the following concerns:

- (a) implications for the perceived increased privatisation of education
- (b) the possible conflict of interest for the Vice Chancellor – the Deputy Vice Chancellor confirmed that the Board of Governors and the Remuneration Committee were reassured that effective arrangements would be put in place to avoid any conflict. HEFCE would require this reassurance before investing funds into such a venture.
- (c) the exclusive nature of the arrangement only covered England and not the rest of the UK
- (d) a symbiotic relationship would be crucial
- (e) the omission in the list of partnerships of the joint development of a Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training
- (f) the need to protect the interests, reputation and brand of UWE.

AB07.01.6.3.4 Members welcomed the potential offered by the proposal and agreed to

give cautious approval for the Deputy Vice Chancellor to proceed.

Action: Deputy Vice Chancellor

AB07.01.7 **INFRASTRUCTURE**

AB07.01.7.1 **FACULTY RESTRUCTURING**

Paper AB07/1/6 was received. The paper set out an update in respect of faculty restructuring. Deputy Vice Chancellor West confirmed that more detailed work would now be undertaken, in consultation with Deans, to develop faculty structures, including:

- (a) the slotting and matching of staff to the new structures, which would be done as far as possible by taking into account expertise, experience and personal ambitions. It was hoped to minimise the numbers of posts for which there would need to be a recruitment process.
- (b) the development of resource allocation and workload models
- (c) governance arrangements.

AB07.01.7.1.1 The Deputy Vice Chancellor confirmed that students would be informed of the new faculty structures when they were finalised; this communication would include faculty structure diagrams, committee structures and identified members of staff with specific responsibilities.

AB07.01.7.1.2 The Board noted that the Bristol Business School would operate for three years as a separate budgetary planning unit in its own right, and would focus on developing a strong identity in support of Knowledge Exchange across the University, working in partnership with all other faculties and Institutes, ensuring that leadership and management agendas are fully exploited.

AB07.01.7.2 **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES RESTRUCTURING**

Deputy Vice Chancellor Rushforth reported on the following developments since the last meeting of the Board:

- (a) job descriptions in CRIGS were being revisited
- (b) CRIGS would be launched as Research, Business and Innovation (RBI) in February 2007, with further external launches at a later date
- (c) the Chaplaincy had been integrated into the Centre for Student Affairs as of 1st January 2007
- (d) consideration was being given to the provision of IT, AV and Printing and Stationery services across the University, with a view to developing a centrally-managed service for all general provision; faculty-specific provision would continue to be managed locally.

AB07.01.7.3 **LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY**

The Academic Registrar reported that the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee meeting on 26th January 2007 had considered the aims and objectives for the University's LTA strategy which had been identified at the LTA Away Day on 15th December 2007. A small group of members of the LTAC would develop the objectives and submit a paper to UMG on 12th March 2007, to Academic Board on 14th March 2007 and to the Board of Governors on 26th March 2007.

Action: LTAC

AB07.01.8 **ITEMS TO NOTE**

The Board received the following for information:

- AB07.01.8.1 Annual report for 2005/2006 from Academic Board to the Board of Governors (paper AB07/1/7)
- AB07.01.8.2 The list of honorary degrees awarded during 2006 (paper AB07/1/8)
- AB07.01.8.3 Minutes of the Joint Student Affairs Committee of 6th November 2006 (paper AB07/1/9)
- AB07.01.8.4 Draft unconfirmed minutes of the UWE Federation Committee of 7th December 2006 (paper AB07/1/9).

AB07.01.9 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

2.00 pm, 14th March 2007, 2.00 pm, room 3D33
2.00 pm, 16th May 2007, 2.00 pm, room 3A22
2.00 pm, 13th June 2007, 2.00 pm, room 3A22
2.00 pm, 4th July 2007, 2.00 pm, room 3D33.