

## **ACADEMIC BOARD**

Minutes of a meeting of Academic Board held on Wednesday 15 June 2011.

**Present:** Professor G Atwood; Professor M Boddy; P Catley; Professor O Doran; M Frutos-Perez; A Gilkison; T Goodhew; Professor P Gough (Chair); Professor S Gray; Professor H Langton; Professor J Longhurst; Professor G Lyons; Professor R Means; P Morgan; P Nolan; C Offler; Professor P Olomolaiye; Professor R Ritchie; B Senior; G Wilson..

**Apologies:** D Allen; A Cheshire; M Grey; S Grive; Dr J Harrington; T Harrison; P Jones; P Hume; A Mathieson; Professor J McLeod; M Partington; Professor L Raphael Reed; J Rushforth; G Sandford; R Scott; F Tolmie; L Ventura; Professor S West; Dr S Waite;

**In Attendance:** T McGoldrick; H Millican (for item AB11.6.9); A Osborn (clerk); C Plaice (for item AB11.6.13); O Reid; C Rex; S Yilmaz (for item AB11.6.20).

### **AB11.6.1 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

*Paper AB11/6/1 was received.*

The minutes of the meeting 6 April 2011 were approved.

### **AB11.6.2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) informed the Board that discussions were ongoing in response to concerns raised by the Students' Union on the future of the Graduate Development Programme and noted the Student Representative Council Vice President's request for greater definition of the timescales involved.

### **AB11.6.3 REPORT OF CHAIR'S ACTIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

*Paper AB11/6/2 was received.*

### **AB11.6.4 VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

*Paper AB11/6/3 was received.*

The Board further noted that the Vice-Chancellor had attended the recently reported meeting between the Prime Minister and Vice-Chancellors.

### **AB11.6.5 REGULATORY REVIEW FRAMEWORK**

*Paper AB11/6/4 received.*

**AB11.6.5.1** The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) introduced the paper and noted that it provided an update on work carried out to date and that the review would move forwards as a project with appropriate support

**AB11.6.5.2** During discussion members noted that proposed new regulations would:

- i. build on good practice elsewhere in the sector;
- ii. be aware of interdependencies with the student record system;
- iii. be concise and precise and written in "plain English";
- iv. be taken through the EIA process at the earliest opportunity;
- v. further consider the definition of, and enshrine the notion of good academic standing; complement other work streams revisiting the University's approach to assessment.

- AB11.6.5.3** Academic Board **approved** the principles proposed to underpin the development of a revised regulatory framework.
- AB11.6.6** **ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO PROJECT: PROGRESS REPORT AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION**  
*Paper AB11/6/5 was received.*
- AB11.6.6.1** Professor Longhurst outlined the history behind the review the University's approach to the development of academic provision and highlighted that the paper did not represent the completion of the work but provided the Board with a set of interim statements.
- AB11.6.6.2** The Board was asked to consider the proposals for developing a unique selling point for the university that would provide a characteristic education and graduate of the University by exposing people to the complexity of contemporary sustainability and employability debates.
- AB11.6.6.3** During discussion the Board noted that:
- i. the review group represented a range of interests beyond sustainability and employability;
  - ii. a timeline of deliverables would be developed in the next phase of the project;
  - iii. whilst proposals focused on the traditional undergraduate students' further work would be conducted to engage with other student cohorts;
  - iv. further definition of the work experience offer would be required to ensure it reflected solely undergraduate programmes and would be presented to the market appropriately;
  - v. previous pilots embedding Institute of Leadership and Management qualifications in the curriculum had been successful and could be expanded to include qualifications from other organisation but would carry credit and cost implications;
  - vi. an emphasis on sustainability within the curriculum would chime with Bristol's emerging green agenda;
  - vii. proposals would not seek to replace existing resources and would recognise where complementary activity, including that supporting employability, was already taking place.
  - viii. It would be important to support colleagues developing curriculum to embed holistic programme learning outcomes alongside subject specific outcomes and in particular provide clear articulation of what would be expected; to this end staff development would be paramount;
  - ix. the measures by which the project would be judged would require careful consideration and in particular further information on the impact of UWE's curriculum innovations was required to better understand their resultant effect on student confidence;
  - x. it would be helpful to further explore how tacit notions of Partnership expressed within the paper could be made more explicit.
- AB11.6.6.4** Academic Board **approved** the recommendations and noted that feedback would be taken back to the development Group. Thanks to Geoff and the team for the development work.
- AB11.6.6.5** The Chair thanked Professor Channon, B Hewett and the wider team for their work developing the proposals.

**AB11.6.7 DISCIPLINE POLICY**

*Paper AB11/6/6 was received.*

**AB11.6.7.1** The Director of Student Services highlighted that the student discipline policy had become considerably dated and was as a result no longer workable. Furthermore effective implementation of the policy required dedicated resource.

**AB11.6.7.2** During discussion the Board noted:

- i. a sub group of the Learning Teaching and Student Experience Executive would meet to further distil proposals with a view to seeking Chair's action over the Summer in order to implement a revised policy in time for the start of the next academic year;
- ii. the discipline policy would sit alongside revised professional suitability and fitness to study policies;
- iii. it would be important to understand drivers behind poor student behaviour to ensure the appropriate procedure was used;
- iv. a significant piece of work would be conducted on highlighting the University's behavioural expectations of students at the start of their studies;

**AB11.6.7.3** The Board **approved** continued work to revise the policy and **endorsed** Chair's approval when appropriate.

**AB11.6.8 SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES PARTNERSHIPS**

*Papers AB11/6/7 and AB11/6/8 were received*

**AB11.6.8.1** The Assistant Vice-Chancellor: Partnerships, Diversity and Civic Engagement updated the committee on the position of the Schools and Colleges Partnership Service Strategy and noted that due to timing, implementation had begun in earnest.

**AB11.6.8.2** During discussion on the University's widening participation activities the Committee noted:

- i. Partner schools and colleges had been supportive of the approach taken;
- ii. the new access agreement would take into account the whole student lifecycle including retention and employability;
- iii. there had been a disappointing response from other Higher Education Institutions in the region over collaboration to mitigate the impact of the withdrawal of Aim Higher funding;
- iv. advice from the Student Representative Council President highlighting that the new proposals would result in a reduction in the number of bursaries awarded and therefore may have an impact on student retention.

**AB11.6.8.3** Academic Board **endorsed** the Strategy to the Board of Governors for approval.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**AB11.6.9 SHELL AWARD FRAMEWORK**

*Paper AB11/6/9 was received.*

The Board warmly welcomed and **approved** proposals to provide greater flexibility to the Shell Award Framework in response to employer demand together with defined processes for its application.

**AB11.6.10 PROPOSAL FOR DIFFERENTIATED BANDINGS OF INTEGRATED BACHELORS/MASTERS DEGREES.**

*Paper AB11/6/10 was received.*

Academic Board **approved** proposals from the Faculty of Environment and Technology Academic Standard and Quality Committee correcting an anomaly between the integrated Bachelors/Masters and stand alone Masters degrees.

**AB11.6.11 ACADEMIC BOARD COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

*Paper AB11/6/11 was received.*

**AB11.6.11.1** Academic Board broadly **approved** amendments to the Terms of Reference for its sub committees subject to further consideration of:

- i. the required frequency of Research Degrees Committee being lowered to a minimum of three meetings per year;
- ii. the addition of library representatives on departmental committees;
- iii. the scope of Assistant Vice-Chancellor inclusion on committee compositions.

**AB11.6.11.2** The Board warmly received proposed amendments to Programme Staff Student Liaison committees and noted that:

- i. Consideration would be given to making co-chairing compulsory, but that this would be subject to the resolution of a number of practical issues;
- ii. Challenges remained over the engagement of part time and post graduate students in the representation structure;
- iii. the quorum may benefit from a normally clause.

**AB11.6.11.3** The Board **agreed** that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Clerk would further refine the proposals in light of the comments received and **endorsed** Chair's approval of further amendments when appropriate.

**ACTION: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)/Clerk**

**AB11.6.12 REPORT FROM LEARNING TEACHING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE EXECUTIVE.**

*Paper AB11/6/12 was received.*

**AB11.6.13 REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF UWESU**

**AB11.6.13.1** The Student Representative Council President updated the Board on current activity within the Students' Union, including:

- i. the incoming new Sabbatical Officers would take office on 20 June;
- ii. work had begun on implementing the new constitution;
- iii. the block grant application had been approved and steps had been taken to accommodate the reduction in funding;
- iv. that all email addresses for the Sabbatical Officers would be changing.

**AB11.6.13.2** In response to a question on student representative attendance at PSSLGs the Student Representative Vice President reminded the Board that the representative system belonged to the University and was facilitated by the Students' Union and engagement from student representatives earlier in the academic year would be contingent on the faster election of student representatives.

**AB11.6.14 UWE HARVARD REFERENCING STYLE**

*Paper AB11/6/13 was received.*

**AB11.6.14.1** The Faculty Librarian for the Faculty of Business and Law outlined that the proposal for a single Harvard Referencing style had undergone a broad consultation and recognised that academic literacy was a key skill. To support the move to a single style a number of measures would be put in place, including:

- i. the production of updated guidance (including Iskills) and tools;
- ii. consideration of a smart phone *app* to support for referencing;
- iii. a review of referencing information in module handbook for the 12/13 academic year.

**AB11.6.14.2** The Board warmly welcomed and **approved** the proposals and noted the exemplary consultation process that had been conducted as part of their development.

**AB11.6.15 REPORTS FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY COMMITTEES**

*Paper AB11/6/14 was received.*

The Board **agreed** that it would be beneficial review the method by which Academic Board received and considered reports from Academic Quality and Standards Committees. The content and guidance supporting reports to the Board would also be considered.

**ACTION: Chair/Secretary**

**AB11.6.16 GRADUATE SCHOOL PROPOSAL**

*Paper AB11/6/15 was received*

**AB11.6.16.1** Professor Boddy outlined the remit of the Postgraduate Research Review Group and thanked the Group's contributors. The Board noted that that under the proposals presented would apply to all Doctoral students and that:

- i. Students would remain attached to their teams;
- ii. The Graduate School would align to One University Administration principles;
- iii. from 2012/13 the intention would be to replace faculty Research Degrees Committees with a University wide Group;
- iv. detailed proposals for the governance and administration of the School would be developed following the appointment of the Director and Administrator.

**AB11.6.16.2** The Board welcomed the proposals and during discussion noted that:

- in addition to the comprehensive list of objectives outlined the Graduate School would help to support a coordinated approach to bidding.
- further clarity would be required on the roles of and links to Faculty leads
- the inclusion of professional doctorates was to be welcomed;
- a task group had been commissioned to further consider the most appropriate support from the Graduate School for Professional Doctoral students;
- the physical location of the School was still under consideration but that it current discussions indicated that it would be part of the Academic Hub;
- students would likely benefit from feeling part of a bigger cohort;
- it would be important and that students relationships with their supervisory team would be paramount and should not be confused with the supporting structure;
- external communications would require careful management to ensure the strategy was understood by the wider sector;
- the Student's Union strongly supported the proposals.

**AB11.6.16.3** Academic Board **approved** the proposals and noted that proposals for the revised research degree committee arrangements would require further Board approval.

**AB11.6.17 CENTRE FOR CLINICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH**

*Paper AB11/6/16 was received.*

Academic Board **approved** the change in title of the Centre For Clinical And Health Services Research to the Centre for Health and Clinical Research.

**AB11.6.18 2010/11 PORTFOLIO REVIEW OUTCOMES**

*Paper AB11/6/17 was received.*

**AB11.6.19 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COLLABORATIVE PROVISION AND ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

*Paper AB11/6/18 was received.*

The Board welcomed the report from the Chair of the Committee and noted that it was anticipated that amendments to the committee approved by the Board (AB11.6.11.1) would further refine the work of the committee. The Assistant Vice Chancellor Partnerships, Diversity and Civic Engagement recorded their thanks to D. Watson for support provided to the Committee.

**AB11.6.20 APPROVAL PROCESS FOR NEW COLLABORATIVE PROVISION**

**AB11.6.20.1** The Board received an oral update from the Senior Assistant Academic Registrar (Collaborative Provision) on proposals to develop collaborative provision with North Shore College and the City School of Architecture, both in Sri Lanka.

**AB11.6.20.2** The board noted that it was proposed that North Shore would adopt UWE's regulations for the delivery of collaborative provision similar to that used with the majority of UWE's Partnerships with the exception that examining boards would be held at the Partner. The City School of Architecture had sought a validating relationship with the University which would require due diligence of the School to encompass local regulations. The intention was to conclude discussions for both partnerships in a single visit to Sri Lanka.

**AB11.6.20.3** Formal Board approval would be sought to make both organisations Affiliated Institutions and, to enable the validation of RIBA awards offered by the City School of Architecture a variation to the regulations would be presented for approval.

**AB11.6.21 SUMMARY OF FINCH RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Paper AB11/6/19 was received.*

**AB11.6.21 PROFESSORIAL APPOINTMENTS**

The Board further noted the Professorial appointments of:

Pam Moore - Professor Emerita

David Evans – Professor Emeritus

Nick Wilson – Visiting Professor

Alec [check name with Robin Means]

**AB11.6.23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair thanked Professors Bedstead and Channon for their contribution the academic life and management of the University and noted that it would also be the last meeting of the Board attended by Tessa Harrison, Gill Sandford, and Gail Wilson and similarly thanked them for their valuable contribution to the Board.