

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Wednesday 6 July 2016.

Present: Steve West (Chair), Lucy Dumbell, Robert Elvin, Alex Franklin, Alex Gilkison, Sarah Green, Jane Harrington, Dylan Jones-Evans, Mandy Lee, Helen Lloyd Wildman; Glenn Lyons, Lamine Mahdjoubi, Stuart McClean, Jo Midgley, Steven Neill, Paul Olomolaiye, Glenn Parry, Milena Popova, Darren Reynolds, Jeanette Sakel, Rachel Sales, Fiona Tolmie, Patricia Voaden, Donna Whitehead, Aylwin Yafele.

In attendance: Jason Briddon, John Clarke, Chris Gledhill (Clerk), Tracey Horton (for AB16.07.7), Alastair Osborn, Neil Willey (for AB16.07.6), Tracy Willis.

Observers: Delia Bean, Edd Burrell (SU).

Apologies: Martin Boddy, Rachel Cowie, Ahmd Emara (SU), Manuel Frutos-Perez, Georgina Gough, Catherine Hobbs, Jamie Jordon (SU), Lynne Lawrance, James Lee, Adam Pinfold, Rosie Scott-Ward.

AB16.07.1 Membership

Academic Board Nominee to the Board of Governors

Members noted that Professor Alex Gilkison's membership of the Board of Governors as Academic Board nominee would end on 31 July 2016.

Academic Board thanked Professor Gilkison for his tenure as its nominee.

The Chair proposed that Donna Whitehead, Pro-Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Business and Law, be nominated to replace Professor Gilkison.

The Academic Board **endorsed** the nomination.

ACTION: Head of Governance

Vice-Chancellor's Nominee to the Academic Board

Members noted that Jenny Ames, Associate Dean, Research, Innovation and Partnerships, HAS would replace Peter Rawlings as representative Associate Dean, RKE and Jackie Rogers, Associate Dean, Learning, Teaching and Student Experience, FET would replace Fiona Tolmie representative Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning.

AB16.07.2 Minutes and Matters Arising

Paper AB16/05/01 was received

AB16.07.2.1 Minutes

Members noted the correction (italics) to Min. AB16.05.11.3 to read:

"Following full and considered deliberation, Members **approved** the revised Regulation I.15.2R and **endorsed** the change of University Ordinance to the Board of Governors for approval."

Subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held Wednesday 18 May 2016 were **approved**.

- AB16.07.2.2 Min AB16.05.3.2 refers: Faculty Boards
Members received an update from the Vice-Chair of the FBL Faculty Board and noted that the FBL planned feed-forward lunch had not taken place as planned due to staff availability. However, a staff suggestion box had been installed in the Faculty post room and a circulation was due to be issued to FBL staff the following week detailing points of contact, the process and terms of reference of the feed-forward lunches.
- AB16.07.2.3 Members also noted that the matters raised through the suggestion box would set the agenda for the feed-forward lunch, shared thereon with Faculty Executive and feedback disseminated through the Faculty newsletter.
- AB16.07.2.4 The Vice-Chancellor shared with Members his thoughts on engagement of the Professoriate in a meaningful manner, following a number of round-table discussion with some of the University's professors.
- AB16.07.2.5 During discussions, Members noted:
- i. The challenge of being a professor in the University but not part of the Executive structure, serving on committees, etc. which often led to lack of awareness of a lot of University business;
 - ii. The importance that professors do engage with this business;
 - iii. The need to mobilise the shared expertise of this group across the whole University;
 - iv. The possibility of engineering a broadly themed 'grand challenge' requiring input from different Faculties and disciplines;
 - v. The synergy between this discussion and the conversations around the enhanced year;
 - vi. The possibility of extending the 'grand challenge' beyond the Professoriate – the example of the amount of work that flowed from the relatively modest funds received for the Green Capital/Sustainability initiative and how this had connected students as well as staff.
- AB16.07.2.6 Min AB16.05.3.3 refers: Faculty Boards
Members noted that the voting for the June Faculty Board elections (HAS and FET) would close at 13:00hrs on Thursday 7 July 2016 and results published the following day.

ACTION: Head of Governance

- AB16.07.2.7 Min AB16.05.6.2 refers: 2016/2017 Academic Calendar
Members noted that the reported anomalies to the draft calendar were followed up and that the final version had now been published.

Members also noted that future calendar would evolve as the Enhanced Academic Year was developed.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

AB16.07.3 Vice-Chancellor's Update *Paper AB16/07/02 was received*

- AB16.07.3.1 Members received an update from the Vice-Chancellor and noted the following in particular:

- AB16.07.3.2 *Strategy 2020 mid-point review update*
- i. The review continued to progress and feedback so far included:
 - a. Behaviours and culture – whether processes matched the culture the University was striving for.
 - b. how could we better empower, streamline and support our decision-making.

- c. The pace of change was too slow and it was often difficult to get things started. It was acknowledged that some aspects of Strategy 2020 would take longer than others to achieve – was it possible to simplify our Strategic Programme boards?
- ii. Members were reminded that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), whilst not in the strategy document, were in place locally and were driven by strategic KPIs that were reported to and monitored by the Board of Governors;
- iii. Changes to be in place for 2016-2017 included a refocusing of the strategic programmes from 4 to 3 and a realignment of projects.

AB16.07.3.3 *Strategic Risk Register Update*

- i. The new approach to risk identification and management leading to a revised strategic risk register;
- ii. Strategic risk register now captured 5 strategic risks, namely:
 1. *UWE falls below its recruitment, retention and success targets*
The University was heavily reliant upon its ability to recruit, retain and graduate its undergraduate students (EU and SLC funding).
 2. *UWE fails to deliver its financial targets.*
The need to ensure sufficient headroom in order to deliver programmes of work such as buildings, people, IT, etc. – this was seriously dependent upon the successful management of strategic risk 1.
 3. *UWE fails to ensure that it uses its people resources effectively.*
The University's greatest asset was its staff and their effective mobilisation was of critical importance.
 4. *UWE fails to achieve research and enterprise targets.*
Research and enterprise were important components of the University as it impacted upon its reputation and standing as well as informing the learning and teaching agenda.
 5. *UWE has a poor reputation and is unable to seize reputation enhancing opportunities.*
This would impact upon the recruitment of both students and staff and the University's ability to create and develop partnerships.

AB16.07.3.4 *Brexit*

- i. The outcome of the EU referendum to leave the EU had caused an economic and social shock, and was already triggering some destabilising and uncertainty, with reported instances of:
 - a. European behaviour of changing the partners with whom to work
 - b. Other institutions: job offers made to EU citizens being declined and EU citizens exiting from their current posts;
- ii. The University continued to send a very clear and very positive message to its staff and students from the EU and to those EU students joining in September 2016;
- iii. There were in the region of 3 million EU staff working within the UK university sector.

AB16.07.3.5 *Campus 2020*

- i. In addition to the significant investment across the University's campuses, work was also progressing in terms of the summer refurbishment programme;
- ii. An overview of further space requirements for engineering, science and provision at the Glenside campus would be completed by the autumn and this would inform further investment in these areas.

AB16.07.3.6 *Tuition fees*

- i. A reminder that through the White Paper and the Higher Education and Research Bill, the government had set out the intention to allow undergraduate tuition fees to rise in 2017/2018 in line with inflation, for those providers who met level one of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF);
- ii. Subject to Parliament approval of the tuition fee changes and based on these criteria, UWE Bristol would be able to introduce a 2.8% increase to fees in 2017/2018;
- iii. The University held the position – which was supported fully by the Board of Governors – that it was appropriate to apply the increased levy to new students only;
- iv. Postgraduate – depending upon activity, postgraduate fees were determined by a Fees Group and recommendations made to the Board of Governors;
- v. Confirmation that for all students, the tuition fee was fixed at the point of registration, but reviewed on an annual basis;
- vi. The second reading of the White Paper had not been presented to Parliament this week as anticipated.

AB16.07.4 National Student Survey and Teaching Excellence Framework 2016-2017
Paper AB16/07/03 was received

AB16.07.4.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost outlined the key points of the report to Academic Board.

AB16.07.4.2 Members' attention was drawn in particular to the following:

- i. A reminder that the technical consultation to the TEF was ongoing;
- ii. The TEF would almost certainly draw on data from the National Student Survey (NSS) in 3 areas: teaching, assessment and feedback, and academic support;
- iii. The University had established a TEF-Ready Group; an operational group that met fortnightly to examine the data sets it was felt were likely to be required in the TEF;
- iv. NSS Task Force – activity would be a year-on-year process and following the publication of the NSS results in August 2016, there would be a series of review meetings in September, which would be scheduled based on the outcomes of the NSS;
- v. Two plans were in place:
 - a. Plan A, to be put into action if the University's NSS outcome had increased from last year and was at, or above the national average
 - b. Plan B, to be put into action should NSS outcomes be the same as last year or show a decrease. Members acknowledged that this would be disastrous in terms of the TEF.

AB16.07.4.3 During discussion of the detail of the two plans, Members further noted:

- i. Work was underway to secure the data analytics that the University currently did not hold, including attendance;
- ii. Other data analytics included VLE usage and assessment hand-in;
- iii. NSS results were expected to be published mid-August although early indications were anticipated towards the end of July, although the results of other institutions would not be known at that point;
- iv. Module evaluations would be held for all modules. Whilst acknowledging that this may appear excessive, it would equip final year students well for the NSS in the following spring term;
- v. Robust engagement with the student body should mean that there was nothing of surprise to the University in the NSS results;
- vi. Surveys at Levels 1 and 2 gave all programmes the opportunity to have improvements in place by the start of the next academic year and to demonstrate that students' views were heard and acted upon;

- vii. LTSEC had suggested that in addition to 'set' questions, it would be valuable to Faculties to have programme-specific questions.

AB16.07.4.4 Following full and considered discussion, Members noted the report and **endorsed** the actions to be taken by the University.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

AB16.07.5 Hartpury Quality Enhancement Framework

Paper AB16/07/04 was received

AB16.07.5.1 Members noted that the Hartpury Quality Enhancement Framework (HQEF) had been considered in detail by the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (LTSEC) at its meeting on 6 June 2016 and was recommended to Academic Board for approval.

AB16.07.5.2 Members **approved** the use of the HQEF – including the proposed committee structure – as an approved variant from September 2016.

AB16.07.6 UWE Policy and Strategy for PGR Contributions to Teaching

Paper AB16/07/05 was received

AB16.07.6.1 Members noted that the document had been revised in response to the QAA Higher Education Review (HER) recommendation that “all postgraduate research students receive appropriate training before they undertake teaching duties”.

AB16.07.6.2 Members also noted the following key points:

- i. The document had been through rigorous consultation process with the PGR student body and observations and comments had been taken on board;
- ii. The strategy was a much-improved mechanism to monitor PGR activity and relay this back to Faculties;
- iii. Following several discussions with the Higher Education Academy (HEA) about the definition of 'teaching', the University had determined that teaching was to be defined as including 'all activities that held students to learn or that help to assess student learning';
- iv. Details of the one-day 'Preparing to Teach in HE' course that would be undertaken by all PGRs as part of their induction programme. PGRs who chose not to would not be eligible to teach unless they had up-to-date equivalent training for teaching;
- v. PGRs who teach more than 120 hours per year must be registered on their degree part-time.

AB16.07.6.3 Members also noted that the University was due to meet with HEA colleagues to discuss the possibility of a UWE-validated route for all PGRs.

AB16.07.6.4 Members **approved** the UWE Policy and Strategy for PGR Contributions to Teaching.

AB16.07.7 Academic Regulations and Procedures

Paper AB16/07/06 was received

AB16.07.7.1 Updated Academic Regulations and Procedures with effect from September 2016
The Academic Regulations & Policy Manager led Members through the changes made to the regulations for 2016/2017.

AB16.07.7.2 Members' attention was drawn in particular to the following:

- i. Work was underway on refining and simplifying the regulations and procedures to eradicate confusion and complexity, whilst being mindful that these were permissible regulations;

- ii. Workshops would be held during 2016/2017. The Academic Regulations & Policy Manager had been asked to draft an outline set of regulations to be consulted upon during 2016/2017;
- iii. the main changes to the regulations for 2016/2017 related to:
 - a. changes in Award titles
 - b. clarification of existing regulations including
 - i. resitting components
 - ii. electronic submission of work
 - iii. use of mobile devices in assessment
 - iv. annulment of the decision of the examining board
 - v. eligibility for the submission of extenuating circumstances applications
 - vi. updates to extenuating circumstances regulations relating to 'self-certification', as approved by Academic Board on 18 May 2016.

AB16.07.7.3 Following due and careful consideration, the revised Academic Regulations & Procedures to take effect from September 2016 were **approved**.

AB16.07.7.4 Review of the Impact of Changes to the Extenuating Circumstances Regulations 2015/2016

Members were reminded that at the beginning of the 2015/2016 academic year the academic regulations had been changed to allow students to apply for extenuating circumstances on the following grounds only:

- i. they had not submitted work
- ii. they fell ill during an exam/controlled conditions assessment
- iii. they undertook an assessment but their judgement in deciding to do so was demonstrably impaired due to a chronic health condition, mental health or bereavement.

AB16.07.7.5 The Academic Regulations & Policy Manager conveyed to Members the findings of the review of the changes during the first year of implementation.

AB16.07.7.6 Members noted:

- i. the rationale behind the change was to encourage students to engage with staff at the time they experience difficulties and to avoid a situation where a student applied for extenuating circumstances which were subsequently not required;
- ii. changes had generated many queries from students and staff and had challenged the systems and processes that were in place, as there was a need to distinguish between those students who had applied according to the criteria set out in the regulations and those who had not;
- iii. it was impossible to tell from the tracking report from the student records system whether extenuating circumstances applied to specific assessments;
- iv. as at 6 June 2016, 1916 applications had been received and these were considered by a Review Group, which had found that 77% of these had not required any action; there was a need therefore to explore alternative ways to best identify the cases that should be acted upon;
- v. there was a clear need to improve the guidance and information for both staff and students;
- vi. the need for stricter adherence to the 10 working day extenuating circumstances submission deadline post-result;
- vii. despite the challenges presented by the change, the 'early intervention' initiatives were starting to have an impact there had been a 10%-14% reduction upon 2014/2015 in the number of extenuating circumstances received and an increase in the use of the 5-day extensions.

AB16.07.7.7 Members further noted the importance of academic staff to understand the provenance of extenuating circumstances and clearer, more succinct guidance would assist in that and reduce the referral of cases to Professional Services colleagues.

ACTION: Academic Regulations & Policy Manager to enhance the guidance and information available on the staff intranet.

AB16.07.7.8 Following due and careful consideration, the following recommendations were **approved**:

1. Clarification in the regulations and guidance, the principle that where a student has submitted work /attended an assessment, the ECs will always be rejected, unless they are applying for exceptional reasons after the assessment.
2. Prioritise development in SharePoint to require students to indicate on their EC1 form whether or not they have submitted their work.
3. Identify an automated method of matching students with marks and their ECs as well as easily being able to verify the assessment submission date(s) the student puts on the EC claim.
4. ECs to be applied at element level in ISIS rather than component level as this reflects the operation of the process and allows instant identification of ECs against the relevant element.
5. The review group and implementation group to be retained for 16/17.
6. Continued monitoring of the effectiveness of the changes and any emerging trends.

AB16.07.7.9 Minor Amendments to Postgraduate Research (PGR) Regulations

Members **approved** the minor amendments to the Postgraduate Research Regulations.

AB16.07.8 Hartpury College – Variant Regulations for 2016/2017
Paper AB16/07/07 was received

AB16.07.8.1 The Associate Dean, Quality and Standards, Hartpury College led Members through the suggested variant regulations.

AB16.07.8.2 Members noted that changes were relatively minor and related to:

- i. Renaming of Field and Award Boards to Module Examination Boards and Programme Examination Boards respectively (A1.9)
- ii. Condonement consideration (A1.10)
- iii. Calculation of the Foundation Degree (A1.11).

AB16.07.8.3 It was suggested that Regulation A1.10 be modified to include a statement with regard to students achieving their learning objectives.

ACTION: HC Associate Dean, Quality and Standards

AB16.07.8.4 During further discussion, the Associate Dean was urged to consult the QAA Code of Conduct in respect of Regulation A1.10 to ensure that it was compliant.

ACTION: HC Associate Dean, Quality and Standards

AB16.07.8.5 Subject to compliance with QAA Code and the suggested amendment it was **agreed** to defer the approval of Hartpury College's variant regulations for 2016/2017 to Chair's Action.

ACTION: Approval of variant regulations deferred to Chair's Action

REPORTS AND UPDATES

AB16.07.9 External Peer Review Annual Report to Academic Board
Paper AB16/07/08 was received and noted.

AB16.07.10 Updates from Faculty Boards

Further to the Faculty of Business and Law update shared earlier in the meeting, the Vice-Chancellor invited updates from colleagues on the other Faculty Board meetings held in June 2016.

AB16.07.10.1 Members noted the following:

Faculty of Arts & Creative Industries and Education (ACE)

- i. The Faculty Board had discussed the Faculty's 2020 Vision document and had agreed that:
 - a. Clarity was needed around what was meant by 'partnership', particularly in relation to Art and Design.
 - b. There was a need to explore ways in which to raise the visibility of the excellent work that was going on. Identifying such work at a programme level would also have benefits in terms of marketing and recruitment.

Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences (HAS)

- i. The Faculty Board had discussed the Strategy 2020 mid-term review, particularly focusing on the questions discussed at Academic Board in May 2016, as well as HAS-specific challenges. Arising from discussions were:
 - a. A lot of positivity and acknowledgement of the University as a forward-thinking institution with a clear identity and an aspiration of excellence.
 - b. Competition with other healthcare providers and institutions –
 - i. 239 institutions had requested to become healthcare providers and
 - ii. The resources required to keep up with the pace of change, e.g. CPD, apprenticeships.
 - c. Improvements in communications and assurance that this would filter through to academic staff.
 - d. Improvements in IT were acknowledged and there had been some discussion around the new student records system.
 - e. Opportunity for new developments and to reshape the Faculty's relationship with its FE partners.

AB16.07.10.2 The Vice-Chancellor requested further details of the concerns in relation to apprenticeships.

ACTION: HAS Faculty Board Vice Chair to provide information to the Vice-Chancellor

AB16.07.10.3 The Vice-Chancellor reported that these discussions reflected those encountered through the recently-held Strategy Cafés and that all feedback would be collated and shared with staff.

AB16.07.10.4 The suggestion from the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Experience that the Deputy Head of Academic Services speak to the Faculty Board about the replacement student journey system was welcomed.

ACTION: Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Experience/ Deputy Head of Academic Services

AB16.07.10.5 *Faculty of Environment and Technology (FET)*

- i. The Faculty Board had discussed:
 - a. The Faculty Plan and in particular the narrative therein to describe the connectivity with the four industries to ensure this adds value to activity and to Faculty staff.

- b. The Faculty recruited staff of a high calibre and was working closely with HR to discuss ways improve staff retention.
- c. Strategy 2020 mid-point review – discussions were in line with those shared by the HAS Faculty Board and across the University generally.
- d. Module Leader role – question posed: ‘has your experience as a Module Leader improved over the last 4 years?’ feedback included:
 - i. experience was seen as a positive one, particularly in relation to working with other areas of the University
 - ii. there had been recognition that improvement was taking place
 - iii. there was an issue of consistency of performance and there may be a need for specific module leadership training and module team training
 - iv. there had been questions on the new self-certification process
 - v. the potential value of an Academic Regulations app.

AB16.07.10.6 Members noted the confirmation that the Student Self-Certification process had gone through the appropriate approval process twice via LTSEC and Academic Board, due to the need to consider suggested revision, and had been approved by the latter on 18 May 2016.

ITEMS TO NOTE

AB16.07.10 Academic Board Chair’s Actions

Members noted that on behalf of Academic Board, the Chair had approved the following institutions as an Affiliate Institute of UWE Bristol:

- i. Banking Academy of Vietnam (BAV), with effect from 7 June 2016
- ii. Saigon University, Vietnam, with effect from 22 June 2016.

AB16.07.11 Renaming of the Construction and Property Research Centre

Members noted that at its meeting on 20 April 2016 the University Research Ethics Committee approved the renaming of the centre to the Centre for Architecture and Built Environment Research (CABER).

AB16.07.12 Minutes of Sub-Committees

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

AB16.05.13 Any Other Business

There was no further business.

AB16.05.14 Dates of future meetings

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

Wednesday	12 October 2016	Dartington Suite
Wednesday	7 December 2016	Dartington Suite
Wednesday	22 February 2017	3A022, A Block, Frenchay
Wednesday	17 May 2017	3A022, A Block, Frenchay
Wednesday	5 July 2017	3A022, A Block, Frenchay