

ACADEMIC BOARD

CONFIRMED

Minutes of the Academic Board held on Wednesday 1 July, 2020. The meeting was held using Microsoft teams.

Present: Paul Bennett, Martin Boddy, Sally Clark, Peter Clegg, Amanda Coffey, Lisa Cole. Sonja Dragojlovic-Oliveira, Hazel Edwards, Marc Griffiths, James Hazzard, Mandy Lee, Sam Louwers, Elena Marco, Candida McCabe, Ray McDowell, Fidel Meraz, Jo Midgley, Christopher Moore, James Murphy, Augusta Chidinma Nnajofofor, Jane Ojiako, Paul Olomolaiye, Favour Oweisana, Carinna Parraman, Gerry Rice, Jane Roscoe, Jeanette Sakel, Richard Strange, Sarah Todd, Steven West (Chair), Neil Willey.

In attendance: Jodie Anstee, Jason Briddon, Rachel Cowie, Chris Gledhill, Katie Jenkins, Heather Moyes (Secretary), Amanda Oliver (Deputy Secretary),

Apologies: Nicholas Ryder, Patricia Voaden, Jingjing Xu

Observers: David Lamb

AB 20.07.1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

AB 20.07.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced:

- David Lamb, a member of the Board of Governors attending the meeting as an observer.

AB 20.07.1.2 He noted apologies had been received from Nicholas Ryder, Patricia Voaden and Jingjing Xu.

AB 20.07.1.3 No declarations of interest were received.

AB 20.07.2 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Paper AB 20/07/01 and Paper AB 20/07/02 were received.

AB 20.07.2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13 May 2020 were **approved** as a true and accurate record of discussions.

AB 20.07.2.2 Action Sheet and Matters Arising

Academic Board noted the majority of actions arising from the previous meeting had been completed.

The Chief Information Officer agreed to make enquiries about the video from the LTSEC Enhancement Event.

ACTION: Chief Information Officer

AB 20.07.2.3 Chair's Actions

AB 20.07.2.3.1 *Paper AB.20.07.03 and Paper AB 20.07.04 was received*

Academic Board noted that Chair's Action was taken to:

- approve changes to the UWE Hartpury Academic Regulations.
- allow the inclusion of a force majeure clause in the Taylors/UWE Dual Award Regulatory Framework (DARF).

AB 20.07.3

AB 20.07.3.1

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

Update from the Vice Chancellor

Paper AB 20/07/05 was received

AB 20.07.3.1.1

The Vice Chancellor informed members that:

- A Recovery Coordination Group, supported by a series of task and finish groups, continued to oversee the management of the University's response to COVID-19;
- Weekly VC Updates and live Q&A sessions were still provided and could be accessed on the intranet, along with updated COVID-19 guidance covering: information for people managers; health, safety and wellbeing; learning, teaching and research; working remotely; technology;
- On-site working was still the exception and work was being undertaken on managing risks and risk profiling to support the move to COVID-secure on-site activities;
- The Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education was progressing a proposal to merge two current academic departments, Arts and Cultural Industries and Film and Journalism, into one - Creative and Cultural Industries - driven by the ambitions set out in Strategy 2030;
- The OfS had published new guidance on student and consumer protection during the coronavirus pandemic, emphasising the need for providers to ensure that prospective students have information that is clear and timely;
- Recruitment to the BA Philosophy programme was being suspended for 2021/22 entry and, in line with the Student Protection Plan, students were being consulted on the future direction of the subject area ahead of recommendations to Academic Board;
- The University was required to report to OfS when, or if, it intended to cease or suspend delivery of higher education. He advised that pre-COVID-19, the University would only have been required to report closures of subject areas, departments or campuses whereas, during the current period, the University is required to report at course level. He advised that the following programmes were being reported to OfS as they were live programmes, with applicants attached to them, and the University was unable to offer an alternative programme:
 - MRes Data Science
 - MRes Geography & Environmental Management
 - MRes Architecture, Design & Built Environment
 - MRes Engineering
 - MSc by Research Robotics

AB 20.07.3.1.2

Academic Board noted the information.

AB 20.07.3.2

Update from UWE Student Representatives

Paper AB 20/07/06 was received

- AB 20.07.3.2.1 The Chair welcomed the new President of The Students' Union to the meeting.
- AB 20.07.3.2.2 The President and Vice President Education of The Students' Union provided a progress update on their recent activities and achievements. This included:
- The Black Lives Matter (BLM) campaign. They informed members that they were supporting the Black Lives Matter movement and calling for an end to police brutality against Black people. They pointed members to their full statement and how they could help. They also shared a poem written by UWE Bristol student Donnell Asare and emphasised that they were working with the student community to listen and drive change;
 - Private Accommodation Lobby: They advised that they were continuing to lobby landlords, letting agencies and MPs in relation to private accommodation. They noted that, MP Jack Lopresti wrote to Chris Pincher, Minister of State at the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), raising their concerns.
 - UN75 survey and dialogue: They noted that they were collaborating with the United Nations (UN) on the Secretary-General's UN75 Initiative for "a global conversation to gather inputs from across the world on people's priorities for the future, on the occasion of the UN's 75th anniversary". It was also highlighted that they had circulated a survey to UWE students, and would be hosting a dialogue session with students to discuss "what people want for the future, how they envision the future and what they expect from their governments".
 - Students Experience Awards. They announced that they would be live streaming the Student Experience Awards on The Students' Union YouTube channel on 6 July at 7:00pm and invited members to join and celebrate the achievement and hard work of staff and students.

AB 20.07.4 **ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR ENDORSEMENT**
AB 20.07.4.1 **LTSEC annual report**

Paper AB 20/05/07 was received

- AB 20.07.4.1.1 The DVC and Provost confirmed that LTSEC was content that the committee and its sub committees had operated in accordance with their Terms of Reference and had been effective in the discharge of the business within their remit.
- AB 20.07.4.1.2 She highlighted detailed points of assurance in the report and advised members that the report included a summary of actions that LTSEC would take over the next academic year to enhance its operation, namely:
- Work with the Community of Good Governance Practice to encourage greater numbers of applications for elected positions on the committee in future, and increased rates of voting;
 - Work with the Students' Union to ensure all Student positions on the committee were filled;
 - Introduce a 3-week lead in time for committee papers, to reduce the volume of late papers;
 - Ensure a minimum of 3-weeks between LTSEC and Academic Board meetings to ensure the smooth flow of business between the committees;
 - Include student representatives in shaping the agendas of the committee;
 - Set aside time at least once within the academic year for sub-committees to report either verbally or in writing on business and matters of interest to LTSEC;

- Maintain oversight of actions identified by its sub-committees during assurance reporting over the next academic year as a mechanism to enhance links between the committees.

AB 20.07.4.1.3

The Chair thanked the Committee for the report which he agreed was comprehensive and provided Academic Board with the necessary assurance. Academic Board endorsed the report.

ACTION: DVC and Provost and Secretary for LTSEC

AB 20.07.4.2 RKEC Annual Report (Tabled Paper)

Paper AB 20/07/08 was received

AB 20.07.4.2.1

The PVC Research and Engagement reported that the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee was satisfied that it had operated in accordance with its Terms of Reference and had been effective in the discharge of the business within its remit.

AB 20.07.4.2.2

He reported that the Committee had identified several actions to take forward, namely:

- Discussion and approval of final submission to Research Excellence Framework 2021 and related policies;
- Discussion and approval of plans for the implementation of the 2030 Transforming Futures: Research Strategy;
- Establishing groups and terms of reference to develop the implementation plan for 2030 Transforming Futures: Community and Business Engagement Strategy;
- Discussion and approval of plans for the implementation of the 2030 Transforming Futures: Community and Business Engagement Strategy.

AB 20.07.4.2.3

He noted the Committee had requested a minor amendment to the Terms of Reference relating to the three year limited on membership.

AB 20.07.4.2.4

Academic Board agreed that the wording should be changed to reflect that "normally" membership would be three years but in exceptional circumstances this would be reconsidered.

AB 20.07.4.2.5

Academic Board endorsed the report.

Action: Secretary and Deputy Secretary Academic Board

AB 20.07.4.3 Faculty Board Annual Reports x 4 (HAS Faculty Board: Tabled Paper)

Papers: AB 20/07/09, AB 20/07/10, AB 20/07/11 and AB 20/07/12 were received

AB 20.07.4.3.1

The Executive Deans presented their annual Assurance reports from their Faculty Board and confirmed that their respective Boards were satisfied that they had operated in accordance with their Terms of Reference and had been effective in the discharge of the business within its remit. They highlighted a series of actions to take forward for 2020/21 including a review of student engagement. Concerns was expressed about the lack of student engagement and student representation throughout the governance structure.

AB 20.07.4.3.2

This was echoed by the Chair and other members of Academic Board who agreed that there needed to be opportunities for more students to sit on boards and committees

throughout the structure to facilitate greater student engagement which was vibrant and challenging.

AB 20.07.4.3.3 The Deans also commended the new governance structure, in particular, the renewed emphasis on the separation of Faculty Board governance and Executive governance. The Executive Dean HAS requested that Faculty Boards were also empowered to focus on strategic issues across the University including those identified in Strategy 2030.

AB 20.07.4.3.4 Academic Board approved the assurance reports and actions proposed for 2020/21.

Action: Secretary and Deputy Secretary Academic Board

AB 20.07.4.4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

Paper AB 20/07/13 was received

AB 20.07.4.4.1 The PVC Student Experience and the Business Improvement Manager introduced the Policy and reported that it had been created to support the My Engagement and My Attendance processes which had been implemented across the University. It was reported that the Policy covered student engagement and attendance for in classroom and online teaching and would enable students to understand the expectations of engagement and attendance and how this information could support students from both an academic and a well-being perspective. She highlighted that this was particularly important with more learning and teaching moving online.

AB 20.07.4.4.2 Members were also advised that the Policy:

- Aligned with Strategy 2030 in outlining an innovative approach and utilising technology to enhance an inclusive and supportive approach to student engagement through their learning experience;
- Would be reviewed again within 12-18 months.

AB 20.07.4.4.3 The Business Improvement Manager emphasised that students could be engaging well with their studies whilst not necessarily attending formal teaching events and vice versa.

AB 20.07.4.4.4 The Chair agreed that it was important to consider outcomes as opposed to inputs and the Business Improvement Manager highlighted that more work was underway to gather data on outcomes.

AB 20.07.4.4.5 Academic Board approved the Policy.

AB 20.07.4.5 Review of External Speakers Policy

Paper AB 20/07/14 was received

AB 20.07.4.5.1 The Safeguarding Manager introduced the Policy and highlighted that the Policy review was undertaken in advance of the required three years following an incident in the previous academic year where EU Hustings was cancelled due to safety concerns raised by the Police associated with planned protests around the attendance of a highly controversial speaker.

AB 20.07.4.5.2 Members were advised that the key changes made were aimed at providing greater clarity on high risk events, namely to:

- Require 21 days' notice for high risk speakers/events;
- Amalgamate forms with the SU;
- Reflect the wider aspect of Duty of Care;
- Clarify that identification of risk does not mean that the event will be cancelled
- Clarify the process of agreeing/refusing high risk events.

AB 20.07.4.5.3 Members heard that initially SU societies had raised concerns about the revised policy's lack of flexibility and potential impact on free speech, so additional changes were made to address these concerns.

AB 20.07.4.5.4 Academic Board were pleased that students had been consulted and approved the revised External Speakers Policy.

AB 20.07.4.6 Proposal to Develop a Double Degree Award
Paper AB 20/07/15 was received

AB 20.07.4.6.1 Academic Board approved the development of a double degree BSc (Hons) 'Computer Science and Software Development' award, to be delivered jointly by UWE Bristol and TSI, Latvia.

AB 20.07.4.7 Election Results (Tabled Paper)
Paper AB 20/07/16 was received

AB 20.07.4.7.1 Academic Board noted the outcome of elections held in June 2020 to fill vacancies across the Academic Governance structure and approved the recommendation for remaining LTSEC and RKEC vacancies to be filled through a by-election that would be held over the summer.

Action: Secretary and Deputy Secretary Academic Board

AB 20.07.4.7.2 Members also noted that the Returning Officer had determined that the election to fill vacancies on the Faculty of Environment and Technology's Faculty Board should be rerun, following a procedural error. The Board would receive an update on the outcome at its next meeting.

Action: Dean, FET

AB 20.07.5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

AB 20.07.5.1 Academic Governance Committee Calendar 2020/21
Paper AB 20/07/17 was received

AB 20.07.5.1.1 Members noted the Academic Governance Committee Calendar for 2020/21 on the basis that this would be reviewed to reflect feedback from the student representatives on the times of meetings and any disruption due to COVID-19.

AB 20.07.5.1.2 The Chair also reiterated the intention to increase student representation through the Academic Governance structure which would mean that for the next calendar year there would be lower demands placed on the Presidents' diaries.

AB 20.07.6
AB 20.07.6.1

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Executive Dean for HAS reported that over the last several weeks they had been engaging HAS Faculty staff around wellbeing and resilience. He advised members that the HAS Faculty had experienced increased levels of concerns from staff around their resilience and sustainability moving into the new academic year. He reported there had been various modes of support for staff within the Faculty which also linked into the University's support mechanisms. He reported that, at the last Faculty Board, members spent much time discussing staff resilience and wellbeing and recognised there could be an impact on future activity. Members were advised that a request had been made that this discussion and concern was raised at Academic Board.

AB 20.07.6.2

The Chair emphasised it was important to continue to work in creative and innovative ways and establish boundaries and shared views on how staff work. He asked managers to encourage staff to come forward with workload issues and he reiterated the University's commitment to blended working.

Dates of 2020/21 Meetings

Wednesday 14 October 2020
Wednesday 9 December 2020
Wednesday 3 March 2021
Wednesday 12 May 2021
Wednesday 7 July 2021