



## ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 1 March 2023

- Present:** Steven West (Chair), Jodie Anstee, Georgie Benford, Paul Bennett, Sally Clark, Amanda Coffey, Wendy Colvin, Rachel Cowie, Lily Diyemowei, Hilary Drew, Kiana Edkandani, Gareth Edwards, John Griffiths, Marc Griffiths, Katie Jenkins, Vanique Kruger, Mandy Lee, James Macdonald, Elena Marco, Jo Midgley, Lyn Newton, Paul Olomolaiye, Rania Regaieg, Jackie Rogers, Jim Smith, Richard Strange, Sadie Trent, Emma Weitkamp, Viljo Wilding, Neil Willey
- In attendance:** Nick Button (Officer); Dan Wood; Emmanuel Adukwu, Xavier Baker, Myra Evans & Jessica Tomico (item 1)
- Apologies:** Yvonne Beach, Roshin Chummun, Olena Doran, Chris Gledhill, Helen King, Sarah Ward
- Observers:** Ian MacKenzie (Board of Governors)

### AB.23.03.1

### WORKSHOP

#### AB.22.03.1.1

#### **Diversity and Inclusion: Enabling All Our Students to Succeed**

Academic Board considered a series of presentations from staff who were leading excellent practice in diversity and inclusion, supporting students from all backgrounds to achieve good outcomes, and closing awarding gaps. Key themes that emerged from the presentations included:

- i. Creating an entire culture of anti-racism was essential, starting from Board level with education work in both staff and student spaces.
- ii. Reforming Performance Development Reviews to directly address these issues had been successful in CHSS.
- iii. Partnerships with community representative organisations and other anchor institutions in the Green Skills for Jobs and Entrepreneurship programme had proved essential in showcasing role models, reaching a diverse intake through advertising in those communities, and delivering place-based activities.
- iv. Adopting a deficit model to awarding gaps was unhelpful and inhibited the necessary but uncomfortable conversations that were required across institutions.
- v. A whole lifecycle model for a minoritised students development programme that targeted recruitment, onboarding, progress, and outcomes was required.

Academic Board members worked in four groups to reflect on the presentations and discuss examples of good practice, and where key

improvements were needed, in their own Colleges and Schools. Key points discussed included:

- i. Giving staff confidence that they would be supported for the positive action they were taking and could cease activities that were unhelpful was vital.
- ii. Feedback should be provided in a way that could then be followed up by students with concrete suggestions for how they could improve, for example, around their analytical writing skills.
- iii. Academics had a great deal of freedom outside of restrictions such as PSRB requirements to design their curriculums and should consider how they could engage as many students as possible with innovations in how students were taught as well as the content of their modules. This was also how on how assessments were designed – considering which careers actually required a 10,000 word dissertation, for example.
- iv. Conversations around awarding gaps sometimes provoked emotional or defensive reactions in staff, but the conversations were still necessary. Staff should be provoked into considering why they were feeling defensive. Integrating these conversations into PDRs would be a positive step forward.
- v. Often actions did not match the good intentions of the University but with an empowered regulator and more general interest in EDI matters, it was important to take ownership and develop a systemic approach that did not rely on lots of individual actions that were not coordinated.
- vi. The Santander FutureLearn EDI programme was a strong example, and it was planned to embed it within the Starting Block programme, with a pilot and evaluation in the next academic year. It would then be necessary to reinforce and embed it throughout the programme and ensure real engagement.
- vii. There were pockets of good practice throughout the University, but it was important to ensure scalability so that all minoritised students could benefit.
- viii. Declaring an ambition of being an anti-racist institution required acknowledgement of existing racism and how it would be tackled.

## **AB.23.02.2 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

### **AB.23.02.2.1 Welcome to members**

The Chair welcomed the new members of Academic Board and those that were observing the meeting.

### **AB.23.02.2.2 Apologies for absence**

The Chair noted all apologies.

### **AB.23.02.2.3 Declaration of interests**

No declarations of interest were notified.

## **AB.23.03.3 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

### **AB.23.03.3.1 Previous Minutes**

*Paper AB.23.03.01 was received.*

Members confirmed the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting of 7 December 2022. Members sought clarity on a discussion at the December meeting about the direction of the University in relation to hybrid learning, noting that there was an explicit campus-based approach but with supplementary activity that supported learning goals. A piece of work was ongoing to clearly articulate the University's learning and teaching offer in relation to hybrid delivery that would be brought to Academic Board in due course. It was important that innovations developed during the Covid-19 pandemic were not lost and also reflected the ways in which students engaged with their studies, as well as supporting their cost-of-living concerns around transport and accommodation.

**AB.23.03.3.2 Action Sheet and Matters Arising**

*Paper AB.23.03.02 was received*

The Chair noted all outstanding actions on the Action Sheet and their progress to date. An update was provided on identifying additional student representatives, which had required consultation with a Students' Union governance expert, with another update due at the next meeting.

**AB.23.03.3.3 Chair's Actions**

*Papers AB.23.03.03/04/05/06 were received.*

The Chair noted the Chair's Actions that had been approved since the last meeting of Academic Board, relating to:

- Co-Opting of Elected Members
- Significant Disruption Procedure
- Emerita Professor – Alison Assiter
- Emeritus Professor – Martin Boddy

Academic Board noted particular praise for Professor Alison Assiter in her work going above and beyond to support students during the pandemic period.

**AB.23.03.4 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

**AB.23.03.4.1 Update from the Vice-Chancellor**

*Paper AB.23.03.07 was received.*

AB.23.03.4.1.1 Academic Board noted the Vice-Chancellor's update, including a minor correction on the target for the awarding gap and the progress made on adopting the quality assurance processes that existed at another institution in order to ensure the future of Initial Teacher Training.

**AB.23.03.4.2 Update from the Students' Union**

*Paper AB.23.03.08 was received.*

AB.23.03.4.2.1 The Students' Union President updated Academic Board on the Union's activities. Attention was drawn to:

- i. The changed layout of the regular reports.
- ii. A strategic workshop that had been held with the Board of Governors on the theme of reimagining student representation.

- iii. The high number of candidates who had put themselves forward in this year's Students' Union elections with results expected by the end of that week.

### **AB.23.03.4.3**

#### **Strategy 2030: Place**

##### *Presentation*

#### AB.23.03.4.3.1

Academic Board considered an update on the Place strand of Strategy 2030. Attention was drawn to:

- i. Space was a central part of the offer to students, with digital as well as physical considerations. The Place strategy was about bringing communities together across campuses.
- ii. While the main focus of the Place strategy was on Frenchay campus at this time, work was ongoing elsewhere.
- iii. The move of Glenside to Frenchay was an important part of building a space that was fit for purpose for the development of the skills envisaged for a future health workforce. There was a challenge of increasing nursing applications, with a need to future proof the spaces available and increase the attractiveness.
- iv. The University had received £5.8m from the Office for Students to support the embedding of new technology, alongside the co-location of teaching and professional service colleagues by community groups.
- v. The creation of an Integrated Care Academy that brought together elements of the entire healthcare life cycle would link to other sectors, had greater international reach, and address the core challenges faced by the West of England region.

#### AB.23.03.4.3.2

During discussion, Academic Board raised the following:

- i. A proposal around provision in Somerset, specifically relating to Taunton and Bridgewater, would be brought to the Board of Governors in July.
- ii. UWE Bristol was well-placed to deliver on these ambitions as it had a pipeline of pre-degrees and postgraduate courses that other institutions did not have.
- iii. The use of Glenside and the timescale for relocation had not been finally decided at this point, although part of the strategy for building more accommodation on Frenchay was to make up for the potential loss of space on Glenside.
- iv. Car parking facilities had been highlighted as an issue across Frenchay and had been factored into conversations about accommodation and other developments.
- v. There was an opportunity for UWE Bristol to support the care worker visa and encouraging students to join that workforce, in collaboration with local authorities.
- vi. The support given to further education partners would open pathways that allow them to access more funding.
- vii. The location of City Campus made sense with its links to industry, but it was important to ensure it did not become isolated as other areas relocated to Frenchay.
- viii. Conversations were ongoing with the student community about creating as much flexibility in accommodation choices as possible.

**AB.23.03.5 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION****AB.23.03.5.1 Research Strategy 2020-30: Implementation Update**

*Paper AB.23.03.09 was received.*

- AB.23.03.5.1.1 Academic Board received an implementation update of the University's research strategy, arising from the findings of the Research Readiness Review and the key reflections of the outgoing Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research & Enterprise. Although the paper was not a formal list of agreed actions, it would be used to inform wider strategy discussions. The paper had previously been considered in detail by Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC).
- AB.23.03.5.1.2 Academic Board formally noted its thanks to Professor Martin Boddy for this contribution and raised the following points:
- i. The Research strategy would now be updated with an accompanying action and plan and engagement strategy.
  - ii. The section on EDI in the paper had an important overlap with the workshop Academic Board had engaged in earlier in the meeting. RKEC had been considering these issues in greater detail, noting the interest in the academic press in PGR, diversity, and support.
  - iii. Changes would need to be implemented in a timely manner but there was recognition of the tensions between change management and other areas of work.
  - iv. There would be focused investment where there were clear growth opportunities.
- AB.23.03.5.1.3 Academic Board noted the contents of the report. A more detailed plan for the next steps of delivering the research strategy would be brought to the next meeting.
- ACTION:** Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor

**AB.23.03.6 ITEMS FOR NOTE****AB.23.03.6.1 Teaching Excellence Framework Final Submission**

*Paper AB.23.03.10 was received.*

- AB.23.03.6.1.1 Academic Board noted the final Teaching Excellence Framework Submission, which had been submitted ahead of the 24 January deadline. In the last TEF exercise, the University had been given an indicative rating based on benchmarks, but this time no more than 50% of the narrative would be based on data and the narrative submission would carry greater weight. There was also a student submission. Key learning from the production of the submission included getting better at evaluating initiatives, as well as recording and building a narrative about the work the University was doing. Work would be ongoing with this ahead of the next expected TEF submission cycle in four years.
- AB.23.03.6.1.2 Academic Board commended the team responsible for producing the submission for its high quality and accurate reflection of the University.

**AB.23.03.6.2 Ofsted Inspection of Apprenticeship Provision**

*Paper AB.23.03.11 was received.*

AB.23.03.6.2.1 Academic Board noted and commended the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspection of apprenticeship provision, which had awarded the University a Good rating.

**AB.23.03.6.3 Honorary Degrees Committee Report**

*Paper AB.23.03.12 was received.*

AB.23.03.6.3.1 Academic Board noted the decisions taken at the Honorary Degrees Committee in January 2023.

**AB.23.03.7 SUMMARY REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES**

*Papers AB.23.03.13/14/15 were received.*

AB.23.03.7.1 Members noted summary reports from sub-committees as follows:

- LTSEC (1 February 2022)
- RKEC (8 February 2022)
- SAPG (7 February 2022)

**AB.23.03.8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**AB.23.03.8.1**

Academic Board noted:

- Student support with registration work had been ongoing.
- The workload model work that was being led by Professor Martin Boddy had recommendations arising but required more refining. It was hoped that proposals would be brought forward this year but there was recognition that it need to be implemented over two years instead.

**AB.23.03.9 DATES OF 2022/23 MEETINGS**

**AB.23.03.9.1**

- Wednesday 17 May 2023
- Wednesday 5 July 2023
- Tuesday 11 July 2023 (with Board of Governors)