

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Wednesday 12 October 2016.

Present: Steve West (Chair), Jennifer Ames, Jane Harrington, John Dovey, Lucy Dumbell, Ahmd Emara, Alex Frankin, Manuel Frutos-Perez, Georgina Gough, Catherine Hobbs, Jamie Jordan, Lynne Lawrance, James Lee, Mandy Lee, Lamine Mahdjoubi, Steven Neill, Paul Olomolaiye, Glenn Parry, Darren Reynolds, Jackie Rogers, Jeanette Sakel, Rachel Sales, Rosie Scott-Ward, Donna Whitehead

In attendance: Jason Briddon, Delia Bean (minutes), Rachel Cowie, Tracy Chalk, Elizabeth Cleaver, Alastair Osborn, Tracy Willis.

Observers: Edd Burrell (SU)

Apologies: Martin Boddy, John Clarke, Alex Gilkison, Chris Gledhill, Sarah Green, Dylan Jones-Evans, Stuart McClean, Helen Lloyd Wildman, Glenn Lyons, Jo Midgley, Adam Pinfold, Patricia Voaden

AB16.10.1 **Membership and Terms of Reference**
Paper AB16/10/01 was received and noted.

The Chair welcomed the Students' Union President and Vice President, Education and new members to the meeting.

AB16.10.2 **Minutes and matters arising**
Paper AB16/10/02 was received.

AB16.10.2.1 Minutes
Subject to correction of minute AB16.07.6.1 "undertake *teaching* duties' and minute AB16.07.10.5, "Faculty of *Environment* and Technology" the minutes of the meeting held Wednesday 6 July 2016 were **approved**.

AB16.10.2.2 Min AB16.07.10.1 refers: Health and Applied Sciences (HAS) Faculty Board

HAS Faculty Board had raised the issue of the duration of University processes and bureaucracy which may limit our agility to respond to new opportunities in CPD or Apprenticeships. The Chair noted the HAS Executive, the Vice Chair of HAS Faculty Board and Associate Dean for Partnerships responses to this issue and the request that our approach be clarified, streamlined, and timely. Both the Chair and the Director of Academic Services noted that this was largely a perception issue and assured members that the review of the Quality Management and Enhancement Framework and processes would help to rectify this.

The Chair noted the opportunities in both apprenticeship funding, and partnership with industry and FE, for apprenticeships up to level 7. The University, with Academic Services, was leading on a HEFCE-supported Degree Apprenticeship Development project. The Chair thanked HAS for raising the item and requested that the processes continued to be streamlined and fast-tracked where possible. The Chair requested that the response to HAS Faculty Board be circulated.

Action: Governance

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

AB16.10.3 Vice-Chancellor's Update *Paper AB16/10/04 was received*

AB16.10.3.1 Members received an update from the Vice-Chancellor and noted the following in particular:

AB16.10.3.2 *Brexit Response*

The Chair reported that the University continued to lobby government, to influence decisions at a national level, as well as engaging at a local level amongst staff and students and was working alongside the city of Bristol, (Bristol Mayor's Core Commissioning Group) and Universities UK (UUK) to assess the impact of Brexit. Whilst continuing to promote its global outlook, the University's message was clear that no staff or student should feel threatened by any behaviours or attitudes, following the UK referendum outcome. Members had welcomed the Vice-Chancellor's positive and prompt response to the UK referendum result and the University emphasis on inclusion, global outlook and actions.

The Chair noted that students and staff required certainty and security, and whilst funding (grants and loans) for EU students would continue in 2017/18 academic year and the duration of their studies, there had been a lack of Government information or assurances about future funding, EU student intake or right to work for EU staff. The Chair noted that Brexit had been added as one of the University's Strategic Risks.

Members noted that EU research bids should continue as usual, however it was recognised that Britain might be seen as a risk in terms of both funding and collaboration. If evidence emerged of being excluded from EU research funding this would be highlighted to the government. Members noted that EU bids should be monitored for submission and success rates and colleagues should be encouraged to continue with bids, as it would be counterproductive for the submission rate to fall. The Chair noted that the government understood the importance of research and of being internationally engaged with the research agenda. Government decisions on the funding model for research were expected.

AB16.10.3.3 *Strategy 2020 mid-point review*

The Chair noted that mid-point feedback for Strategy 2020 had been used to inform the University's strategic focus and used to reflect on progress. Members discussed the communication of projects and how to embed these across the organisation to promote ownership and empower colleagues. The Chair noted the importance of removing barriers to encourage ideas and creative solutions at ground level within the quality construct.

AB16.10.3.4 *UWE Bristol Impact Assessment*

The University had worked with Local Enterprise Partners and the Universities of Bristol; Bath and Bath Spa and Oxford Economics to explore the economic impact that higher education made to the local economy.

AB16.10.3.5 *Recruitment Update*

Recruitment figures were not finalised however it was reported that 84% of students had completely registered with fees in full. International student figures had been on target until two weeks before enrolment. Members noted international student enrolment had fallen across the sector.

Across the University:

- Enrolment figures were on target for home students
- The Faculties of Environment and Technology, and of Health and Applied Sciences, had recruited over their home student target
- international recruitment data would be analysed
- Recruitment statistics would be reflected in the planning round and investment in different parts of the university

AB16.10.3.6 Members noted the Strategy Portfolio Board July-September update.

AB16.10.4 Student Survey Results

AB16.10.4.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) and Provost reported on student survey results: National Students Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Student Experience Survey (PTES). The University had increased its performance in every single category of NSS, including assessment and feedback, a key area of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). For the first time since 2009 the University was above the national average score for 'overall satisfaction' and aimed to sustain and improve on its scores year on year, especially in assessment and feedback.

AB16.10.4.2 Members noted the new sets of NSS questions:

- Learning Opportunities
- Learning Community
- Student Voice

TEF and the new and amended NSS questions had been explained at departmental roadshows throughout the University. Members noted that NSS scores would feed into the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The NSS Task Force had shared and disseminated good practice and visited under-performing programme teams. Programmes receiving 80% satisfaction or less would be reviewed. The DVC and Provost reported that three programmes were currently under review. The Chair noted that the bar would rise across the sector and that the University would need to improve scores annually too.

AB16.10.4.3 The DVC and Provost noted that the NSS taskforce had identified actions for programmes to enhance the student experience and that the uplift in NSS scores and league tables had a positive effect on recruitment and University reputation, both internally and externally. Members noted that there was a chance within the refurbishment to consider and provide more social, programme and subject learning space, to engender a sense of community and belonging and provide shared experience of campus life.

AB16.10.4.4 The Chair noted the combined effort of students and staff to improve the student experience and noted the relationship between students, academic endeavour and the staff who supported this. Students required collegiality and community, to feel part of a cohort that works together. The University recognised this and would continue to improve all aspects of programme leadership and design, and to develop programme teams and physical and digital space to increase a sense of the community environment across all campuses.

AB16.10.4.5 The DVC and Provost noted that good organisational design and great programme leadership were a priority for the University. Members noted that recruitment of good programme leaders required recognition of the importance and experience of the role, perhaps through the academic career ladder to Associate Professor level.

AB16.10.5 Revised Operating Model for Quality Assessment – Annual Provider Review
Paper AB16/10/05 was received.

AB16.10.5.1 The Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement (HLTE) presented the revised operating model for quality assessment, Annual Provider Review, which would replace the current cyclical Higher Education Review (HER) by the Quality Assurance Agency. The baseline requirements of HER would remain mostly the same, the key element would be an initial desk based review of university quality processes. The first Annual Provider Review would take place 2016/17.

Metrics that HEFCE will use for the Annual Provider Review include:

- Non-continuation (withdrawal) rates
- Destination of Leavers of Higher Education Data (DLHE)
- National Student Survey overall satisfaction score
- Degree outcomes
- TEF data
- Other data including Widening Participation; operating surplus

AB16.10.5.2 Members noted that reports would be co-ordinated to a timeline to allow Academic Standards and Quality Committees, and Learning Teaching and Student Experience Committee consideration of data and processes, before submission to Academic Board. HLTE reported that under the revised operating model, the University would be required to comply with the standards and guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education area (ESG, part one). Academic Board would receive mapping of the University's current position across ESG in December.

AB16.10.5.3 The Chair noted that alongside financial assurances to HEFCE, university governing bodies would be required to provide assurances on the suitability of institutional processes for improving student outcomes, and that under the new arrangements the evidence on which the Board of Governors provided its assurances would be periodically tested. HLTE noted that through its annual report, Academic Board and its Committees would be responsible for providing assurances to the Board of Governors and that it was essential for Academic Board to engage with external measurement of the University's performance through the TEF and HEFCE data.

Members noted that the revised operating model would be outcome and data driven. Academic Board would engage fully with the data and process to assure the Board of Governors, who were accountable for the University's quality outcomes and processes, with statutory responsibility to HEFCE.

ACTION: Academic Board

AB16.10.6 Academic Board Annual Report to the Board of Governors

AB16.10.6.1 The Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement (HLTE) presented the annual report and noted that:

- the format of the report was adapted following the introduction of the revised operating model for quality assessment
- the report was required to demonstrate that Academic Board had discharged the responsibilities assigned to it by the Board of Governors and Articles of Government

AB16.10.6.2 HLTE noted that this would be the first report to the Board of Governors following the introduction of the revised operating model for quality assessment. The Chair noted that the Board of Governors' Strategic Planning and Performance Committee had received a briefing on the revised operating model for quality assessment, the annual report of Academic Board and its significance to the Board as evidence to assure HEFCE of the University's quality assurance processes and how this would shape the institution's approach to Quality Assessment. The Chair requested that this briefing paper was circulated to Academic Board members for information and that it accompanied the annual Academic Board report for the Board of Governors.

ACTION: Governance

AB16.10.6.3 Members noted that there would be a change to the reporting cycle and that the Academic Board report would be submitted to the last Academic Board of the academic year in future. New schedules of reporting would be drawn up to enable the new timescale and to provide the latest information to the Board of Governors. The DVC and Provost noted that TEF outcomes would form part of the Annual Provider Review. There would be a change in focus to aspects in the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience, and Research and Knowledge Exchange Committees.

AB16.10.6.4 Members noted that the report presented an accurate view of the University's quality activities and suggested including:

- Reference to Learning 2020 and how this ties in with Academic Board and what we have achieved against L2020
- Enterprise curricula
- More metrics and evidence – factual aspects that would assure the Board of Governors

ACTION: Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement

AB16.10.6.5 Members **approved**, with caveat, the report to the Board of Governors.

AB16.10.7 Strategic Marketing and Communications Change Process

AB16.10.7.1 The Director of Marketing and Strategic Communications presented an update on the proposed transformation of the structure and business processes in Marketing. The remit was to bring Internal and Corporate Communications; Marketing and Alumni departments together, to align processes and teams alongside functional expertise for project related activity. There had been consideration of the impact on the Student Communications team and their work. Members noted that students and staff should benefit from the new functionality of the structure and that the role of Senior Partner would have responsibility in the area of marketing for Research.

AB16.10.7.2 Members noted the team structures and roles and that each Faculty would benefit from a business partner to provide marketing expertise, supported by the marketing team. Programme teams would be able to liaise directly with the Faculty business partners. Members noted there was a need to produce improved programme descriptions. The Director of Marketing and Strategic Communications noted that the transformation would deliver dedicated hubs of creative strategy; corporate communications, alumni services and production. A consultation throughout the restructuring process had been held with students and staff and this would be complete October 2016, with a view to filling new roles in November 2016.

AB16.10.7.3 The Chair noted the new approach modelled industry practice, and that Faculty 'specialists' had been utilised by other departments successfully. The change

would be monitored with staff and Trade Unions fully consulted. Input from user communities would be welcomed.

AB16.10.8 Academic Calendar 2017/2018

Paper AB16/10/08 was received

The Director of Academic Services reported that the Academic Calendar for 2017/18 started one week later from 18 September 2016. Academic Calendars (enhanced year) for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 would be considered at future Academic Boards. Members noted the dates and requested that the HAS October graduation ceremony and teaching start dates were also included in future calendars.

ACTION: The Director of Academic Services

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

AB16.10.9 Emeritus Appointment

Academic Board granted Professor Emeritus status to Dr Robin Means.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

AB16.10.10 Update from UWE Student Representatives

Paper AB16/10/09 was received

AB16.10.10.1 The Vice President, Education introduced the Students' Union Representation Team report and the focus of student representation in 2016/17.

AB16.10.10.2 Members noted the VP Education's six objectives for the year:

- Liberation
Focussing on attainment gaps, curricula design, environment and student empowerment
- Bristol Cut the Rent
Working with University of Bristol SU and ACORN to tackle local rent prices and bad landlord practice
- International students
11 key themes to welcome, orientate and include international students
- #UWESaysRelax
Exam and work stress campaign featuring services for students and a petting zoo
- Course costs and tuition fees
Addressing rising costs and tuition fees
- Students Reps
Remodelling the student representation system and support for student representatives

AB16.10.10.3 Members noted that the University was working with the Students' Union on enhancing student representation and that the Students' Union Advice Centre data would inform this. The VP Education agreed to share this data with the Director of Academic Services.

ACTION: VP Education

AB16.10.10.4 The Chair welcomed the report and noted that continued engagement with the student community does make a difference to the University community, the Students' Union and to the quality of programme provision. Tuition fees would be subject to a rise in 2017 for new students only – current students' fees were protected at the current rate. Members noted that the University sought to reduce

cost burdens to students where possible and work was progressing to reduce the cost of graduation.

AB16.10.11 Inclusivity 2020: Single Equality Scheme

Paper AB16/10/10 was received.

AB16.10.11.1 The Chair introduced the University's 2016-2020 Single Equality Scheme, Inclusivity 2020, noting that the University was required by law to publish its equality objectives every four years. Inclusivity 2020 would address live issues across the University and would improve the University's core equality objectives, following the timeline of Strategy 2020.

AB16.10.11.2 Members considered the report and noted:

- that the Inclusivity 2020 (I2020) action plan would be aligned with the University's work on the Teaching Excellence Framework and Office of Fair Access to align projects and avoid duplication
- that the I2020 action plan was currently draft; ongoing work around metrics, context and timelines would be factored into the I2020 action plan in collaboration with the Equality Management Group

ACTION: Equality and Diversity Manager

AB16.10.11.3 Members noted that central areas of University business should be incorporated within the I2020 action plan.

It was requested that the following be addressed in the I2020 action plan:

- Incorporate the University's Inclusive Curricula
- Include support for Care Leavers
- Include Race Equality Work in Performance 2020
- Include the University's response to changes to Disability Students' Allowances and funding
- Improve the I2020 action plan's representation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender staff – this did not seem representative within the action plan despite the University's work and great outcomes with Stonewall
- Under 12 (page 72) expand and improve the actions for "improve experience of students and staff from diverse cultures" currently the action is: "ensure inclusive menus"

More broadly members felt that the action plan may have identified actions at the operational, rather than tactical or strategic level and that it would be worth revisiting the level of detail and give consideration to developing greater resonance with existing project/programme level action plans (e.g. L2020).

ACTION: Equality and Diversity Manager

AB16.10.12

The Chair noted that management had collaborated with the University's disabled student and staff community to improve understanding of the University's access issues, both geographic and cultural. Outcomes from this collaboration would feed into Campus development plans and I2020 access and inclusive curricula were key University objectives.

AB16.10.12.1 Members noted that the themes of University community, identity and representation and what that means to students and staff, had been prevalent throughout discussion of all the Board's items and that these should be explored in

a central piece of work.

Structures uniting identity and belonging, both organisationally (Faculty, Department, research, and subject) and culturally, should be made visible and the community and collegiality of the University explored. The Director of Strategic Marketing and Communications suggested that the University should engage in ideas of community and collegiality tactically and promote inclusivity and pride in our University community.

AB16.10.12.2 Academic Board charges the Vice- Chancellor to work with teams to refine the I2020 document into one of more focus with actions more likely to enable positive outcomes.

ACTION: Vice-Chancellor, DVC and Equality and Diversity Manager

ITEMS TO NOTE

AB16.10.13 Chair's Actions

AB16.10.13.1 Academic Board Chair's Actions undertaken since the last meeting

Members noted that on behalf of Academic Board the Vice-Chancellor agreed the following:

- i. Approval of the Auston Institute of Management as affiliated institution, with effect from 11 July 2016.
- ii. Approval of professional practice module 'Non-Medical Prescribing (Independent and/or Supplementary Prescribing' for programmes accredited by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC): "students are only permitted one attempt by right at this module (two 'goes'). A further attempt is only permitted if there is approval from academic and supporting organisations (i.e. the professional body)".

AB16.10.13.2 TEF Technical Consultation: Revised Timetable

Members noted the changes to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) timetable, amended from that included in the TEF Technical Consultation.

AB16.10.14 Any Other Business

AB16.10.14.1 The Students' Union President raised two points:

- inflation to fees and whether there might be a corresponding increase to bursaries and loans
- that there had been more student engagement in the Students' Union elections and more representatives from the international and BME student groups nominated as candidates

AB16.10.14.2 The Chair noted the President's point about inflation to student fees and possibility of a comparative rise in bursaries and loans and members welcomed the encouraging news about Student Union elections and candidates.

AB16.10.15 Dates of future meetings

Wednesday	7 December 2016	14:30 – 17:30
Wednesday	22 February 2017	14:00 – 17:00
Wednesday	17 May 2017	14:00 – 17:00
Wednesday	5 July 2017	14:00 – 17:00