

Minutes of the extraordinary Academic Board meeting on Tuesday 17 September, 2019.

Present: Paul Bennett, Martin Boddy, Sally Clark, Elizabeth Cleaver, Peter Clegg, Sanja Dogramadzi Marc Griffiths, Jane Harrington, Lisa Harrison, Catherine Hobbs, James Lee, Elena Marco, , Ray McDowell (for Donna Whitehead), Fidel Meraz, Jo Midgley, Christopher Moore, James Murphy, Jane Ojiako, Paul Olomolaiye, Precious Onyenekwu Tatah, Carinna Parraman, Jane Roscoe, Jeanette Sakel, Sarah Todd, Patricia Voaden, Steven West (Chair) Aylwin Yafele.

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

Apologies: Sonja Dragojlovic- Oliveira, Candida McCabe, Derek Norris, Nicholas Ryder, Neil Willey

AB 19.09.1 WELCOME and APOLOGIES

AB 19.09.1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and announced the following apologies:

Sonja Dragojlovic – Oliveira, Candida McCabe, Derek Norris, Nicholas Ryder and Neil Willey.

AB 19.09.02 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

AB 19.09.2.1 New Academic Governance Structure
Paper AB19/09/01 was received

AB 19.09.2.1.1 Members of Academic Board were asked to:

- Comment on and endorse the proposed revisions to the academic governance structure for implementation on a transitional basis with immediate effect and in full by December 2019;
- Approve the proposed terms of reference for the committees and sub-committees within the revised structure.

AB 19.09.2.1.2 Members were reminded of the recommendations from the independent review of Academic Governance and the rationale for the changes made. This included:

- A need to reduce the number of committees, demarcating their responsibilities more clearly, and shortening reporting and accountability relationships.

- An increasing regulatory and external focus on academic governance and academic standards
- Additional responsibilities, in the OfS Regulatory Framework, for Boards of Governors to provide assurance on academic governance, academic standards, the integrity of academic qualifications and the quality of the student experience.

AB 19.09.2.1.3 Emphasis was placed on the importance of having an Academic Governance structure which provides clear lines of sight; clarifies accountabilities and responsibilities and, clearly defines the relationships between committees and sub-committees.

AB 19.09.2.1.4 The Director of Student and Academic Services highlighted the additional work being undertaken to support the new structure and professionalise governance services. This included the establishment of a Community of Practice to support committee secretaries in performing their role and ensuring consistent governance practice across the University. She reported that this would provide clarity on the business of committees and visibility on where decision making happens and where actions or referrals occur. She highlighted its value in providing a clear audit trail and giving Board of Governors confidence in signing off their responsibilities for academic governance.

AB 19.09.2.1.5 The Chair drew attention to the key changes to the structure as identified in paper *AB19/09/01* Table 1, p.70, and invited comments on the terms of reference for each Committee.

AB 19.09.2.1.6 Comments included general points of consistency and substantive changes specific to each committee. The general points raised included the need for all committee terms of reference to:

- Include provision for up to two “co-opted members” with voting rights;
- Include provision to have members “in attendance;” noting that these individuals do not have voting rights. Faculty sub-committee Terms of Reference should include provision for up to two additional members in attendance;
- Include full job titles for members;
- Have chairing arrangements which reflect posts in the University’s staffing structure not transitional or temporary staffing arrangements;
- Have a standardised approach to the presentation of committee membership
- Specify time limits for serving on committees. It was agreed that non-elected representative committee members should be rotated annually and elected members on all committees should have a 3 year term of office from this academic year.

AB 19.09.2.1.7 The substantive changes recommended and agreed for individual committee terms of reference are listed below.

- **Academic Board**
Members noted the importance Academic Board having oversight of its committees’ Terms of Reference and the need for this to be reflected in its responsibilities.

- **Learning Teaching and Student Experience Committee (LTSEC)**

Members noted that the fifth bullet point in the LTSEC Terms of Reference should refer to Programme Enhancement Review Panels.

- **Research Knowledge Exchange Committee(RKEC)**

Members noted that the reference to “University Centres for Excellence” in the RKEC Terms of Reference should be removed.

- **Faculty Boards**

It was agreed that the membership of Faculty Boards should include a student representative in the form of a Students’ Union sabbatical officer and this was an omission. To enable attendance at meetings that were likely to fall on the same day, it was suggested that there should be a Student Union elected officer associated with each Faculty.

It was also agreed that Deans could appoint up to two members of each Faculty Board which could include representation from technical or professional services.

- **Employability and Enterprise Sub-Committee**

Members approved the suggestion that teaching staff need to be represented on the Employability and Student Enterprise Sub-Committee.

The possibility of having external representation on the Committee was raised. Members agreed that this should be reviewed during the transition period by the Deans and a recommendation brought to Academic Board in December by the Director of Library, Careers and Inclusivity.

- **ACTION: Director of Library, Careers and Inclusivity**

- **Partnerships Quality Sub-Committee**

It was agreed that the Chair of the Partnerships Quality Sub-Committee should be a PVC/Executive Dean without specifying a Faculty.

- **Graduate School Sub-Committee**

It was agreed that it would be useful for the membership of the Graduate School Sub-Committee to include a representative from the Academic Practice Directorate.

- **Human Tissue Sub-Committee/ Animal Welfare and Ethics Sub-Committee**

Members agreed that the Research Governance Manager should be in attendance at, rather than a member of, the Human Tissue Sub-Committee and the Animal Welfare and Ethics Sub-Committee.

- **Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Sub-Committees**

Members agreed that the membership should include one Programme Leader and one Module Leader from each department, rotated on an annual basis. The committee membership should include provision for up to two additional members.

- **University Curriculum Panel (UCP)**
It was agreed that the Chair of the UCP should be the DVC/Provost.
- **University Validation Panel (UVP)**
It was agreed that membership of Special Validation Panels should comprise, as a minimum, a chair and two academics, with an officer in attendance.
- **Programme Management Committees (PMCs)**
Members emphasised the importance of the student voice being clearly articulated in the structure and that Student Representative Staff Forums (SRSFs) should be retained as part of the structure, in addition to Programme Management Committees.

It was also agreed that lead department student representatives would be invited to Departmental Executive meetings twice a year to influence and have a voice in departmental strategic decision-making.

The Deputy Director (Policy Development and Student Experience) of Student and Academic Services highlighted that a joint University-Students' Union review of the University's Principles of Academic Representation was in progress during 2019/20, which would provide a useful mechanism through which to test the effectiveness of these arrangements and help drive further improvements around ensuring the student voice is present throughout the academic governance structure.

Based on the inclusion of SRSFs in the structure and the invitation to Departmental Executive meetings, it was agreed that the proposed Departmental Student Partnership Forum was unnecessary and would be removed from the structure.

It was also confirmed that Students' Union Officers could support student representatives at committee meetings but are not part of the membership.

- **Faculty Curriculum Review Groups (FCRGs)**
It was agreed that the Quality Account Managers should be in attendance at FCRGs.
- **Faculty Research Degree Committee (FRDCS)**
Members agreed that the Terms of Reference for FRDCs should note that agendas need to include an item for reserved business.

AB 19.09.2.1.8

Academic Board agreed that:

- The academic governance structure should be implemented on a transitional basis with immediate effect and in full by December 2019;
- The Committee Terms of Reference should be amended and presented to Committees during the transitional period with any further changes presented to Academic Board in December for confirmation.

ACTION: Secretary and Deputy Secretary to Academic Board.

AB 19.09.2.2 Academic Committee Calendar 2019/20

Paper AB19/09/02 was received

AB 19.09.2.2.1 The SU President asked whether the Committee Calendar could be changed to take account of assessment periods and term dates and allow more time before newly elected Presidents attend their first Academic Board meeting. The Chair explained that the Committee Calendar reflects business planning cycles, reporting requirements for OfS, and other regulatory bodies as well as good governance practice. He explained the scheduling of committee meetings is complex and reflects the responsibilities and accountabilities of each committee.

AB 19.09.2.2.2 It was suggested that the Students' Union might consider reviewing its arrangements for the induction for incoming Presidents to allow opportunities for newly elected Presidents to shadow the outgoing Presidents and observe at meetings. The University would be happy to work with the Students' Union to take this forward.

AB 19.09.2.2.3 It was also noted that student representatives had been present at every meeting of the Board during 2018/19.

ACTION: Secretary to Academic Board

AB 19.09.2.2.4 Members approved the Academic Committee Calendar for 2019/20.