CONFIRMED

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Wednesday 17 May 2017.

Present: Jane Harrington (Chair), Samira Abokor, Hadi Abulrub, Martin Boddy, Jon Dovey, Ahmd Emara (SU), Alex Franklin, Manuel Frutos-Perez, Georgina Gough, Jamie Jordon (SU), Lynne Lawrance, Fiona Lawrence, James Lee, Lamine Mahdjoubi, Jo Midgley, Paul Olomolaiye, Darren Reynolds, Gerry Rice (for S Neill), Jackie Rogers, Jeanette Sakel, Rachel Sales, Rosie Scott-Ward, Aylwin Yafele.

In attendance: Tracy Chalk, Rachel Cowie, Ian Dibble (for AB17.05.5), Mark Davis (for AB17.05.4), Chris Gledhill (Clerk), Katie Lucking (for AB17.05.7), Tracy Willis.

Observers: Delia Bean, Elizabeth Cleaver.

Apologies: Sarah Bennett, Jason Briddon, Nadine Fry, Sarah Green, Nina Higson-Sweeney, Catherine Hobbs, Stuart McClean, Steven Neill, Nicholas O'Regan, Alastair Osborn, Glenn Parry, Jayne Storey, Steve West, Maggie Westgarth, Donna Whitehead.

AB17.07.1   Membership

AB17.05.1.1   <u>Vice-Chancellor's Nomine to the Academic Board</u>
Academic Board noted that the vacancy arising from the recent departure of Professor Jenny Ames was filled by Professor Nicholas O'Regan.

AB17.05.1.2   <u>Representative Head of Department, FBL</u>
Members also noted that Dr Nadine Fry replaced Patricia Voaden as the Representative Head of Department for the Faculty of Business and Law.

AB17.05.2   Minutes and Matters Arising
Paper AB17/05/01 was received

AB17.05.2.1   <u>Minutes</u>
The minutes of the meeting held Wednesday 22 February 2017 were **approved**.

AB17.05.2.2   <u>Min AB16.12.2.2 refers (December minutes): Matters Arising – Revised Operating Model for Quality Assessment – Annual Provider Review</u>
Members noted that the data schedule to support the revised operating model for quality assessment would be incorporated as part of the Continuous Improvement strand of the Enhancement Framework.

AB17.05.2.3   <u>Min. AB17.02.6.12 refers: URKEC Annual Report 2015/2016 – Graduate School</u>
Members noted that the comments relating to the condition of some accommodation for PG students had been taken back into the Faculty and any issues were currently being worked through with the Director of PGR Studies and the Deputy Dean.

AB17.05.2.4 <u>Min. AB17.02.6.25 refers: Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee</u>
Members noted that the comments of Academic Board in relation to the Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee were discussed at the URKEC meeting on 5 April 2017.

AB17.05.2.5 <u>Min. AB17.02.9.4 refers: Updates from Faculty Boards – Faculty of Health and Applied Science</u>
Members noted that the HAS Faculty Lead for Widening Participation and Student Success was working with colleagues to organise a University-wide BME Conference in June where various issues would be shared.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

AB17.05.3   Vice-Chancellor's Update
Paper AB17/05/02 was received and noted.

AB17.05.3.1 Members received further updates from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost on the following:
  i. Guardian League Table – the University had improved its position by 16 places to 52, which reflected the hard work that had been undertaken. Analysis was now underway to identify further improvements;
  ii. Complete University Guide – the University had improved its position in this guide too, up 7 places to 60;
  iii. Athena Swan – Academic Board formally recorded its thanks to colleagues who had contributed to the latest submission;
  iv. TEF outcomes would be announced on 14 June 2017.

AB17.05.3.2 Members noted that the UWE Staff Survey was underway and open until Friday 19 May 2017. The Chair urged Members to encourage their colleagues to complete the survey.

AB17.05.4   Strategy 2030 Horizon Scanning - Technology

AB17.05.4.1 Members received a presentation from the Deputy Director, ITS.

AB17.05.4.2 Members noted the following highlights of the presentation:
  i. By 2030, digitalisation would be inherent in all aspects of life and would influence the way we worked;
  ii. Data and intelligence would be critical to how the University operated and activity would be centred around five areas:
    1. <u>IT Foundation</u>: the IT estate, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Virtual Learning Environment (VLE, network, etc.) – there was currently a shift to cloud-based environments and UWE's IT similarly would function wholly from this.
    2. <u>Student/Staff Experience</u>: this will be a key driver; the virtual workplace, the transition from face-to-face learning to virtual would be seamless, bringing digital into the physical, in an augmented experience. The use of tools such as Microsoft's HoloLens, Google Tilt Brush and others, would mean the way we interacted with technology would be very different;

3. <u>Internet of Things</u>: 'location-aware content' would provide a personalised experience for students, e.g. notification of favourite bands playing locally. Deakin University in Australia had a digitally-enabled "Cloud Campus", underpinned by 5G; such campuses would accelerate in development and would be critical to UWE's future;

4. <u>Eco Systems and Integration</u>: collaborative use of data, enabling students to develop applications using data from a number of sources – an example would be a virtual placement environment;

5. <u>Data and Intelligence</u>: the above four areas would feed into this. The application of machine learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and their presentation through different mechanisms would enable a very highly personalised student experience and the tailoring of learning preferences. This was arguably the most controversial area;

AB17.05.4.3 iii. What did this mean for UWE?
   a. Questions would be explored through S2030 discussions
   b. In terms of IT, UWE would need an IT environment that was flexible and able to adapt swiftly
   c. There would be a focus upon the integration of systems, the management of data and how data was used, security and architecture
   d. There were several areas that would require careful consideration:
      a. how to train staff to use technology when it was changing so rapidly
      b. how to manage the cultural changes that were required
      c. financial models
      d. how to merge augmented virtual environments in order to create an enriched learning experience.

AB17.05.4.4 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost invited Academic Board Members to consider in groups the following question:
"With the growing importance of digital technologies, what should our ambitions be for our academic provision and offer in 2030?"

AB17.05.4.5 <u>Initial Feedback</u>
Members were invited to share highlights of their discussions. Feedback included:
   – The need to use technology to link people together;
   – As an institution, to have an ambition to lead the way in how technology can enhance education;
   – The importance of remembering that technology was the tool not the driver and to make the most of resources that were available;
   – The University should have an ambition to be agile, flexible and connected – both in bureaucracy and mind-set – e.g. harness technology for employability, look at real-world applications, be courageous with regard to when and where technology should be used in teaching and learning. Information literacy would be critical to the success of this ambition – be clear on boundaries of what we would or would not be prepared to do;

- The need to be aware of the currency of the curriculum – how do we teach something that was likely to be out of date very quickly;
- There would be a need for a continued focus on practice-based learning and ensuring that University systems matched the speed of applications in the real world, but be cautious as to how these were applied – face-to-face, synchronous teaching – there was a concern that an ambition such as that being discussed could impose a conflict with the Widening Participation agenda in relation to students' access to that technology. Be mindful of the level of digital literacy and be clear about the problem the University was trying to solve;
- Recognise that technology would need to link with assessment strategy, as well as learning and teaching;
- The need to be prepared to embrace and harness technology, but not be driven by it; to remain open-minded about it and understand its drawbacks;
- The need to examine what a modular system would look like in a digitised world;
- Whilst all on the same 'journey', UWE students were diverse and travelling that journey differently; the University therefore needed to engage with them on a personal level from the start.

AB17.05.4.6 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost thanked Members for their comments and highlighted that further thought pieces would be brought to Academic Board for consideration during this exploration stage of the development of the Strategy 2030 plan.

AB17.05.5   Student Journey Programme and Student Information System (SIS)

AB17.05.5.1 Members received a presentation from the Programme Director Student Information System and noted the following:

i. The new SIS was a large-scale business-led, IT enabled project that would touch all elements of the student journey, from enquiry to alumni;

ii. The aims of the system, namely:
  a. A better user experience for students across the student lifecycle
  b. A better user experience for professional services and academic staff, including support for learning and teaching activities
  c. Improved statutory and regulatory reporting
  d. Insights and information to enable better decision-making
  e. More efficient and streamlined processes and ways of working;

iii. ITS had examined the current complex technical landscape of existing systems pre-project – 20+ systems connected by 200+ interfaces were difficult to maintain – and whilst SIS would not replace all of these systems, there would be some degree of compromise;

iv. There would be a number of discrete elements – e.g. curriculum management, upon which the first phase would be focused;

v. There was some degree of disconnect within the current model which were further frustrated by the systems that were in place;

vi. The future business model would have the UWE student experience at its core to ensure that that experience felt personalised to each student;

vii. The programme's indicative timescale of 4-5 years.

AB17.05.5.2 Members noted the challenge to continue to deliver 'business as usual' and to be ready for the digital world and that the transitional period would consist of a series of stages requiring careful consideration.

AB17.05.5.3 Members acknowledged the process review work currently underway which would continue to explore what could be achieved now and would could wait to be included in the new system.

AB17.05.5.4 Members also acknowledged that the SIS had the potential to be transformational and there was a valuable opportunity to involve academic staff in this initial phase with regard to how they interfaced with the system – e.g. online marking – and noted that the programme's core team would include Faculty-facing Account Managers.

AB17.05.5.5 Members further noted the experience at Hartpury College, which was halfway through implementing a new system and the recommendation to use student focus groups, including 'pre-students', as the College's visits to primary and secondary schools had discovered systems that were much more advanced than had been seen in the university sector.

AB17.05.5.6 Members suggested the development of a communications strategy aimed at academic staff in relation to issues and challenges that the system was looking to address. Members endorsed the Programme Director's comments that directed communications and engagement were critical to the success of the process and noted that how best to approach that would be explored by the Head of Business Change, Internal Communications and the Faculty Account Managers.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

AB17.05.6 **2017/2018 Academic Governance Calendar**
Paper AB17/05/03 was received

AB17.05.6.1 Members noted that the afternoons of two dates – Wednesday 4 October 2017 and Wednesday 14 March 2018 – had been left free of meetings to allow for professional development.

AB17.05.6.2 Members also noted the request that any changes to meeting dates post-approval of the calendar were to be managed locally, but in liaison with Academic Services and that revised dates be notified to the Governance team.

AB17.05.6.3 Members **approved** the 2017/2018 Academic Governance Calendar.

AB17.05.7 **UWE Bristol Principles of Academic Representation**
Paper AB17/05/04 was received

AB17.05.7.1 Members received an update from the VP Education and the Student-Led Enhancement Manager.

AB17.05.7.2 Members noted that the proposed model:
   i. provided a more nuanced approach that supported innovative practices for effective academic representation with a local context;
   ii. maintained a clear set of minimum expectations familiar to those working with the current representation model;
   iii. the proposals aligned with and supported the wider shift from annual monitoring to continuous improvement;

iv.   Whilst focused on the representation structures of Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate (PG) Taught programmes, some ideas and principles would be transferable to that of PG Researchers and collaborative provision;

v.   Recognised the different learning communities at the University and allowed for programme teams to define the most appropriate form of representation for their activity;

vi.   Had five primary elements of academic representation, as detailed in the report:
1. Inclusive
2. Partnership
3. Effective
4. Ambitious
5. Transparent

vii.   Would be effective from September 2017 and support would be available centrally from the University and the Students' Union.

AB17.05.7.3   Members also noted the creation of a benchmarking tool to assess and develop plans for academic representation, and which would be specific to each department.

AB17.05.7.4   Members further noted that in the longer term, examples of best practice would be collated and the principles reviewed.

AB17.05.7.5   Members questioned the nature of reporting methods in the new model and noted that there would be a mechanism in place for recording feedback authoritatively, with the relevant Head of Department signing off that identified actions were being undertaken.

AB17.05.7.6   Members **approved** the UWE Bristol Principles of Academic Representation.

AB17.05.8   **Posthumous Award**
Paper AB17/05/06[1] was received

Academic Board **approved** the proposal to award a posthumous Doctor of Philosophy to Siebelien Felix.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

AB17.05.9   **Update from UWE Student Representatives**
Paper AB17/05/07 was received

AB17.05.9.1   The VP Education provided Members with the key highlights of the report.

AB17.05.9.2   Members noted in particular:
i.   Student Experience Awards – the VP Education formally thanked the Associate Deans and the Directorate for their support and donations to enable the event celebrating representation and partnership at UWE to take place;

ii.   SU at UWE Leadership Race –
a. overall engagement with the election had been higher than the previous year, with a total turnout of 15.11%, slightly lower than the national average of 16%

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[1] Paper AB17/05/05 was withdrawn post-publication of the agenda.

        b.   the diversity of the candidates – over 50% of whom self-identified as female, 44% as BME (twice the UWE Bristol average) and 20% declared disabled;

   iii.   General Election –
        a.   voter registration drive
        b.   Filton and Bradley Stoke Hustings event, Thursday 25 May 2017, 6pm;

   iv.   The Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) Modernisation work being undertaken to ensure the smooth transition into the new model of DSA – a paper would be brought to Academic Board in July, following consideration by the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (LTSEC) in June.

AB17.05.9.3   Members requested details of the Hustings event to be circulated.

ACTION: VP, Education/Head of Governance

AB17.05.10   Updates from Faculty Boards

AB17.05.10.1   Members noted that no formal Faculty Board meetings had taken place since Academic Board had met in February and the Chair invited Faculty Board Members to share any updates of interest.

AB17.05.10.2   *Faculty of Business and Law (FBL)*
Members noted that an informal Faculty lunch had taken place and discussions had included:
   i.   Improving Faculty communications and the opening of SharePoint as a means of providing feedback
   ii.   The transition to the new Bristol Business School building
   iii.   Programme Leader Workload – details of which would inform the wider piece of work being undertaken.

AB17.05.10.3   *Faculty of Environment and Technology (FET)*
Discussions at the March Faculty Board meeting had included:
   i.   The first year student experience and in particular, engagement with skills development and the academic aspects of their programme
   ii.   The experience of new starter staff of the process of recruitment and integration in social and academic life
   iii.   A new Faculty newsletter to share stories of Faculty success and activity.

AB17.05.10.4   *Faculty of Arts & Creative Industries and Education (ACE)*
Members noted that a Faculty Forum had been held and had continued discussions from the previous Faculty Board meeting, as well as exploring how best to interpret the target 10% increase in student numbers. The Forum had also discussed the Faculty's Degree Show taking place on Friday 2 June 2017, which Academic Board Members were encouraged to attend.

AB17.05.10.5   *Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences (HAS)*
Details of the most recently-held Faculty Board were shared, including:
   i.   Enterprise 2020 and the theme of 'learning gain'
   ii.   PG Taught provision and how Enterprise 2020 would feed into that

      iii.   CPD across the Faculty
      iv.   The considerable investment taking place across the Faculty and the use/future use of that space
      v.   Extended induction across years 1 to 3.

ITEMS TO NOTE

AB17.05.11   **Student Surveys Update**

Members received an update from the Director of Academic Services and noted the following:
      i.   NSS closed on 30 April 2017 and the UWE student response rate was 70.5%, slightly below that of the previous year, although FET had achieved a response rate of 83.1%. NSS results were expected in August 2017;
      ii.   Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) was open until the end of June 2017 and so far 812 students had responded. The Chair reminded Members of the Government's intention that Postgraduate activity would become part of the TEF and requested that they encourage students to complete the survey.

AB17.05.12   **Access Agreement 2018/2019**
Paper AB17/05/08 was received

AB17.05.12.1   Members noted that Widening Participation and Inclusivity were a key focus for the University and that the Access Agreement detailed how the University would sustain and improve the representation of under-represented groups.

AB17.05.12.2   Members also noted that in terms of performance, the University was at benchmark for most of the indicators although local analysis of Student Success had shown that there was a particular challenge in relation to BME students.

AB17.05.12.3   Members further noted that the University's Race Equality Task Force was investigating this from an organisational perspective and looking at actions at department, discipline and programme level; improvement would be dependent upon local engagement with that data.

AB17.05.12.4   Members **agreed** that the sharing at a future meeting of more detailed information on the University's Outreach activity in developing engagement and enthusiasm for learning – e.g. Future Quest – would be welcome.
          ACTION: Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Experience

AB17.05.13   **Student Life Board**
Paper AB17/05/09 was received

AB17.05.13.1   Members noted the terms of reference of the new sub-group of the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience (LTSEC) Committee, which would be responsible for the development of strategy and the implementation and oversight of actions to secure a positive University culture.

AB17.05.13.2   Members also noted that a number of other groups would inform the work of the Student Life Board, such as the Anti Sexual Violence and Race Incident Group.

AB17.05.13.3 Members requested that the Board's membership be revised to include Faculty and multi-campus representation.

ACTION: Director of Academic Services

AB17.05.14 **Review of Academic Governance**

Members noted the planned effectiveness review, which would be undertaken by an external facilitator.

AB17.05.15 **Academic Board Chair's Actions**

Members noted that on behalf of Academic Board, the Chair had approved the renewal of the Partnership Agreement with Ho Chi Minh City University of Law for a further five years, to 31 August 2022.

AB17.05.16 **Minutes of Sub-Committees**
Members noted that the latest available minutes of subcommittees were available from the SharePoint Site.

AB17.05.17 **Any Other Business**

There was no further business.

AB17.05.18 **Dates of future meetings**

Wednesday 5 July 2017 14:00-17:00