

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY 14 MAY 2024 IN ROOM 109, REGENT STREET AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT:	Professor P Bonfield (Chair) Professor D Anand Dr S Jarvis Professor C Kalantaridis	Professor A Linn Dr T Moore I Wilmot
IN ATTENDANCE:	M Baldwin D Husbands (Minute 23.187)	J Lamarque (Secretary) P Trwoga (Minute 23.186)
APOLOGIES:	Professor J Jones	

23.182 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 23.182.1 **Welcome:** The Chair welcomed all members and attendees to the meeting.
- 23.182.2 **Apologies:** Apologies were received as noted above.
- 23.182.3 **Declaration of interests:** Members did not declare any conflict of interest for the matters on the agenda.
- 23.182.4 **Requests to discuss starred items and business not on the agenda:** The Chair confirmed there were no requests to discuss starred items or to raise items of business not on the agenda.

Chair's business

- 23.182.5 The Chair briefed members on political discussions around work/study visas.
- 23.182.6 The University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (USCOO) informed members that the Regent Street campus would be closed the weekend of 18-19 May 2024 due to electrical works.
- 23.182.7 Members received updates on the Summer Party at Harrow and an apprenticeship award for Life Sciences.

23.183 STAYING SAFE: BUSINESS CONTINUITY GROUP UPDATE

- 23.183.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Education/Co-Chair, Staying Safe: Business Continuity Group informed members that a sub-committee had been formed to deal with protest camps.
- 23.183.2 Members heard that the Group would submit a review of business continuity to UEB three times a year.

23.184 STUDENT FEES AND OTHER CHARGES POLICY – ANNUAL REVIEW

- 23.184.1 The USCOO presented the Student Fees and Other Charges Policy annual review (Document UEB 240514A).
- 23.184.2 Members discussed the non-refundable deposit for international students and were informed that there are agreed actions to mitigate fraudulent claims.
- 23.184.3 Members heard that the Enrolly platform, which is used widely in other institutions, has been well received by the UKVI team as a tool to manage fraudulent activity.

23.184.4 Members discussed the number of issued and withdrawn Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS) certificates and noted that the USCOO will give regular updates on CAS at future UEB meetings.

23.184.5 **APPROVED** Student Fees and Other Charges policy to be implemented from 1 August 2024.

23.185 UPDATE ON PERSONAL TUTORING

23.185.1 Thomas Moore, Interim Head of College for Liberal Arts and Sciences and Personal Tutoring Lead briefed members on the position for the next academic year, including implementation of 'We Thrive'.

23.185.2 The Personal Tutoring lead informed members that Professional Services colleagues and students have been involved in the discussions around the Learner Analytics Dashboard.

23.185.3 Members noted that each School has been asked to update their operating plan to include personal tutoring, and this will be supplemented by the Head of College professional development reviews (PDRs) which in turn will be reflected in the Head of Schools PDRs.

23.186 STRATEGIC EVALUATION OF FULLY ONLINE COURSE DELIVERY OPTIONS

23.186.1 Phil Trwoga, Head of the School of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) presented a strategic evaluation of fully online course delivery options (Document UEB 240514B).

23.186.2 The Head of CSE reported that there has been a large increase in demand for the online market, with a move to accredited and micro credentials.

23.186.3 Members discussed the summary of online options and comments included:

- It is not possible to market research all options; appropriate research and exploration should be restricted to the preferred options.
- Option 4 will build on our strong tradition with employers.
- Focus should be on short course development, especially in known market areas with a good track record, which are mostly in Business.
- Options 4 and 5 sit comfortably with each other and provide lots of opportunities.
- A full Masters programme is too high risk.
- Focus on a few high value courses in the first instance.

23.186.4 The Head of CSE confirmed that likely areas for implementation are Life Sciences, Computer Science and Engineering, Law and Business Studies.

23.186.5 In response to a member's query about the Short Courses Team, the Head of CSE confirmed that he had met with them many times and is keen to represent the good work they have been doing.

23.186.6 **AGREED** Head of CSE to work on the preferred options - Options 4 and 5 - with the Director of Business Engagement, supported by the relevant Schools.

23.186.7 **AGREED** There will be a financial commitment once the business case is completed.

23.186.8 The Head of CSE confirmed the tie-in with accreditation bodies and business and noted that the courses will have some longevity and can be updated and reused.

23.186.8.1 ACTION DVC (Education) to talk to the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) regarding the commissioning brief.

23.187 EDI (EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION) ANNUAL REPORT – UPDATE ON IMPACT

23.187.1 Dibyesh Anand and Deborah Husbands, Co-Chairs of the EDI Committee reported on the impact of EDI work.

- 23.187.2 Members heard that:
- There is broad satisfaction with the EDI Strategy, and it is making an impact.
 - Plans are visible and events are making an impact on culture; there is an acknowledgement that celebration is good.
 - Embedding of EDI in PDRs needs to be more consistent.
 - There is great impact externally, and internally but we need to drive more consistency.
 - It is important to ensure that the various elements of EDI continue to be better tied together.
 - Although many/most appointments are made with paying to EDI there needs to be consistency in every appointment.
 - Good progress is being made with celebration events and we need to ensure that no colleagues are blocked by their line managers from attending and engaging with the events.
 - There are staffing challenges in supporting EDI and the onus remains on a few colleagues; this is particularly felt by colleagues with marginalised identities.
 - We need to ensure that student and colleague wellbeing for those that take on the majority of the EDI work is considered and is not negatively affected.
 - PDRs should be used as a point of reference for the EDI barometer.
 - The University is at the forefront of the EDI agenda and this needs to be sustained.
 - EDI is on committee agendas, and we need to ensure that it cascades down to demonstrate that EDI has a place at the more local level.
- 23.187.3 A member commented that the Professional Services EDI Champions are working well and there is a lot of activity across Professional Services to progress the EDI agenda; however, different messaging to help colleague understanding would be welcome.
- 23.187.4 An EDI Committee Co-Chair reported that academic matters dominated the EDI Forum and a reshaping of the request for submissions will be considered as well as providing support for the Professional Services EDI Leads who are more junior colleagues.
- 23.187.5 Members shared how EDI works in their area of responsibility and identified some challenges:
- **Education**
 - Interventions from the Access and Participation Plan should drive actions.
 - There are some gaps in attainment and employability and a need to continue to drill down to identify unseen barriers.
 - Black students are less likely to submit mitigating circumstances than other groups of students and their submissions are less likely to be accepted.
 - **Research**
 - A series of culture workshops will be launched across the University.
 - **Design, Creative and Digital Industries**
 - Focused on gaps and student outcomes.
 - Lack of visibility of School EDI Leads.
 - **Liberal Arts and Sciences**
 - The College is working on consistent messaging from the Associate Heads of Schools.
 - **Westminster Business School**
 - Some successful initiatives are in place.
 - Ensuring diversity of colleagues in appointments and progression is a challenge.
- 23.188 STUDENT CONTINUATION UPDATE**
- 23.188.1 The DVC (Education) informed members that the first sit fail rate is recovering; however, second sit pass rates are still on a downward trajectory.

23.188.2 The DVC (Education) reported that there are still opportunities to make a difference in supporting our resit students, and there may still be some COVID-19 factors.

23.189 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING

23.189.1 **AGREED** Members confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2024 (Document UEB 240514C) as an accurate record of the meeting.

23.189.2 Members reviewed a summary of the actions from previous meetings (Document UEB 240514D) and noted those that were now complete.

23.189.3 **Update on 115 New Cavendish Street (NCS) developments (Action 23.171.7.1)** The USCOO confirmed that a meeting to discuss the governance and membership of the 115 NCS project group would take place that afternoon.

23.189.4 **Student Continuation Update (Action 23.161.4.1)** The DVC (Employability and Global Engagement) confirmed that a meeting to discuss proposals to improve continuation for postgraduate international students will take place in early June 2024.

23.189.5 **Student Continuation Update (Action 23.161.4.2)** The Heads of Colleges confirmed that they have taken action with their Schools to ensure students who are currently referred in an assessment are contacted by Module Leaders and Personal Tutors.

23.190 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

23.190.1 Members did not raise any other matters for discussion.

23.191 MEETING EVALUATION

23.191.1 The Chair confirmed the key communication points, the risks identified through discussions at the meeting and how those risks would be mitigated.

23.191.2 A member commented on the pace of the meeting which started with thoughtful and interesting discussions.

23.192 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH FEES

23.192.1 **AGREED** Members recommend the proposed Postgraduate Research fees for 2025/26 (Document UEB 240514E) to Resources Committee for approval.

23.193 UPDATED UEB TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

23.193.1 **APPROVED** UEB terms of reference 2023/24 with updated membership (Document UEB 240514F) to be implemented with immediate effect.

23.194 WELLBEING ACTION PLAN

23.194.1 Members noted the Wellbeing Action Plan (Document UEB 240514G).

23.195 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are 10.30am to 12.30pm (unless alternative time stated below) in Room RS109, Regent Street and via Microsoft Teams.

24 May 2024 9am to 11am
11 June 2024
25 June 2024
9 July 2024 at 4pm (UEB dinner)

10 July 2024 9am to 5pm (UEB away day)
23 July 2024
7 August 2024