

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY 11 JUNE 2024 IN ROOM 109, REGENT STREET AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT:	Professor P Bonfield (Chair) Professor D Anand Dr S Jarvis Professor J Jones	Professor C Kalantaridis Professor A Linn Dr T Moore I Wilmot (Deputy Chair)
IN ATTENDANCE:	O Adetona (Minute 23.209) C Benyon (Minute 23.211 to 23.212) P Harding (Minute 23.209)	J Lamarque (Secretary) E Maddison (Minute 23.211 to 23.212) C Molloy (Minute 23.210)
APOLOGIES:		

23.207 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 23.207.1 **Welcome:** The Chair welcomed all members and attendees to the meeting.
- 23.207.2 **Apologies:** There were no apologies received.
- 23.207.3 **Declaration of interests:** Members did not declare any conflict of interest for the matters on the agenda.
- 23.207.4 **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.
- 23.207.5 **Chair's business:** There were no items of Chair's business.

23.208 STAYING SAFE: BUSINESS CONTINUITY GROUP UPDATE

- 23.208.1 There were no updates from the Staying Safe: Business Continuity Group.

23.209 FINAL UNIVERSITY BUDGET 2024/25

- 23.209.1 Phil Harding, Interim Director of Finance and Oyin Adetona, Deputy Director of Finance presented the proposed University budget for 2024/25 (Document UEB 240611A), which is recommended by the University Planning Committee.
- 23.209.2 The Interim Director of Finance informed members of the planned surplus of £7.5m before contingency and noted that this is a prudent budget giving some protection against the potential for a more adverse set of circumstances in the 2024/25 financial year.
- 23.209.3 Considering the volatile environment, the Interim Director of Finance recommended a full review of the budget at the end of Quarter 1 (Q1) to assess the impact of the student outturn and whether remedial action needs to be taken. Members noted that the Finance team will work between now and Q1 to develop an outline plan to address any adverse circumstances.
- 23.209.4 Members noted that staff costs are forecast close to 58% of income and that work will continue to reach the 53/54% target.
- 23.209.5 Members heard that the total capital expenditure budget including special projects is set at £59m.
- 23.209.6 The Interim Director of Finance assured members that the budget includes a sufficient level of contingency.

- 23.209.7 In response to a member's query on the 50% reduction in international recruitment against original growth plan, the Deputy Director of Finance confirmed that the contingency applied is to the income figure and not to the headcount.
- 23.209.8 The Deputy Director of Finance confirmed that agency commission fees had not been adjusted pending completion of work to forecast an increase in headcount.
- 23.209.9 **AGREED** Members recommend the proposed University budget 2024/25 to Resources Committee subject to the amendments discussed.
- 23.209.9.1 **ACTION Interim Director of Finance** to add information on scenario planning and a statement clarifying the nature of the 50% reduction in income from international student fees against original growth plan to the report prior to submission to the Resources Committee.

23.210 COLLEAGUE WELLBEING SURVEY OUTCOMES REPORT

- 23.210.1 Caragh Molloy, Director of People, Culture and Wellbeing (PCW) presented the initial findings from the colleague wellbeing survey (Document UEB 240611B).
- 23.210.2 The Director of PCW reported that there had been a significant increase in the number of responses, in particular from academic colleagues, and that most of the measurements have improved. Members noted that a more detailed report will be submitted to UEB in due course.
- 23.210.3 Members discussed the interim recommendation regarding alignment of the academic calendar with school holidays and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Education confirmed this matter is yet to be discussed at Teaching Committee and Academic Council.
- 23.210.4 Members discussed the feedback that colleagues feel a greater involvement and understanding of decision making, hybrid working and qualitative responses.
- 23.210.5 Members discussed improvements to the report such as including improve efficiencies in the interim recommendations.

23.211 DISCUSSION ON ASSOCIATION TO ADVANCE COLLEGIATE SCHOOLS OF BUSINESS (AACSB) ACCREDITATION

- 23.211.1 Christos Kalantaridis, Head of College, Westminster Business School (WBS) presented an options and proposal paper on accreditations (Document UEB 240611C).
- 23.211.2 Members heard that the initial response from training and qualification provider Quality Education Development was that AACSB accreditation is achievable for WBS, although some work will need to be carried out to meet all requirements.
- 23.211.3 Members discussed the proposed accreditation in relation to international partnerships and noted that partner accreditation would be progressed once WBS secured AACSB accreditation.
- 23.211.4 The Head of WBS confirmed that the College will need to invest in academic positions at the time of securing accreditation, which will have a positive impact on research.
- 23.211.5 Members discussed accreditation, MBA's and pre-experience MBA's.
- 23.211.6 **ENDORSED** Members supported the proposal for WBS to work towards AACSB accreditation as a single business unit.

23.212 GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (GenAI) UPDATE

- 23.212.1 The Chair postponed the update on GenAI to a future meeting.

23.213 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT, ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 23.213.1 Dibyesh Anand, DVC (Employability and Global Engagement), Caroline Benyon, Director of Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications (GRAMC) and Emilie Maddison, Head of International Recruitment (IR) presented a paper on the challenges and opportunities for international student recruitment, admission and enrolment (Document UEB 240611D).
- 23.213.2 The Director of GRAMC updated members on UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) engagements with the sector and recruitment challenges in the international market.
- 23.213.3 The Head of IR reported on difficulties in 2023 in converting applications to enrolments and members heard that the enrolment forecast dashboard shows a significant decline in the number of applications, with a predicted shortfall against the target.
- 23.213.4 The Head of IR informed members that to date the University had received 25% of the target for deposits had been received despite the deadline having passed and that the University should expect a significant reduction in postgraduate students and a reduction in undergraduate students.
- 23.213.5 Members discussed the risks associated with extending the enrolment deadline and the impact of policies in Australia and Canada, scholarships and UKVI.
- 23.213.6 Members noted that UKVI would need reassurance that there is a programme in place to onboard students if the deadline were to be extended and that it is not possible to extend the deadline this year.
- 23.213.7 The DVC (Education) tabled a recent snapshot from the attrition dashboard showing an increase from the previous two years and commented that it was likely attrition would increase if the University implemented an extended enrolment deadline.
- 23.213.8 Members discussed attrition, late arriving students, and the possibility of an earlier application deadline to allow applicants more time to secure visas.
- 23.213.9 The Head of IR presented a review of international student fee deposits and members discussed four options for changes to the fee deposits.
- 23.213.10 **AGREED** The University will increase the deposit for all students to **[REDACTED]** for 2025/26 entry onward with the ability to flex the deposit arrangements in exceptional circumstances. GRAMC must report any exceptions to UEB.

23.214 UKVI 2024/25 POLICY

- 23.214.1 The DVC (Education) presented the UKVI's Remote delivery policy (Document UEB 240611E).
- 23.214.2 Members noted that the Teaching Committee agreed that the university should not seek special dispensation to teach over 20% of course content online and has established a working group to examine modules and ensure that they do not exceed 20% online teaching.
- 23.214.3 The DVC (Education) confirmed that modules that require more than 20% online content will be reported to the UKVI Compliance Manager as exceptions.
- 23.214.4 **ENDORSED** Members supported the planned measures to ensure compliance with the UKVI's policy.
- 23.214.5 The Director of GRAMC suggested that compliance with the policy is included in the internal audit of UKVI compliance.

- 23.214.6 **UKVI Action Plan**
The Director of GRAMC informed members that the action plan was in place prior to the UKVI visit, that UKVI were reassured by the action plan and there would be a follow-up UKVI visit in September 2024.
- 23.215 INTERNATIONAL HOUSE**
- 23.215.1 The University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (USCOO) presented proposals for the use of International House (Document UEB 240611F).
- 23.215.2 Members considered the proposals, discussing letting and disposal options.
- 23.215.3 Members confirmed that Estates Planning and Services should continue to explore options for use of International House.
- 23.216 STUDENT CONTINUATION UPDATE**
- 23.216.1 The DVC (Education) tabled information showing that the first sit pass rate is rising, although the gaps between different groups is not closing.
- 23.217 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING**
- 23.217.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2024 and 24 May 2024 (Documents UEB 240611Gi and UEB 240611Gii) were agreed as accurate records of the meetings.
- 23.217.2 Members reviewed a summary of the actions from previous meetings (Document UEB 240611H) and noted those that were now complete.
- 23.217.3 **Strategic evaluation of fully online course delivery options (Action 23.186.6.1)** The DVC (Education) confirmed that she had spoken to the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) regarding the commissioning brief for online course delivery.
- 23.218 MEETING EVALUATION**
- 23.218.1 The Chair summarised the risks identified through discussions at the meeting and how those risks would be mitigated.
- 23.219 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 23.219.1 Members did not raise any other matters for discussion.
- 23.220 ABSENCE POLICY**
- 23.220.1 **AGREED** Members recommend the updated Absence Policy (Document UEB 240611I) to Resources Committee.
- 23.221 AUDIT EXEMPTION FOR SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES**
- 23.221.1 **AGREED** Members recommend a proposal to exempt the subsidiary companies from external audits from 2024/25 (Document UEB 240611J) to Audit and Risk Committee.
- 23.222 DRAFT INNOVATION AND RISK APPETITE STATEMENT**
- 23.222.1 **AGREED** Members recommend the draft Innovation and Risk Appetite Statement (Document UEB 240611K) to Audit and Risk Committee.
- 23.223 PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE (WHISTLEBLOWING) REGISTER – ANNUAL SUBMISSION**

23.223.1 Members received the annual submission of the Public Interest Disclosure (whistleblowing) register (Document UEB 240611L).

23.224 QUINTIN HOGG TRUST (QHT) SUMMARY REPORT

23.224.1 Members noted the QHT summary report (Document UEB 240611M).

23.225 LEGAL REGISTER – ANNUAL REVIEW

23.225.1 **APPROVED** Members confirmed the updated Legal Register (Document UEB 240611N).

23.226 PG MODULE FEES FOR 2025 ENTRY

23.226.1 **AGREED** Members recommend the revised fees paper (Document UEB 240611O) to Resources Committee.

23.227 NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES GUIDANCE

23.227.1 Members noted the Notifiable Infectious Diseases Guidance (Document UEB 240611P).

23.228 GENETIC MODIFICATION SAFETY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

23.228.1 Members noted the Genetic Modification Safety Committee terms of reference (Document UEB 240611Q).

23.229 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.

2023/24

25 June 2024	23 July 2024
9 July 2024 at 4pm (UEB dinner)	7 August 2024
10 July 2024 9am to 5pm (UEB away day)	

2024/25

10 September 2024	4 March 2025 – all day (UEB away day)
24 September 2024 - evening (UEB dinner)	25 March 2025
25 September 2024 – all day (UEB away day)	8 April 2025
8 October 2024	29 April 2025
22 October 2024	13 May 2025
5 November 2024	27 May 2025
26 November 2024	10 June 2025
10 December 2024	24 June 2025
7 January 2025	7 July 2025 - evening (UEB dinner)
21 January 2025	8 July 2025 – all day (UEB away day)
11 February 2025	22 July 2025
25 February 2025	5 August 2025
3 March 2025 - evening (UEB dinner)	