ACADEMIC BOARD   CONFIRMED

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 June 2022

Present:	Julie Mennell (Chair), Emma Bales, Victoria Barbe, Jean Brown, Colette Conroy, Alex Dittrich, Tom Grimwood, Karen Hadley, Alison Hampson (from 21:76), Ruth Harrison-Palmer, Tina Harvey (left at 21:91), Signy Henderson, Amanda Lane, Helen Manns, Jessica Robinson, Karen Shaw, Mike Toyn and Rob Trimble
In attendance:	Emma Shaw (Minutes) Carolyne James (on behalf of Nigel Rourke, left at 21:91)

21:73	**Introduction and Apologies for absence** Apologies were received from Elizabeth Bates, Tom Davidson, Lucy Haddath, Richard Harrison, Nigel Rourke, Ian Sinker and Brian Webster-Henderson.	Verbal
21:74	**Minutes and actions of the previous meeting** The minutes of the 8 March 2022 meeting were approved as an accurate record. The action log was noted. Item 21:26 had been picked up with the Dean for Student Success (DeanSS). For item 21:29, it would be decided which policy discussions would come to Academic Board to ensure the balance was weighted between process and compliance.	AB21/46 a) b)

The agenda order was changed at this point, items have been minuted as received.

21:75	**Students' Union Matters**	AB21/47

Received   A report from the UCSU

In the Academic Officer's absence, the report was noted. It was agreed that there would be follow up with the Students' Union on engagement and representation across the student body. **Action:** DeanSS

> **AGREED:**   To receive the report.

21:76	**Towards 2030 Strategy – Academic Strategy**	AB21/48

Received   The Towards 2030 Strategy – Academic Strategy

The DVC(A) spoke to the paper setting out how the Academic Strategy had been drafted to deliver the key academic objectives of the Towards 2030 Strategy. The Strategy was set out under five themes:

- Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- Student Experience and Achievement
- Research and Knowledge Exchange
- Academic Portfolio
- Academic Staff Development

The actions required to deliver on these themes were outlined within the document, with relevant KPIs from the 2030 Strategy embedded into it. It was noted that following Academic Board, the Strategy would be reviewed by Academic Governance Committee prior to being put to University Board for final approval.

The Chair noted the importance of the document, which drew heavily on the Towards 2030 Strategy and provided further specificity in terms of areas of focus and how success would be measured. It was important for the Strategy to translate into every day thinking and practice and to create a strategy specifically for the University of Cumbria.

In the discussion the following points were made:
- The importance of creating a strategy for the University that focused on the needs of the region and raising attainment. The DVC(A) responded this focus was throughout the document, but additional prominence could be given.
- Whether the notion of inclusivity was sufficiently foregrounded in the Learning and Teaching section of the Strategy was asked, with scale of students with a SpLD and / or some form of disability at the University being very significant. The DVC(A) responded that the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy would provide further detail but that it could also be brought out more in the Academic Strategy.
- Alignment of the areas of student support, experience and achievement was commented upon, with a suggestion that 'proactive' would be a better description of the aim than 'enhanced' student advice and support. The DVC(A) responded that the aim was not to increase the amount but rather to ensure that the support available was applicable and appropriate.
- The terminology being used and its consistency was commented upon, for example with 'knowledge exchange' potentially more inclusive than 'technology transfer'. The DVC(A) agreed to review the terminology with the DVC(HE&I) and to ensure that it was consistent.
- The importance of the next level of strategies / plans was noted, with an example being the need to set out how the broader, non-academic, student experience was to be included in the strategy framework.
- The potential tension between serving the region and also wishing to grow globally was commented on.
- It was noted that the research and knowledge exchange international outlook from the Towards 2030 Strategy was not reflected in the Academic Strategy, with this aspect of the strategy needing to be enhanced.
- It was commented that it was positive that there was inclusion of important elements such as active learning, the co-creation of the curriculum with employers and strengthening of the applied research focus.
- The Research Knowledge and Exchange Strategy should include focus on increasing the quality of the research not just increasing the volume.
- There needed to be clear communication with staff and students of the new strategy, and development of plans with staff.
- A focus on the 'Cumbria academic'. Staff development not simply about learning and teaching skills but creating a research ethos to promote research informed teaching.
- Consideration of undergraduate research with it suggested that students and their contribution be explicit in the research section.
- Whether it was helpful to make a distinction between learning, teaching and research when they are all so closely linked.
- The portfolio section was commended.

Following the DVC(A) summarising the feedback received, the Vice Chancellor added:

- The need to include a student (number/type) profile and infographics relating to the make up of the student body, to reflect the breadth and depth of academic offer and take up e.g. apprenticeships, the portfolio, demographics, student with disabilities etc.;
- A glossary was needed;
- A summary of the scope of the strategy would be useful, as well as an overview of external regulators and drivers for different aspects of the strategy, e.g., the OfS, PSRBs, employers;
- How the strategy would become embedded into the Quality Enhancement Framework of the University. If it would be done as a step change or over a number of years;
- How the various elements of staff development could usefully be prioritised;
- Further consideration of academic input, including how to, for example, mainstream use of visiting professors and professors of practice and where industrial expertise comes from.

The DVC(A) and colleagues were thanked for their contributions.

Academic Board members were asked to send any further feedback on the Academic Strategy to the DVA(A) and DVC(HE&I), copying in the Committee Officer by the end of Wednesday 15 June 2022. **Action:** All.

It was agreed, subject to these comments being addressed, to recommend the Academic Strategy to Academic Governance Committee and the Board for approval.

AGREED: To recommend approval of the Academic Strategy to University Board, subject to revisions in line with the feedback provided.

21:77   Policy Update   Verbal

Received   An update on significant aspects of external policy: OfS consultation outcomes

The Director of Academic Quality and Development (DAQD) provided an overview of the changes to the OfS B conditions of registration, which came into effect from 1 May 2022. An update was also provided on OfS consultations.

AGREED: To receive the update.

21:78   Academic Regulations, Procedures and Processes 2022/23   AB21/49

Received   The proposed changes to the Regulations for:
a)   Taught provision
b)   Post-graduate research provision

The DAQD spoke to the paper, starting by setting out a number of proposed changes to taught provision. Many were housekeeping changes to provide clarification or reflect internal changes. The changes of principle were detailed within the paper, along with feedback from SSQAC.

With respect to F8.6, where feedback from SSQAC to allow students to appeal (without ECs) if they do not appreciate the implications of their non-engagement in the reassessment, it was asked whether this could be included in the Academic Regulations for 2022/23. The DAQD responded that this had been a timing issue, with some changes required to the Regulations and to the relevant guidance. These could be progressed for 2022/23 if there was agreement from Academic Board that the wording could be approved by Chair's action. This was agreed.

There was discussion on F11.11 regarding a course of action outside of these regulations. The Dean for Student Success (DeanSS) clarified that only an assessment board (not the student or individual members) could make an appeal to the DVC(A). This would be a rare circumstance. It was suggested the wording be updated to make this clearer and to provide examples. It was agreed to approve the changes by Chair's action following the revisions.

The Head of the Graduate School spoke to the proposed changes to the Post-graduate Research Assessment Regulations, which included revisions to make them clearer. There had also been changes due to the launching of MRes and to allow the use of digital submissions of theses and online viva examinations. Academic Board approved the proposed changes.

AGREED:
- To approve by Chair's action the amendments to the Academic Regulations for Taught provision
- To approve proposed changes to the Academic Regulations for Post-graduate research provision

21:79   Ofsted inspection updates   AB21/50
                                                                            a) & b)

Received
- Outcome of the ITE Ofsted inspection, improvement plan and update on progress for ITE re-accreditation
- Updated Quality Improvement Plan for Apprenticeships and the Apprenticeship Data Summary

The Chair introduced the agenda item by setting out that it had been a long time since the University's ITE provision had been subject to an Ofsted inspection. Previously the University had been rated as 'good' across all elements. There had been recent changes to Ofsted's approach, criteria and focus with the University being one of the first institutions in this round of inspections using the new criteria. The overall result following the inspection had moved from 'good' to 'requiring improvement' with some specific areas requiring focus and some common areas across primary and secondary provision. Ofsted would return in the next 9-10 months for a re-inspection with the University's expectation that the outcome be a return to at least a 'good' rating.

The Director of the Institute of Education (DIoE) added that the result was on the cusp between 'requires improvement' and 'good'. An ITE quality and compliance group had been set up to prepare for the re-inspection as well as an Ofsted preparedness group.

Academic Board was asked to consider its reflections on the outcome including where it sought its assurances from.

It was commented that Ofsted readiness was a university wide responsibility, with institutes and professional services needing to ensure that they worked together as needed to support this.

It was suggested that a practical addition could be the creation of an apprenticeship Ofsted readiness group, as set up for ITE.

It was noted that there were different levels of assurance: local, University level, and external, with each to be explored further and potentially mapped out to provide greater future assurance. The DIoE confirmed that there was oversight of Ofsted activity previously, however there was now enhanced University level oversight. The Head of Business Development & Knowledge had been invited to the first group meeting to support the evolution of a university wide approach. The DIoE also set out how the Institute was learning from the sector as Ofsted undertook further inspections under the new framework.

A suggestion was made to have a session focusing on risk early in the 2022/23 academic year. **Action:** Uni Sec to arrange.

The Chair invited comments on the Apprenticeship Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and the new Apprenticeship Data Summary. The DVC(A) set out that he had asked for a risk review of the University's apprenticeship provision. As part of this a workshop was taking place to bring together staff from the relevant academic institutes as well as the professional services.

A question was asked as to the total number of stars the employer feedback was out of. The DAQD responded the maximum was three stars; this would be added to the paper for Academic Governance Committee.

AGREED: To receive the reports

21:80	**Student Outcome Report**	AB21/51

Received   The Student Outcome Report

The Dean for Student Success (DeanSS) outlined the paper which gave an overview of action planning at the University in relation to 2020/21 student outcomes data. She explained that the document was added to as results were published, with the data from the latest Graduates Outcome Survey presented for the first time.

AGREED: To receive the report

21:81	**Degree Outcomes Statement 2022**	AB21/52

Received   The Proposed Statement for 2022

The Director of AQD spoke to the paper which gave the annual update to reflect the latest student outcomes (degree attainment) data.

It was agreed to remove the statement relating to improvements in outcomes relating to a specific institute. **Action:** DAQD

AGREED: To recommend the Degree Outcomes Statement 2022 to the Board for approval, subject to the agreed amendment

21:82	**Student Charter for 2022/23**	AB21/53

Received   The proposed Student Charter for 2022/23

The DeanSS spoke to the paper informing Academic Board that the Student Charter was co-created between the University and UCSU and

reviewed annually. For 2022/23, an update was proposed to include additional content relating to academic integrity. This was supported by the Students' Union.

With the new University and Academic strategies in place it was proposed to continue with the existing student charter and to review it with the newly elected sabbatical officers in the context of these new strategies. It was agreed that a revised Student Charter would be brought to Academic Board for approval by the end of 2022. **Action:** DeanSS

> **AGREED:** That the student charter be reviewed in light of the new Towards 2030 and Academic strategies and brought back to Academic Board for approval.

21:83   Honorary Awards nominations   AB21/54

Received   Honorary Awards nominations

The Uni Sec introduced the paper, which included two nominations for honorary fellows and two for alumni of the year. The Board endorsed these nominations and agreed that Chair could approve any change to the nomination for one honorary fellow nominee.

> **AGREED:** To endorse the recommendation to University Board, as set out in the paper, subject to a potential Chair's action

21:84   Student Services Report   AB21/55

Received   The Student Services Report

The Director of Student Services (DSS) spoke to the paper which gave an update on the academic, careers and library support offered to students. The Careers and Employability Service continue to work with Institutes to deliver the 2021/22 Employability Action plan. This links to support student enterprise and entrepreneurship with a specific new post within the careers team created to support this work.

A question was raised as to whether more focus was being directed at areas where it had been more challenging for students to find employment, for example in the Arts. The DSS responded that there was a differentialized model in place informed by the graduate data outcomes data.

> **AGREED:** To note the report

21:85   Access and Participation Plans (APP)   AB21/56

Received   An update on performance against 2020/21 targets and development of the 2022/23 APP

The DeanSS outlined the paper which provided an update on the various workstreams in place for each year of the University's APP. It was noted that the OfS had confirmed there were no issues to raise in terms of the 2020/21 plan, actions and targets.

The Dean SS reported that the 2021/22 Plan continued to be executed and the Plan for 2022/23 did not require amendment. The 2023/24 Plan was being amended via a 'mass variation exercise'. A draft would be presented to Academic Governance Committee, with approval required by the Vice Chancellor by the 31 July 2022 deadline. The requirements for the APP from 2024/25 was being consulted on in the autumn.

AGREED: To note the update

21:86 Annual Report of Assurance of OfS Academic Conditions of Registration AB21/57

Received   Assurance of OfS Academic Conditions of Registration annual report

The DAQD outlined the annual report which sought to provide assurance that the University could evidence continuing compliance with the academic related Conditions of Registration with the Office for Students, specifically Conditions of Registration A1, B1-B6 and C1-C3.

It was commented that it would be helpful if the summary was expanded and towards the start of the report and examples for the conditions be included, as appropriate. It was agreed this would be added before the report was presented to Academic Governance Committee. **Action:** DAQD

AGREED: To approve the report based on revisions

21:87 New Office for Students B (Quality Conditions) and Implications AB21/58

Received   Update and proposed actions for new Office for Students B (Quality Conditions)

The paper was outlined by the Director of AQD. The OfS had, following a period of consultation, published a number of revised B (quality) conditions of registration. These revised conditions for B1, B2, B4 and B5 came into effect from 1 May 2022. The paper contained detail of the new conditions and a comparison to those they were replacing. It identified key changes and proposed a number of actions for the University to take to demonstrate compliance.

It was suggested that the changes be disseminated more widely to academic staff so that they understood why changes were being made.

A question was asked as to whether Academic Board could be assured that the new conditions were able to be met. The DAQD commented there were issues in some areas due to the requirements being communicated and needing to be implemented in-year. It was agreed to add a RAG rating to the table when presented to Academic Governance Committee along with the reasoning as to why any aspects could not be fully implemented at this point. **Action:** DAQD.

There was discussion regarding the level of detail in the action plan. The DAQD explained that there was a detailed mapping spreadsheet that had informed the paper. It was agreed that further discussions would take place to enable the DVC(Academic) to be fully assured, including that the required resources and support were all in place. **Action:** DVC(A) and DAQD.

Discussion took place regarding the provision of resources for programmes. The requirements were currently identified via the Programme Initiation Process (PIP), however the allocation of resources was not agreed at the same time as the programme approval. The Chair confirmed that it was the role of the Institute Director to ensure that adequate resources were in place to deliver programmes. It was agreed that the support from the Institute for provision of resources for programmes be looked at in the PIP process. **Action:** DVC(A) and DAQD.

Academic Board approved the actions subject to any changes flowing from the actions.

AGREED: To approve the proposed actions

21:88   **Research Ethics Workstreams**   AB21/59

Received   A proposal relating to Research Ethics Workstreams

The Vice Chancellor proposed that the paper be amended, with comparison to the existing Research Ethics Policy added. It was commented that all academic staff should receive ethics training, not only those that were active researchers.

It was agreed that the Director of Institute of Arts liaise with the Uni Sec to agree the route for approval of the revised paper and with respect to a potential future agenda item on Ethics. **Action:** Director of Institute of Arts and Uni Sec.

AGREED: That the proposals be resubmitted for approval

21:89   **Research Excellence Framework Update**   AB21/60

Received   The Research Excellence Framework results

The Vice Chancellor asked Academic Board to note the progress that the University had made, alongside progress across the sector. It was agreed that, in order to see the results in the context of the University's Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy that Academic Board would be approving in due course, the REF results be submitted to a subsequent Academic Board meeting as appendices to the draft strategy. **Action:** Director for Applied Research and Knowledge Exchange (DAR&KE)

AGREED: To note the results

21:90   **Revised RASA Guidelines**   AB21/61

Received   Guidelines for implementation for 2022/23 academic year

The Vice Chancellor set out how the revised guidelines had been reviewed by RKEC in the context of the Committee's scope. However, in parallel to the development of the guidelines, the Towards 2030 Strategy and new Academic Strategy had been finalised and not all aspects were included in the revised guidelines. As such it was proposed that further work be undertaken.

The DAR&KE added that the guidelines were in the process of being consulted on with the Trades Unions, however Academic Board was asked to note the importance of the proposed changes.

It was agreed that the Vice Chancellor would discuss the Guidelines in the context of the Towards 2030 strategy and the UoC academic, with the DVCs. **Action:** Vice Chancellor, DVC(A) and DVC(HE&I).

AGREED: To update the guidelines to present to a further meeting

21:91   **Annual Committee Effectiveness Review**   Verbal

Received   An update on the effectiveness review

The Uni Sec encouraged all members to complete the committee effectiveness review surveys that had recently been circulated.

AGREED: To receive the update.

21:92   Chair's actions

The Chair's actions since the last meeting of Academic Board, as set out on the agenda, were noted.

AGREED: To note the actions

21:93   Vice Chancellor's Report   Verbal

There were no further updates from the Vice Chancellor.

21:94   Institute Representatives   Verbal

Received   Feedback from the institute academic staff representatives

The Institute Academic Staff Representatives were asked to email their reflections on the positives and negative aspects of 2021/22 to the Committee Officer to help inform the year ahead by 20 June 2022. **Action:** Institute Academic Staff Representatives

AGREED: To receive the feedback for onward consideration

21:95   Director updates

Received   Reflections on 2021/22

The Directors were asked to email their reflections on the positives and negative aspects of 2021/22 to the Committee Officer to help inform the year ahead by 20 June 2022. **Action:** Directors.

AGREED: To receive the reflections.

21:96   National Student Survey   AB21/62

Received   Operational update on the NSS 2022

AGREED: To note the update.

21:97   Graduate School Update   AB21/63

Received   Graduate School Update

AGREED: To note the update.

21:98   Research Supervisor Model Update   AB21/64

Received   Changes to the supervisor model

AGREED: To note the changes.

21:99   HE-BCIS report   AB21/65

Received   2020/21 HE-BCIS submission

AGREED: To note the submission.

21:100	**Senior Academic Board Committees**	
	Received Minutes from the meetings of:	
	- Student Success & Quality Assurance Committee 24 May 2022	SSQAC21/81
	- Academic Strategy and Planning Committee 16 May 2022	ASPC21/47
	Research Knowledge Exchange Committee 30 November 2021, 8 February 2022, 11 May 2022	RKE21/23 RKE21/33 RKE21/45
	AGREED: To receive the minutes	

21:101 University Board Minutes   UB21/40
                                                                                       UB21/63

Received   Minutes from the meetings of University Board 25
             November 2021 and 17 March 2022

AGREED: To receive the minutes

21:102 Matters for Onward Communication   Verbal

To be determined outside of the meeting.

21:103 Forward Meetings   Verbal

Thursday 13 October 2022
Thursday 15 December 2022
Thursday 9 March 2023
Tuesday 20 June 2023