

Minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2019

Present: Liz Bates, Jean Brown Colin Coghill, Jeremy Colclough, Diane Cox, Ed Esche, Ruth Harrison-Palmer, Signy Henderson, Lequane Johnson, Elspeth Lees, Julie Mennell, Jess Robinson, Ian Sinker, Ian Todd, Rob Trimble, Katie Walker-Small, Chris Watson, Brian Webster-Henderson, Suzie Wilson

In attendance: Justine Bigland, Carolyn James

Apologies for Absence: Amanda Lane, Michelle Leek, Alison Marshall, Steve Mccarthy-Grunwald, Nigel Rouke, Kaz Stuart

The Vice Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting and, after introductions, reminded members of the importance of the role of the Academic Board within the University and their duty to be an active participant both within and outside of meetings.

19:01 Minutes and actions from the previous meeting AB18/59

The minutes of the 19 June 2019 meeting were approved as an accurate record.

The action log was reviewed and updates provided as follows.

The PVC(Academic) noted that the academic department reports would be included in Marketing and Recruitment reports in future (minute 18:48).

Regarding 18:71, the Director of Research (DofR) reported that the Professional Doctorate was undergoing programme initiation, with a Doctorate in Education also being planned with the aim of all of the new programmes to be available to start in 2020.

It was reported that, following the award of RDAP, it had been agreed to introduce an Honorary Doctorate, the first of which would be presented to the Archbishop of York in November 2019.

19:02 Terms of Reference and Membership AB19/01

- a) To approve the Terms of Reference & Membership for Academic Board for 2019-20
- b) To approve the Schedule of Business for Academic Board for 2019-20
- c) To note the final outcomes of the Committee Effectiveness Review 2019 and the resulting Terms of Reference and Memberships for Deliberative Committees for 2019-20

The PVC(Academic) introduced the documentation, reporting that the membership of the various deliberative committees had been updated following the introduction of the new Institutes and the Schedule of Business had undergone a detailed review. The University Secretary added that the number of meetings of Academic Board, and a number of the committees of the Board, had been reduced, with the Schedule of Business used as a driver for the timing of the meetings through the year.

The DofR reported that the Research and Enterprise Committee had been changed to the Research Committee to provide greater focus on research. Changes had been made to the Terms of Reference and membership to reflect this.

The Vice Chancellor suggested that members of Academic Board, SSQAC, ASPC and RC came together prior to the next meeting of the Academic Board to discuss academic matters and areas of focus.

Action: University Secretary

- Outcome:**
- To Terms of Reference & Membership and Schedule of Business for Academic Board for 2019-20 were approved subject to a minor amendment
 - The final outcomes of the Committee Effectiveness Review 2019 and the resulting Terms of Reference and Memberships for Deliberative Committees for 2019-20 were noted

19:03 Institute Representatives

Verbal

Received: Updates and comments from Institute Staff Representatives

The Vice Chancellor introduced the item, setting out the important role that staff representatives have.

A representative commented that they had expected to be invited to the deliberative committees of Academic Board but had not been to date. It was agreed that this would be looked into. **Action:** University Secretary.

19:04 Student Union Matters

AB19/02

Received: A report from the Students' Union Academic Officer, including an update on UCSU Operational Priorities for 2019-20

The Students' Union Academic Officer spoke to his report starting by setting out how the recruitment of academic representatives had gone well, with 385 in place. The majority of the 64 roles left to fill were for business programmes or those with January starts. Training of the representatives had been undertaken and been well received.

Recruitment for the Students' Union Panel roles had also been ongoing, with a number of roles remaining to be filled. Support was requested from the Institutes to promote the roles.

Student feedback was highlighted, in particular with respect to car parking in Ambleside, social spaces, the changes to Calva Bar and the provision of hot water. Improving communication between academic staff and the Students' Union had been agreed as a priority by the Panel. It was agreed that the PVC(DofSSS) would pick up the feedback with respect to Calva Bar and provision of hot water, **Action:** PVC(DofSSS), and the Director for Ambleside would meet with the Academic Officer to provide an update on car parking at Ambleside, **Action:** Director for Ambleside Campus. (Secretary's note – information relating to the panel can be found here: <https://www.ucsu.me/panel>)

The Vice Chancellor set out how at the start of every year there would be a Students' Union action plan which would be presented to Academic Board to enable the University to better support the

Students' Union in its work. The Academic Officer set out that the Action Plan would be finalised before Christmas. The Dean for Student Success agreed to support this process. **Action:** SU Academic Officer / DforSS.

The Acting Director of the Institute of the Arts described the student drop-in session that he held, which the Students' Union also attended. The Vice Chancellor noted that a similar opportunity was provided for students in London, and consideration needed to be given to how these opportunities could be provided at all campuses. **Action:** PVC(Academic).

The Academic Officer went on the brief the meeting on the referendum on changes to the Students' Union constitution, which 90% of students had supported. It was agreed that there would be an update on the changes to the constitution at the next meeting, including anything that the University should consider with respect to the proposed new arrangements. **Action:** Academic Officer.

A member of Academic Board noted the discussion in SSQAC regarding representatives for apprenticeship students. It was confirmed that there was an expectation that such representatives would be in place.

The interactions between the Student Experience lead in each Institute and the Students' Union was discussed. It was noted that, in addition to supporting the recruitment of roles within the Union, the Institute leads could also support them to be active. It was agreed that each Institute should think about gathering their student representatives together with key staff within the Institute, possibly once a semester. **Action:** Institute Student Experience Leads.

Equality and Diversity matters were discussed. The PVC(Health) reported that the EDIW Committee covered both staff and student matters. The Committee had discussed investing in Apps, starting with one in relation to mental health support, and a mental health focused blog was about to be launched, initially as a pilot.

Outcome: The Students' Union Academic Officer's report was received.

19:05 Student Achievement Strategy

AB19/03

Received: The Student Achievement Strategy

The PVC(Academic) spoke to his paper starting by setting out that the Student Achievement Strategy had been drafted to draw the range of student support activity together into an overarching strategy. The document referenced the existing Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy alongside new initiatives, with the overall objective of enhancing the student experience and student outcomes. He explained that the indicative work packages and timeline were included at the end of the document, and that these would be turned into a formal working document once the strategy had been approved. He then stepped through the key components of the strategy, as set out in the paper.

In the discussion that followed the Strategy was welcomed. Clarity on how the elements within the strategy would be communicated to staff was requested. It was confirmed that there would be a

communications plan for staff and students, the latter working through the Students' Union.

In response to a question regarding how it would be known when outcomes were embedded, it was confirmed that the objectives to be achieved were clear, plans were in place or would be developed for each aspect and these would be monitored. The SSQAC Schedule of Business included clarity on what updates it would receive on delivery of the Strategy, to include both implementation and impact. In addition, further conversations were to be held regarding the embedding of the Strategy into the PPDR process, both as a general theme and with respect to aspects to be embedded into particular roles.

The student populations that the Strategy applies to were discussed. It was agreed that it would be useful if the document set its scope out at the start. **Action:** PVC(Academic).

With respect to communication of the Strategy, it was agreed that it would form part of the meeting of Academic Board and its committees referenced earlier in the meeting, in addition to the use of team brief and the Global e-mail. Academic Forum sessions were also suggested for each campus to discuss academic priorities. **Action:** PVC(Academic) and DAQD to arrange Academic Forums for each campus.

Outcome: The Student Achievement Strategy was approved, subject to the addition of the scope of the strategy.

19:06 Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy

AB19/04

Received:

- a) The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 3 year Action Plan
- b) The associated Curriculum Design Framework

The Director of AQD introduced the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy Action Plan, which addressed six key themes. She confirmed that the Plan had been through a significant process of consultation and had received strong endorsement. Within the feedback more institutional CPD days were requested, and it had been agreed that these would be embedded into the Academic Calendar to enable the majority of staff to engage with them. Progress against the Action Plan would be reported to SSQAC.

More detail was requested in relation to the CPD days. It was reported that work was ongoing with each Institute to ensure that the days deliver what is needed and what the institutes want to reflect upon, in addition to any centrally focused themes. The days would be a combination of good practice that needed to be embedded into policy, and training. The processes to support the embedding of good practice, once shared, were discussed. It was confirmed that CAPE had a key role in this, working with the relevant leads in each institute.

The Vice Chancellor commented that she would like to see a staff development plan for each institute setting out training to be provided across four categories: mandatory; core; bespoke; and role specific. The LTA Strategy's six themes would sit within the Core strand, with a CPD and good practice session for each area. This

would, in time, ensure that every programme approval / validation panel included someone that had undertaken one of the training sessions. **Action:** PVC(Academic) to ensure all institutes have staff development plans in place aligned to role, subject, pedagogical and institutional themes.

Responding to a question regarding the core skills that students needed to be provided with and how these would be integrated into the curriculum, it was reported that the Curriculum Design Framework was explicit with respect to core skills and outcomes. In some areas what was expected was known, in other areas there was further work to be done. An example was given as digital pathways, which had been developed with AQD using LinkedIn Learning, with the Institute of Arts developing a targeted approach to ensure that students' academic needs were met.

Following a discussion it was agreed that consistency of expectations regarding panel membership and training was required, followed by the communication of dates of training sessions. **Action:** Director of AQD

The Director of AQD went on to introduce the Curriculum Design Framework, which had been consulted on over the summer. Feedback from the consultation and from SSQAC had been taken on board in creating the draft presented. The Director of AQD set out that the University has historically had design principles, but the Framework was a richer document designed to help programme teams to develop programmes from Level 3 through to 7. It was envisaged that the Framework would be mandatory for 2020/21, recognising that some programmes were currently in development. The programme initiation process was being looked at to ensure that the new framework becomes embedded, and it was expected that it would be a significant aspect of forthcoming CPD days.

The PVC(Academic) confirmed that the Framework was a comprehensive piece of work with a sensible roll-out plan. He set out that he would like to see a small pilot to ensure that everything in the document is clear and covers all that it needs to. Members of the Board noted the user friendliness of the document, which would be useful for programme leaders when writing annual monitoring reports.

It was agreed that some references to dissertations required a minor change as one was not required for MRes programmes. **Action:** Director of AQD.

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 3 year Action Plan and associated Curriculum Design Framework were approved and the team involved in drafting thanked for their work.

Outcome:

- The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 3 year Action Plan was approved
- The associated Curriculum Design Framework was approved, following minor amendment.

19:07

Academic Regulations

AB19/05

Received: An update on the implementation of changes to the Academic Regulations.

The Director of AQD set out each aspect of the paper in turn, starting with the proposed approach to reviewing the impact of the changes to the Academic Regulations made last year. She reported that an interim report was scheduled to be taken to SSQAC in January 2020 with a full report in Autumn 2020, when a full assessment of the impact will be able to be made.

The approach to the review of impact of the changes to the Academic Regulations was approved.

The Director of AQD went on to set out the proposed changes to the presentation of the Academic Regulations, the drivers for the changes included making the regulations more accessible. Changes were also being considered to the principles of the Regulations and in some aspects to the Regulations themselves. In the discussion it was confirmed that there would be opportunity for the institutes to work with the Students' Union Academic Representatives as part of this work.

The proposals were endorsed.

Outcome:

- The approach to the review of impact of the changes to the Academic Regulations was approved.
- The intended approach to changing the presentation of Academic Regulations was endorsed.

19:08 NSS

AB19/06

Received:

- a) An update on NSS outcomes 2019 and detailed analysis of results
- b) An update on NSS Action Plans

The Vice Chancellor introduced the item setting out the need for plans to be in place to give a clear sense of how the University is going to improve the student experience and its results in the NSS.

The PVC(Academic) reported that analysis of the NSS 2019 results had been undertaken and action plans were being prepared in each Institute, with actions pre-populated for aspects where the Institute results were below the University average. Meetings had taken place with each Institute lead with a forthcoming deadline set for the final versions of plans; they had not been presented to Academic Board at this meeting as some required extra time to finalise. The action plans would be monitored, amongst other means, through fortnightly meetings between the PVC(Academic) and the Institute leads.

An Institute lead confirmed that work was continuing in parallel with the finalisation of the action plan, with all sources of data being reviewed to ensure that required changes were being made.

In the discussion that followed it was agreed that the qualitative comments can be useful, however they did not always reflect the quantitative results and could be in relation to programme cluster or institutional matters. Where a matter was not in a programme team's ability to resolve it was agreed that it should be raised to the Institute lead.

A member of the Board noted that the programme level qualitative comments had not been received in their area. It was reported that all that required access should have the qualitative comments and it was agreed that this would be followed up. **Action:** Dean for SS.

In concluding the Vice Chancellor set out the requirement for plans to be in place to cover what needs to be done at programme level; at Institute / Professional Service level; and at institutional level.

- Outcome:**
- The analysis of the NSS 2019 results was received.
 - The requirement for focused action plans was agreed.

19:09 Access & Participation Plan 2020/21-2024/25

Verbal

Received: The final Access and Participation Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25

The PVC(Academic) reminded the meeting of OfS requirement in relation to the 2020/21 to 2024/25 Access and Participation Plan, which was originally submitted to the OfS in June 2019. The University had responded to questions from the OfS, with the final version of the Plan approved on 1 November 2019. The OfS had not set any additional conditions, a credit to those involved in the drafting of the Plan. Work was now being undertaken to merge the actions with those in the 2019/20 Access and Participation Plan and putting in place the monitoring and evaluation processes required to enable required reporting.

The Vice Chancellor thanked those involved for their work in achieving a positive outcome.

- Outcome:** The final Access and Participation Plan for 2020/21 to 2024/25 was received.

19:10 Ofsted Self-Assessment Report 2018/19 (Apprenticeships)

AB19/07

Received: The Self-Assessment Report

The PVC(Academic) introduced the Ofsted apprenticeships self-assessment report, which was presented to Academic Board to provide an oversight of activity in this area. It had been agreed that the report would not be uploaded to the Ofsted web-site, but was of use to the University in assessing its position in this area.

- Outcome:** It was agreed to note the report.

19:11 Student Protection Plan 2019-20

AB19/08

Received: The Student Protection Plan 2019-20

The University Secretary introduced the Student Protection Plan 2019/20, noting that a range of administrative changes had been made, including those required following receipt of Research Degree Awarding Powers. The Plan had been approved by the Vice Chancellor and Chair of the Board, for publication at the start of the academic year. It was noted that a full review of the Plan would be undertaken once the anticipated OfS guidance was received.

- Outcome:** The Student Protection Plan for 2019/20 was noted.

19:12 Research Matters

AB19/09

Received: An update on REF 2021

The Director of Research spoke to her paper on preparations for REF 2021. She noted that the PVC(Academic) now chairs the REF Steering Group and that the University is on track to submit to the REF 2021 in November 2020 based on the July 2020 census date. The Code of Practice had been approved and all academic staff had been contacted to inform them of their eligibility for submission to the REF.

Outcome: The update on preparations for REF2020 was noted.

19:13 Academic Calendar 2020/21 and Enhancement Weeks

AB19/10

Received: Academic Calendar 2020/21

The PVC(Academic) spoke to the paper, which set out the recommendation for the 2020/21 academic calendar, including the proposal to extend the academic year by the addition of two enhancement weeks at key points in the year. The weeks would be mandatory and would consist of a series of programme related activities.

A member of the Board commented that something similar was in place in their subject area, however, depending on when the weeks were held there could be challenges in turning around marks with early Module Assessment Boards. Following discussion, the PVC(Academic) commented that the preference was for the weeks to be at the same time for all programmes, but that the observation would be taken on board.

The next steps in implementing the new calendar were outlined, with the development of the activities to be included in the enhancement weeks under discussion with the relevant areas, both within the institutes and in professional services. It was noted that the plans were to be in place by the summer. In response to a question it was confirmed that the aim was to include mixing student from across different programmes within some activities – to ensure efficient delivery, and to provide added value to the experiences.

The Vice Chancellor commented that the activities should include some core to all students and others bespoke to their programme. In the discussion it was noted that core activities could include graduate attributes, digital literacy and entrepreneurship.

The Academic Calendar, and introduction of enhancement weeks, were approved. **Action:** PVC(Academic) to oversee introduction of well structured and value adding enhancement weeks.

It was noted that reading weeks were taking place in some programmes and were not acceptable, with this needing to be re-communicated to staff. **Action:** PVC(Academic) to work with DofSS and TL&SE leads in each institute to ensure reading weeks are introduced only following formalisation as part of programme approval.

Outcome: - The Academic Calendar for 2020/21 was approved

- The introduction of enhancement weeks was approved
- The use of reading weeks was to be re-communicated as unacceptable.

19:14 Academic Governance Committee Annual Report AB19/11

Received: Academic Governance Committee Annual Report to the Board 2018-19

The University Secretary introduced the report from the Academic Governance Committee to University Board, presented to Academic Board for information. It was noted that the content was structured by the Office for Students Conditions of Registration.

Outcome: The Annual report from Academic Governance Committee to University Board was noted.

19:15 Approval of New Associate Partner (Academic Collaborative Provision) AB19/12

Received: Chair's Action of Vision College, Malaysia as a new Associate Partner of the University

Outcome: The approval of the new associate partner, Vision College in Malaysia, was noted.

19:16 Portfolio Development Programme AB19/13

Received: Update on developments

The PVC(Academic) spoke to the report, noting that there was now a single register of programmes. He reported that targets had been set for programmes running in 2020/21 and that he had met with each institute to review developments planned for 2023/24. The aim being that a plan would be in place for each institute by the end of November 2019 so that AQD could work with the institutes to plan development and validation activity.

Outcome: The report was received

19:17 CMA – J Robinson AB19/14

Received: Update on CMA compliance

The Director of AQD introduced her report noting that CMA touches on many areas of the University. She reported that the CMA compliance group had been set up and gave an overview of the key aspects of its work. Institute representatives were asked to support work to ensure that all had completed the CMA training. **Action:** Institute Representatives.

Outcome: The report was received.

19:18 Honorary Awards AB19/15

Received: Proposals from the HAC for recommendation to University Board

The Vice Chancellor spoke to the paper, setting out that the Honorary Awards Committee had recommended three individuals for Honorary

Fellowships. Academic Board endorsed the recommendations for approval by University Board.

Outcome: Academic Board endorsed the recommendations for the three Honorary Fellows for approval by University Board

19:19 Senior Academic Board Committees AB19/16

Received:

- a) Academic Strategy & Planning Committee 3 October 2019
- b) Research Committee – 4 October 2019
- c) Student Success & Quality Assurance Committee – 24 October 2019

The minutes were noted.

19:20 University Board Minutes AB19/17

Received: Minutes of the meeting of University Board held on 11 July 2019 to note.

The minutes were noted.

19:21 Vice Chancellor's Report Verbal

The Vice Chancellor started by setting out her pleasure at the position of the University, following the progress made over the last three years. The refreshed strategy, which went back to why the University was originally set up, recalibrated the focus of the institution and had set the foundations of the recent and current successes. Amongst other things, the strategy set out the continued emphasis on three year undergraduate degrees, alongside a clear focus on new and different types of provision.

With respect to student numbers, the Vice Chancellor stated that the flow through of reduced cohorts meant that the University was slightly down on student numbers in 2019/20, but that the next three year forecast showed growth of circa £10m over the period. She noted that there was still work to do on student outcomes.

The Vice Chancellor set out how the University had never been in such a positive position, providing examples of recent successes and the initiatives underway. A collaborative approach, keeping focus on the strategic aims and continual improvement, would help the University to grow.

19:22 Matters for Onward Communication Verbal

It was agreed these would be collated following the meeting.

19:23 Forward meetings: Verbal

26 February 2020 (by videoconferencing Carlisle and Lancaster)
15 April 2020 (by videoconferencing Carlisle and Lancaster)
22 June 2020 (by videoconferencing Carlisle and Lancaster)