

## Academic Board

AB17/27

**Notes of the meeting held on 16 January 2018**

**Present:** J Mennell (Chair), T Livsey, K Fox, M Mitchell, Jez XX, L Mansfield, L Callan, S Henderson, A Hampson, E Lees, T Barry, L Nelson, C Rouncefield, A Marshall, E Bates, A Fletcher, A Lane, M Leek, C Coghill, K Watson, F Sapsford, N Rourke, J Robinson

**17:18 Apologies for absence:** S Booth, R Harrison-Palmer, L Kenward, I Sinker, K Small, N Harris, R Hunter (M Mitchell attending for), D Cox (L Callan attending for), J Whitfield (Committee Secretary)

**17:19 Notes of the previous meeting held on 25 October 2017**  
Subject to amendments, the minutes were approved as an accurate record.

AB17/15a

Amendment 1 (p.10)

"A significant drop of 16% in satisfaction had been seen in terms of satisfaction with IT and work was being undertaken at departmental level to identify the causes."

Replace with:

"A significant drop of 16% in satisfaction had been seen in terms of the new question on satisfaction with IT and facilities and work was being undertaken at departmental level to identify the causes."

Amendment 2 (p.10)

"24-hour library resource opening was now in place and well-received by students."

Replace with:

"Extended library resource opening hours at Brampton Road and Lancaster was now in place and well-received by students."

**17:20 Action points from the previous meeting:**  
The action log was noted, and completed and outstanding actions confirmed.

AB17/15b

**Matters arising:****Institutes of Technology**

The formal criteria had been published since the last meeting of Academic Board and this was noted to have changed from that presented previously. Meetings would take place over the next few weeks to determine the implications from the Cumbria perspective (region) and from the University perspective.

**Terms of Reference and Membership**

The revised academic committees will be reviewed later in the year, as normal, to ensure their continued effectiveness. It was also noted that revisions were estimated to be saving £33k in staff time.

**Sentamu Building (Lancaster Campus)**

Following the opening of the Sentamu building before Christmas, the building was due to be blessed by the Chancellor on 24 January.

The Chancellor would also deliver a lecture on the role that education has to play in supporting young people to respond to the complexities of society today.

### **HEA Stimulus Paper**

Following discussion at the last meeting of Academic Board, the University had provided formal feedback to the Higher Education Academy.

### **Annual Report (Academic Governance)**

Following receipt of further comments from members of Academic Board the Annual Report had been updated, presented to Academic Governance Committee and was signed off by University Board in November.

## **17:21 Academic Board and Senior Deliberative Committee Memberships**

Academic Board approved the appointment of academic staff representatives to Academic Board for the Departments of Medical & Sports Sciences and the Institute of the Arts.

AB17/16a

Additionally the Board approved changes to terms of reference to Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee, minor textual amendments to terms of reference for Academic Strategy and Planning Committee and a number of changes to memberships of the following deliberative committees for 2017-18 (as set out in the paper):

AB17/16b

- Student Success & Quality Assurance Committee
- Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee
- Research & Enterprise Committee
- Academic Strategy & Planning Committee

In relation to Research and Enterprise Committee it was suggested that the representative from Health and Social Care Evaluation (HASCE) should be a full member rather than observer. It was agreed that this be considered outwith the meeting.

**Agreed:** To consider the case for HASCE membership of Research and Enterprise Committee.

## **17:22 Vice Chancellor's Report**

AB17/17

### **HEFCE Assurance Review**

HEFCE had written confirming that the University was due its HEFCE Assurance Review (HAR), as required by the Memorandum of Assurance and Accountability between HEFCE and Institutions, in 2017/18. The University of Cumbria was last reviewed in July 2011 and HEFCE proposed to undertake the next HAR review in June 2018.

### **Organisational Development/Change Programme**

Three staff conferences had been held across campuses during October and November 2017. The conferences covered focus and priorities for the year ahead and had been designed to give all staff the opportunity to gain a better understanding of what the University was doing, setting out expectations and providing an opportunity for staff to engage and provide input into the key areas of work including some large scale programmes.

### **Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP)**

Following the initial two-day scrutiny visit from the RDAP assessors in October, the scrutiny process was continuing, with a schedule for future meetings and observations for the rest of the academic year having now been received.

## **Strategic Plan and Stakeholder Communication**

Following the launch of the Strategic Plan "Enriching People Through Place", work was continuing to develop and update the presentation and dissemination of the plan in a range of dynamic and engaging ways, including the web-based materials.

## **Nuclear Decommissioning Award**

A collaboration between the University of Cumbria and Sellafield Ltd had won a prestigious and industry-recognised NDA supply chain award for the best enhancement of capability and capacity. Recognition for the creation of a Project Academy came as part of the NDA Estate Supply Chain event (recognising the contribution of suppliers to the UK's nuclear clean-up mission).

The Vice Chancellor provided the following additional verbal updates in light of recent developments.

## **Arts Council Visit**

The success of the recent visit by the Chief Executive of the Arts Council and other high profile visitors was noted. The Director of Marketing and Recruitment was developing a range of follow on pieces for publication to key audiences, emphasising the importance of People, Partnership and Place.

## **Sector Updates**

The merger of the Higher Education Academy with the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and the Equality Challenge Unit would take place over the next few months. The name of the new body would be confirmed in due course. It was noted that there would be no immediate changes in relation to the UK Professional Standards Framework with professional recognition remaining a core function.

## **Annual Operating Plan**

The Annual Operating Plan will be presented to the next meeting of Academic Board, following discussion by University Board of some minor changes, namely revisiting some of the student success themes and some streamlining to provide clarity in actions, responsibilities, prioritisation and focus.

## Ambleside Strategy

In relation to the Ambleside Strategy, the additional support and expertise brought in to support this project was providing the necessary emphasis on ideas generation from within the University, within the local community and with partners. The first stage of work was coming to close and Vice Chancellor's Executive Group would formalise this before sharing with and through the Senior Leadership Team.

## Portfolio Review

In relation to the Portfolio Review, three elements were underway, considering the pipeline for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21. Much work had been undertaken to review the scale and complexity of programmes and consider prioritisation in new developments.

Following a query it was confirmed that the Ambleside Project would inform (and be informed by) the Portfolio Review through the role of the project managers.

The 'healthcheck' process (for determining the strength and value of existing provision) was underway, supported by the development of metrics including complexity, NSS results, market intelligence, graduate outcomes etc. Detailed information had been provided to Heads of

Department to inform ongoing work in this area, helping to shape decisions about where there is a need to grow, reinvigorate or in some cases divest.

#### Academic Infrastructure

It was noted that the project scope would be discussed by Senior Leadership Team later in the week.

#### **Recruitment**

It was noted that a settled position would be available by the end of the following week. Projections would then be reviewed and considered in terms of implications for September 2018 and possible impact on budgets and the profile across the portfolio. The importance of delivering focussed recruitment and, critically, conversion activity was noted.

In response to a question it was clarified that whilst Academic Strategy and Planning Committee minutes referred to the Portfolio Review being completed by the end of January, this had moved to the end of February. It was hoped to present a paper on outcomes to the next meeting of Academic Board.

#### **17:23 Deputy Vice Chancellor's Report**

AB17/18

The Deputy Vice Chancellor provided a summary of the report presented, highlighting key points, in particular noting the focus of activity on the National Student Survey (ongoing action planning and planning for the 2018 survey), retention and recruitment.

In relation to the NSS, work to improve vibrancy was a key priority, being delivered through a wide range of activities as set out in action plans. The importance of understanding students' needs and providing responsive student support was highlighted. It was reported that the Director of Marketing and Recruitment was looking at 'student segmentation' with the hope of improving understanding of applicants and in turn better meeting their needs. The 2018 National Student Survey would launch on 5 February.

Summaries of key student and departmental successes were then presented by exception by the Heads of Department, as outlined in the report.

In response to a question it was clarified that minor amendments had been made to the Academic Workload Model in 2016/17 and that the current focus was on the most effective way of operationalising its implementation (clarifying that the Model itself was not planned for review at this time). The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Director of Staff and Student Services agreed to meet to discuss the specific focus of work in this area and to clarify the programme of work (including addressing the comment that members of staff should have a copy of their workload model for themselves). It was agreed that Academic Board should receive a paper on the Academic Workload Model and planned work in 2017/18.

#### **Actions agreed:**

- The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Director of Staff and Student Services to discuss the focus of work in relation to Academic Workload Model and a paper presented to a future meeting of Academic Board.

**Agreed:** To note the report.

A summary of the circulated report was provided, and key points highlighted as follows:

- Supporting staff with the Welcome Back events and encouraging students to stay safe on nights out through the new Nightwise Campaign. Promoting the university's 'Stand Alone' campaign to offer support to 'Estranged Students' over the Winter time and other engagement activities including establishing a society called 'Lifestyle Champions' to help with campaigns and events.
- Student Voice - 205 Student Academic Reps had been registered with the Students' Union with 273 'plays' of the new online training. Student Academic Reps have now attended their first Staff-Student Forum meeting and Department Reps have attended Departmental Leadership Team meetings to discuss the students' experience and quality of teaching & learning. Ongoing work was underway to review the recruitment and induction for Student Academic Reps in all areas, with a view to agreeing a new approach before November 2018.
- Democracy - Nominations had opened for #CumbriaVotes 2018, to elect new Sabbatical Officers, Activity Reps, Campaign Reps, Campus Reps, and Department Reps. UCSU encouraged members of Academic Board to help promote the elections and talk about the opportunities available.
- Student Experience/Engagement – Updates on activities supporting Campus Vibrancy across campuses. The next campaign was focussed on London and the development of the London Facebook site had been welcomed by students.
- Volunteering - 214 organisations had been registered to the platform, with 211 opportunities available for students to volunteer as at January 2018.
- Casework – Updates on cases opened and case notes recorded since September 2018. The top three areas of casework this academic year were identified as Academic Appeals, Disciplinary proceedings and supporting students with Complaints.

In response to query about the level of engagement in the online training for student representatives and plans to improve participation it was noted that there were further meetings between UCSU, the Dean for Student Success and student representatives planned for 24 and 28 January (Lancaster and Fusehill Street respectively).

### **SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS**

17:25

#### **Office for Students**

Presentation

The Board received a presentation on the Office for Students, including detail of implications for governance, quality and standards. The range of work underway within the University in preparedness for the new regulatory framework was noted and welcomed. The need for a continued focus on data driven approaches to improving student outcomes was agreed.

17:26

#### **Academic Governance**

AB17/20

##### **Academic Governance Annual Report:**

The final Academic Governance Annual Report, as agreed by Academic Governance Committee, was received and noted.

##### **HEFCE APR Action Plan**

The updated HEFCE APR action plan (submitted to HEFCE on 27 November) and the current status of the plan was noted.

The Board noted that despite internal data showing improvement in retention across all departments there was a considerable time lag with the data used for HEFCE APR so the public position would take some time to change. An update would be provided to the next meeting of Academic Board.

### **Student Retention and Continuation Report for 2017/18**

The report was received and noted.

**Agreed:** To receive an updated HEFCE HAR action plan at the next meeting of Academic Board, reflecting the improved retention position and revised recommendations and actions.

### **Safeguarding: Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Annual Report**

The Director of Staff and Student Services introduced the report. The establishment of a Safeguarding Management Group reporting to University Board (through Employment Policy Committee) was noted. The new group, meeting three times a year, would provide appropriate oversight and assurance. The scale and complexity of activity during 2016/17 and was noted, with much multi-agency work having been undertaken. Academic Board was advised that early figures from 2017/18 indicated that the scale of work in this area was likely to continue.

Following discussion, it was proposed that in future years, this annual report be considered through the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee, with relevant matters being referred to Academic Board as appropriate (for example recommendations in relation to student support).

#### **Actions Agreed:**

- To note the report
- That the Annual Report on Safeguarding: Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults be considered through Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee moving forward.

### **Casework Report: Student Complaints, Academic Appeals, Malpractice, Code of Conduct & Student Progress Reviews and Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Annual Report**

Following its consideration by Student Success and Quality Assurance Committee, Academic Board discussed the Annual Report. The report provided a holistic overview of student procedure-related activity during 2016/17, including a summary of changes impacting on the procedures in 2016/17, high level data and headlines.

The range of enhancement work undertaken during 2016/17 (including reviewing reporting of complaint outcomes) was welcomed.

The Vice Chancellor reaffirmed the importance of the use of this data to support institutional learning and advised Academic Board how this information was contributing to work in the Academic Infrastructure element of the Annual Operating Plan.

**Agreed:** To note the report.

### **Graduate School Annual Evaluatory Report and Action Plans for Research**

Academic Board received the report, noting its detailed consideration through Research Degrees Sub-Committee.

The increase in conversion rate from application to registration (from 25% in 2015/16 to 35% in 2016/17) was noted as was the detailed analysis of the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and resultant action planning led by the Director of Research and Head of Graduate School, in collaboration with students and staff.

**Agreed:** To note the report

#### **MATTERS FOR APPROVAL**

**17:27      Learning Teaching & Assessment Action Plan** AB17/21  
The item was deferred to the next meeting.

**17:28      Portfolio and Academic Administration** AB17/22  
The Vice Chancellor explained that the Academic Infrastructure element of the Annual Operating Plan would consider the academic year. Given the interdependencies with other elements of the Academic Infrastructure it was proposed that the draft calendar be progressed through the AOP project in the first instance and presented to Academic Board for approval by the end of 2017/18.

**Agreed:** To approve the 2019/20 calendar at a later meeting of Academic Board (in 2017/18).

#### **Proposals for Programme Withdrawals**

Academic Board approved the proposals for programme withdrawals as set out in the papers.

**Agreed:** To approve programme withdrawals.

**17:29      Academic Partnerships & Collaborative Provision** AB17/23

#### **Renewal of Institutional Approval for Bishop Rawstone CoE Academy**

Bishop Rawstone CoE Academy was noted as being the University's first School Direct partnership, operating as the pilot from which the University's School Direct model was developed. Academic Board was advised that in 2017 Bishop Rawstone chose to work with another University but it had since indicated that it wished to work with the University again, from September 2018. Noting that due process had been followed and the proposal to renew the partnership had been fully considered by the Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee, Academic Board agreed to approve the renewal of Bishop Rawstone CoE Academy as a School Direct Partner.

**Agreed:** To renew Bishop Rawstone CoE Academy as a School Direct Partner.

#### **Arrangements for the renewal of School Direct Partnerships to the revised procedures for Collaborative Provision**

Academic Board approved the addition of arrangements for partnership review and renewal processes for School Direct and SCITT partnerships, recognising that the more streamlined process reflected the reduced level of risk to the University posed by such partnerships.

**Agreed:** The arrangements for partnership review and renewal of School Direct and SCITT partnerships.

<b>17:30</b>	<b>Institutional policies</b>	AB17/24
	<p><b>Information Services: Open Access Policy for Research &amp; Scholarly Outputs</b></p> <p>Academic Board endorsed the decision to revise the Open Access Policy to <i>require</i> (rather than expect) academic staff to deposit copies of any published research and scholarly outputs in the institutional repository, Insight.</p> <p><b>Agreed:</b> To endorse the change to wording in the Open Access Policy.</p> <p><b>Framework for Communicating Information to Students</b></p> <p>Academic Board approved the framework, noting it to be a reflection of the current approach.</p> <p><b>Agreed:</b> To approve the Framework.</p>	
<b>17:31</b>	<p><b>Committee minutes:</b></p> <p>The following minutes were received and key points noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Degrees Sub-Committee – 6 November 2017</li> <li>• Academic Strategy &amp; Planning Committee – 7 November 2017</li> <li>• Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee – 7 November 2017</li> <li>• Student Success &amp; Quality Assurance Committee – 15 November 2017</li> <li>• Research Ethics Panel – 21 November 2017</li> <li>• Student Success &amp; Quality Assurance Committee – 13 December 2017</li> </ul> <p>In relation to the minutes of the Research Ethics Panel it was suggested that it would be helpful to summarise the number of submissions to the Panel and report this through the minutes.</p>	AB17/25 a-f
<b>17:32</b>	<p><b>University Board of Directors Minutes - 17 October 2017</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting were noted.</p>	AB17/26
<b>17:33</b>	<p><b>Next meeting:</b> 28 February 2018, Carlisle Fusehill Street Campus</p>	Verbal