



Minutes Meeting of the University Executive Board

Date: 07 November 2023

Present: Professor K Lamberts (KL), in the Chair

Professor A Blom (AB), Professor J Derrick (JD), Professor S Fitzmaurice (SF), Professor S Hartley (SH), Professor G Jewell, J Jones (JJ), Professor C O’Bradaigh (items 1-2 and 9-14), R Sykes (RS), Professor G Valentine (GV) (items 1-7), Professor M Vincent (MV), Professor C Watkins (CW), I Wright (IW)

Secretary: D Swinn (DS)

In attendance: J Strachan (JS), T Wray (TW); A Carlile (AC), A Morgan (AM) and L Wilson (LW) (items 6-9); M Nuttall (item 9)

Apologies:

1. **Closed Minute and Paper**
2. **Closed Minute and Paper**
3. **Closed Minute and Paper**
4. **OfS Annual Financial Return 2022 and Annual Report and Financial Statements**
 - 4.1 UEB considered the University Annual Report and Annual Financial Return to the OfS, key elements of which had been considered in draft at earlier meetings of UEB, Council Finance Committee and Council.
 - 4.2 UEB:
 - 4.2.1 Approved the Annual Report and audited financial statements,
 - 4.2.2 Recommended to the Council Finance Committee for recommendation to Council: the approval of the 2022/23 financial statements and for signature to be delegated to the President and Vice-Chancellor and Chair of Council and Pro-Chancellor, prior to submission to the Office for Students (OfS).
 - 4.2.3 Noted the stress testing and going concern assessment.
 - 4.2.4 Noted the draft external auditor’s year-end report 2022/23.
 - 4.2.5 Noted the letter of representation.
 - 4.2.6 Noted the letter of representation.

- 4.2.7 Noted that the University would be asked to provide letters of support to two subsidiary companies, as noted in the related paper.
- 4.2.8 Confirmed that no Member was aware of: any potential breach of law/regulations which were relevant to the University; any actual or suspected frauds which were relevant to the University; or any related party transactions which are not already known and which are more than £0.1m.

5. **Annual Data Return to OfS regarding compliance with Prevent Duty**

- 5.1 UEB received and approved the Prevent update and Declaration and data return. UEB recommended approval to the Council, for submission to the OfS.

6. **Proposed New Structure**

(AC, AM and LW in attendance for this item)

- 6.1 UEB discussed an update on the latest feedback from Faculties and other colleagues through the ongoing period of consultation and engagement, related recommendations, including changes from UEB's original proposals, and proposed next steps and actions.
- 6.2 UEB discussed feedback from each of the Faculties in turn.
 - 6.2.1 It was noted that many of the issues and themes raised by staff were being addressed through further communications as far as this was possible but there was a need to consider the future approach to how evidence to support both the need for change and the proposed changes themselves were presented to various audiences. It was reported that around 100 messages had been received to the dedicated inbox that had been set up for staff to contact. UEB discussed and agreed an approach to be followed over the coming weeks. Importantly, it would be necessary to address any misconception that proposed changes were wholly data driven and/or that the data was inaccurate or misleading.
- 6.3 UEB also discussed and agreed that the final names for each School would be proposed and agreed during the implementation phase. UEB also discussed the proposed principles for decision making, as set out in the related paper, and approved these subject to minor amendments and one addition. UEB noted an update on the cross-cutting work strands that would support the development and implementation of Schools, subject to Council approval.

7. **Educational Governance**

(AC, AM and LW in attendance for this item)

- 7.1 UEB considered a paper proposing a series of updated and more detailed principles that built on UEB's earlier agreement to the principle that educational delivery would be situated in Schools, which was being tested and clarified with Faculties in some areas, as noted in the related paper.
- 7.2 Following discussion, UEB approved the updated principles as set out in detail in the related paper, subject to:

- 7.2.1 The potential future need to reconsider the approach to short courses in the context of the emergent Lifelong Learning Entitlement.
- 7.2.2 With respect to teaching units not embedded within a School clarification was required in order to provide clarity and avoid the emergence of a hybridised position, i.e. optimising the structure and its use of resource in the context of the benefits sought by the overall proposals to move to an academic Schools-based structure. Academic programmes themselves must be delivered through Schools.

8. **Governance in the New School Structure**

(AC, AM and LW in attendance for this item)

- 8.1 UEB discussed and approved a proposal to seek and appoint external consultants to advise the University on governance in a new school structure, focusing on education governance in order to ensure that, subject to Council approval, this work could be taken forward at pace to provide clarity to new schools on the new governance arrangements. It was recognised that if this was not in place at an early stage then key benefits sought from the proposed restructure in relation to reducing regulatory risk and reducing workloads would not be achieved. The appointment of external consultants would introduce an element of independence to the governance workstream and enable the University to learn from experiences in comparable institutions.
- 8.2 During discussion, UEB noted the wider context for this work in terms of variability and inconsistencies in current practices and the attendant risks, which were potentially significant; the consultants to be approached for quotations; the draft assignment and associated timescales. It was also noted that the work of the consultants would inform subsequent recommendations to UEB.

9. **Management Accountabilities in the New School Structure**

(MN, AC, AM and LW in attendance for this item)

- 9.1 UEB considered a paper which set out proposals for the key responsibilities and accountabilities of Schools and Faculties, subject to Council approval of the structural changes. The paper set out an initial direction of travel for professional services and technical staffing structures at School and Faculty level. The proposals were: (i) made with reference to the agreed definition of School, principles around academic delivery and the constitutional position; (ii) designed to ensure that Schools and Faculties were able to function effectively and consistently; and (iii) maximise the benefits to be delivered from the change in academic structures.

10. **Closed Minute and Paper**

11. **Closed Minute and Paper**

12. **Report of the UEB Risk Review Group**

- 12.1 UEB received and approved the report, including the proposed exposure for each Corporate Risk and the proposed 2023/24 Corporate Risk Register.

13. **Report of the UEB Health & Safety Sub-Group**

13.1 This item was deferred.

14. **Round Table**

(a) Industrial Relations: UEB noted the result of the latest UCU ballot, which had not returned a mandate for further action. MV also reported on ongoing efforts to ensure that students' lost learning opportunities during the previous period were replaced effectively.

(b) India Visit: KL reported on a recent institutional visit to India.