



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd March 2009

08/21 Attendance

21.1 Present

Mr J Pallett	Chair
Mr D Antell	
Dr H Barrett	
Ms J Bruce	
Professor M Clarke	
Mr A Duncan	
Ms F Fairhurst	
Professor D Green	Vice Chancellor
Mr A Hemming	
Mr M Newitt	
Mr T Patrickson	
Mrs J Quallington	
Mrs E Spalding	
Mrs J Swan	
Mr P Swinburn	
Professor T Thompson	

21.2. In Attendance

Dr M Doughty	Pro Vice Chancellor (Resources)
Professor J Elkin	Deputy Vice Chancellor
Mrs P Finch	Director of Finance
Mrs A Hannaford	Director of ILS
Ms H Johnstone	Assistant to the Registrar & Secretary
Mr J Ryan	Registrar and Secretary
Ms G Slater	Director of Personnel
Dr M Stowell	Director of Quality & Educational Development

21.3. Apologies

Professor J Low	
Mr L Probert	
Mr P West	
Professor G Elliott	Director of Regional Engagement

21.4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

08/22 Minutes

- 22.1. The minutes of the meeting held on the 1st December 2008 [BG08/21] were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting. It was noted that Dr Stowell was at the meeting and the list of attendees would be amended accordingly.

22.2. There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

08/23 Vice Chancellor's Business

The Vice Chancellor presented his report [BG08/22] drawing attention to the following items:-

- 23.1 Nursing and Midwifery Commission – the Prime Minister announced, in March 2009, the formation of the Commission to advise on the future of Nursing and Midwifery. Professor Thompson has been asked to sit on the Commission. It is possible that there will be implications for the future training of nurses and midwives.
- 23.2 Community Safety Accreditation Scheme – the University's Security staff will be trained under the safety accreditation scheme and this will give them some powers to deal with student related issues off campus.
- 23.3 Student Recruitment 2009/2010 – it was noted that 387 potential students had registered to attend the upcoming Visit day. Recruitment to Nursing and Midwifery courses is up by 30% on 2007/2008 but other areas have remained at similar levels. Due to the government's decision to freeze student numbers, the University may be one of a small number of institutions with places available during clearing.
- 23.4 Rugby Club and grounds – the Board would be pleased to note the email from the Rugby Club Captain thanking Facilities staff for the excellent quality of the pitches at Battenhall which represented an excellent improvement in the provision of facilities for outdoor sport.
- 23.5 Research Degree Awarding Powers – it was noted that the first visit of the Scrutiny Panel had gone well. Members of the Panel would visit 11 meetings of various University Committees and Boards including the next Board of Governors meeting in May.
- The Deputy Vice Chancellor reported that the scrutineers had requested additional information which would now be provided. She thanked those governors that had met with the Scrutiny Panel.
- 23.6 Inaugural College of Fellows Lecture – the lecture by Professor David Eastwood had been well received.
- 23.7 University Finances – the institution is preparing for a difficult year in 2010/2011. Given the current economic climate it is unlikely that the University's revenues will continue to grow at the same level as they have in recent years. It is essential that University officers ensure that the finances are managed in such a way that the University can continue to operate effectively should there be a protracted downturn.
- 23.8 Research Assessment Exercise 2009 – it was noted that the outcome of the exercise had resulted in a welcome increase in the funding received to support research, which would increase to an annual sum of £322k from 2009/2010. This was the result of the decision to fund "pockets of excellence" wherever they existed. The Board noted that a working group was being established by Academic Board to consider the University's research strategy.
- 23.9 Graduate Employment – it was noted that the University would shortly be launching a 'graduate internship' scheme. The scheme had received support from Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce and the West Midlands CBI.
- 23.10 The Board received the Vice Chancellor's report

08/24 Student Recruitment [BG08/23]

- 24.1. The Registrar advised the Board that the number of applicants applying to the University had risen by 10.56% against a national increase of 7.92% and the number of individual applications was up 10.54% against a national increase of 7.4%. The number of applications received to date, 8382, is already in excess of the number received at the end of the 2008 cycle (8371).
- 24.2 Applications from the EU are up by 66.67% against a national increase of 14.73%. However, applications from non-EU countries are down by 23.4% against a national increase of 9.21%. The Board noted that the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Group would be looking specifically at the University's international recruitment record and considering alternatives for a way forward.
- 24.3. The high number of applications to Creative Art and Design and Combined Arts is largely due to curriculum development within the Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts and the introduction of a number of new courses including Journalism, English Language and Film Studies. It was noted that Business courses are still maintaining their increase although not at the same level as in 2008 when the new courses were introduced.
- 24.4. The challenge for the University will be to maximise conversion. The upcoming Visit Days will be crucially important and the programmes are constantly being adjusted to ensure a high quality experience for applicants. It is anticipated that the offer of guaranteed places in halls for first year students will assist with conversion.
- 24.5. The Board received the report.

08/25 Students' Union [BG08/24]

- 25.1. The President of the Students' Union advised members that the recent elections had been well supported with 1390 student members voting compared to 970 in 2008. This exceeded the Students' Union's target to increase participation by 10%. The Students' Union thanked the University for providing IT support during the election and allowing candidates to display their promotional material around campus. Members congratulated David Antell, Vice President Education and Welfare, on his election to the post of President for 2009/2010.
- 25.2. It was noted that the bar continues to struggle against competition from city centre venues. The shop continues to increase its sales but is limited due to space this is something the Students' Union will have to review.
- 25.3. The new Marketing Co-ordinator has started to improve the promotion of the Students' Union and its communication with its membership. This has also allowed other members of staff to have more time to concentrate on their individual areas of work. The new Student Advisor will shortly be trialing an electronic case recording system which will assist the Students' Union in analysing the number and type of cases managed. Members queried whether data protection issues had been taken into account and noted that the information would be anonymised and stored on a University server with limited access.
- 25.4. The Student team continue to perform well in the BUSA leagues. The Men's Rugby has created a link with Worcester Warriors which allowed them to access excellent training facilities. The LOCO Show Company has produced a pantomime and is rehearsing another production which it intends to take to local schools. Sunday Sport is celebrating its 10th anniversary and continues to provide weekly coaching sessions for the community on Sundays.

- 25.5. The Students' Union will be launching a 'Safe Drinking' campaign during March. The course representative scheme now has 100 students on the data base. The Students' Union has submitted a course rep report to Academic Board which reviews the service this year and makes recommendations to improve the system.
- 25.6. Housing Week had been well achieved with 60% of first years attending the talks despite the snow.
- 25.7 The Board received the report.

Reports from Academic Board and Committees

26.1. Academic Board [BG08/25]

- 26.1.1. The Registrar drew members' attention to the report on the discussion at Academic Board around retention and achievement. Members of the Board welcomed the report, which related to a very important aspect of the University's activities and achievements, and which had been the subject of discussion at a recent meeting of the governing body. The Board asked to be kept informed of progress in this area recognising that it was central to the University's Strategy to provide an outstanding student experience. It was also noted that improved retention was as important as excellent recruitment in the achievement of the University's growth in student numbers.
- 26.1.2. The Board also noted the report from the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee on the academic health of the taught provision and the outcomes of the annual monitoring process. The Board especially noted the assurance provided that "standards are being maintained and the quality of courses is at least satisfactory and in many cases, as evidenced through student satisfaction, external examiner and external audit outcomes, quality is strong" and evidence from external examiner reports that "the standards of UoW awards are appropriate and in line with comparable courses and national frameworks." Members of the Board acknowledged the considerable effort and hard work undertaken by all staff to ensure that the quality and standards of the University's provision is guaranteed.
- 26.1.3. The Board noted the section of the report that provided an update on the University's application for research degree awarding powers. The Report included further guidance on RDAP criteria and a new metrics template, which all future applications would be required to complete. The Board noted that it had been agreed that the University would complete the template as part of the continuing scrutiny of the University's application for RDAP and that the data collection to do so was in hand.
- 26.1.4. The Board received the report.

26.2. Personnel Committee [BG08/26]

- 26.2.1. The Board noted the new "People Strategy" which sets out a clear commitment to the people who work within the University based on the University's Strategic Plan. The Board endorsed the Personnel Committee's view that the strategy represented a succinct and accessible document, which was aligned with the key relevant success criteria in the Strategic Plan 2007-2012.
- 26.2.2. The Board noted the report on National Pay Bargaining. The Director of Human Resources advised the Board that the concerns raised by UCU over the JCHES machinery have now been resolved following meetings supported by ACAS. This cleared the way for a national bargaining process according to the previously published timetable. The Board recorded its concern at the level of the UCU claim, which it considered unrealistically high in the context of the current economic climate. The Chair of Personnel Committee will be kept informed of any developments.

26.2.3. The Board received the report.

26.3. Finance & Development Committee [BG08/27]

26.3.1. The Board received the updated budget for 2008/2009 which showed a forecast surplus of £884 and noted that it still contained a £500k contingency fund. It was further noted that it did not include provision of any adjustment by HEFCE following the recent audit or for FRS17 pension adjustments.

26.3.2. The Board received the report.

08/27 Dates of Next Meetings

27.1.	Special meeting of the Board	9 th May 2009
	Next Scheduled meeting	11 th May 2009

..... (Chair)

..... (Date)