

Academic Board 19 April 2017

Summary of Proceedings

The one hundred and thirty third meeting of the Academic Board took place at 2pm on Wednesday 19 April 2017. Papers for the meeting are available on the Academic Board website: <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/partners/academic-board.htm>. Academic Board's proceedings are summarized below. Full minutes will be published on the website once they have been approved by Academic Board at the next meeting on 05 July 2017.

Report from the Vice Chancellor

- 1 The Vice Chancellor provided the Board with an update on recent policy development in the UK HE sector. A copy of recent correspondence from Alistair Jarvis, Deputy Chief Executive at Universities UK (UUK), was tabled concerning the potential impacts on HE of the recent announcement to call a general election an in particular the reduction of the timescale for the Higher Education & Research Bill to complete its passage through parliament. UUK's position was that the Government would likely try and push the Bill through before Parliament was dissolved in early May 2017 although this could be dependent on how much the house of Lords wished to see their proposed changes to the Bill incorporated. UUK would be issuing further updates as they became available.
- 2 The Vice Chancellor also tabled a copy of the QS Starts Development Roadmap for our University which showed a good performance in several key areas of the audit. Our University had secured 5 Stars in Employability, Internationalization, Facilities, Inclusiveness and the Specialist Criteria category, which in our University's case focused on Hospitality & Leisure Management. Overall our University achieved an institutional 4 Star rating, although our score placed us close to the threshold for earning 5 Stars. The overall rating also placed the University 64th in English University's in the QS international rankings. It was observed that this excellent performance would be very positive for the reputation of the University and in particular for international recruitment.

Report from the Students' Union (SU)

- 3 The SU provided an overview of its current and future work, and work undertaken since the last report to the Academic Board. The report covered: the latest progress in completion of the Sabbatical Officer objectives; the preparations for the forthcoming Golden Robes event on 27 April 2017; Course Representative recruitment and training as well as details of an early, semester 2, course rep election pilot for 2017/18; the Student Engagement Partnership (TSEP) annual provider review pilot; the results of the recent SU Elections; and an update on the second round of School Forums.
- 4 It was agreed that a meeting would be set up to discuss the potential for consolidation of the 'Golden Robes' awards and the 'Achieving Excellence' awards in order to avoid duplication of effort as the latter now had categories that were open to students to nominate in that were very similar to those featured in the Golden Robes awards.

Student Recruitment

- 5 A report was received from the Deputy Vice Chancellor Corporate Communications providing an overview of the latest position for home and EU undergraduate recruitment, international, and postgraduate student recruitment. An overview was also provided concerning some of the changes being planned for the 2018 recruitment cycle. Overall applications were 3.5% (circa 971) fewer than in the previous year. This was an improvement on the position reported to the Committee in January 2017 and was broadly in line with the sector which had reported a slightly higher decile of 3.67%.
- 6 The main focus of the University's work would now be on converting applications to firm acceptances with an extensive range of activities taking place to support this including applicant events at both campuses, phone call and postcard campaigns, and a virtual online open day particularly for those UK applicants who are unable to attend an applicant visit day.

Academic Assurance Report

- 7 The Board received a report providing the most recent evidence and outcomes for assurance of academic quality relating to Student Non-Continuation (HESA) as well as an update concerning first degree classifications (2015/16), External Examiner reports for postgraduate provision 2015/16 and the operation and oversight of Course Annual Review. An update on our AQSC continuous action plan for enhancement was included which provided evidence that supported the affirmation and maintenance of academic standards and quality and that action is underway where needed.
- 8 *The Academic Board **AGREED** to endorse the recommendation that the evidence provides affirmation that academic standards and quality is being maintained.*

Leeds Beckett University Access Agreement 2018/19

- 9 The Academic Board received the University's Access Agreement 2018/19 for consideration. The two appended papers comprising the documentation were: a narrative document outlining our access strategy, activities and response to the strategic guidance for 18/19; and a document outlining our five year targets and milestones developed to be cognisant with our institutional key performance indicators, monitoring performance of activities related to low participation groups and collaborative targets with partner groups and individual education institutions.
- 10 Consultation meetings were held with our SU before the agreement was drafted to receive their input where there were clear lines of collaborative working and final comments would be sought from SU Sabbatical Officers, the SU CEO and SU Head of Membership Engagement following the meeting of the Academic Board before the Access Agreement was submitted to the Office for Fair Access.

- 11 Academic Board **RECOMMENDED** that the Board of Governors approve the Access Agreement 2018/19 and associated targets and milestones for submission to the Office for Fair Access.

Development of the Academic Regulations in 2016/17

- 12 The report set out the plan for the further development of the Academic Regulations in 2016/17 and presented an update on progress as well as a number of emerging proposals for changes to the Academic Regulations for the Board's consideration and discussion. The Academic Board provided detailed feedback on the emerging proposals for changes to the Academic Regulations to inform the final drafting stage and it was confirmed that further proposals would be considered at the July 2017 meeting of the Academic Board.

Apprenticeships

- 13 The report provided the case for developing a portfolio of Level 6 and 7 Degree Apprenticeships (DA's). We were provided with a breakdown of the institutional developments that would need to take place to support DA's at both undergraduate and masters level. It was explained that a phased development was being proposed to support an effective and efficient transition to introducing DA's. It was explained that the development of new DA's will be dependent upon demand and sustainability and that demand was likely to arise from employers seeking apprenticeships for their employees; colleges seeking progression routes for lower level apprenticeships, and from SME's seeking to take advantage of the 90% fee reduction.
- 14 Our University was currently developing two DA's for September 2017 launch. One for Digital and Technology Solutions and the other for CMI Leadership and Management (plus framework). It was confirmed that, subject to contract, Wetherspoons would be the first major client for this programme and the 2017 intake would be for 120 students with circa £1million income to the University.

Research Ethics Policy

- 15 The DVC Research & Enterprise presented proposed revisions to the Research Ethics Policy following a review undertaken between December 2016 and February 2017. The proposals had been considered by both the Research Ethics Sub-Committee and the Research & Enterprise Committee who had both recommended their approval. *The Academic Board **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed revisions to the University Research Ethics Policy, for implementation on 01 August 2017.*

Review of Standing Orders

- 16 The report provided an overview of the recent review of our University's Standing Orders and proposed that the current single version was replaced by two new versions, one for the Board of Governors and its committees and a separate version for the Academic Board and its Committees. This approach had been proposed as separate sets of standing orders would: Be wholly relevant to the board and committees that they address and there

would be no sections that were redundant or not applicable; not be overly long in order to accommodate all that was applicable to the two arms of governance being covered; and be more accessible and easy to engage with as they avoided overly formal language and presentation.

- 17 *The Academic Board **RESOLVED** to approve the revised Standing Orders for the Academic Board and its committees for immediate implementation.*

Proposed dates for Academic Board & Committee meetings for 2017/18

- 18 *The Academic Board **APPROVED** the proposed dates for Academic Board & Committee meetings for 2017/18.*