



Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors

30th September 2019

19/01 Attendance

1.1 Present

Mr J Bateman OBE	Independent Governor, Chair
Mr J Bothamley CBE	Independent Governor
Mr R Dudley	Staff Governor
Mrs D Gant	Independent Governor
Professor D Green CBE	Vice Chancellor & Chief Executive
Mrs A Hooper	Independent Governor
Mr D Iddon	Independent Governor
Mr N Khan	Independent Governor
Mr H Lonsdale	Student Governor
Dr D McDougall	Staff Governor
Rev'd Dr A Pettersen	Independent Governor
Dr S Pittaway	Staff Governor
Miss M Price	Student Governor
Mr M Scriven	Staff Governor
Mr I Smith	Independent Governor
Mrs S Speck	Independent Governor

1.2 In Attendance

Mr R Bonham	Director of Finance & Resources
Mrs J Britton	Director of Communications & Participation
Mrs A Cope	Director of Human Resources
Mr M Donovan	DPVC and Head of School of Sport and Exercise Science (<i>for item 8</i>)
Professor S Greer	Deputy Vice Chancellor & Provost
Mr M Harris	Vice President, Student's Union
Mrs S Jamdar	Partner & Head of Education, Shakespeare Martineau LLP (<i>for item 11</i>)
Ms H Johnstone	Head of Governance and Regulatory Affairs (Clerk to the Board)
Mrs J Newland	Assistant Clerk to the Board
Mr R Renton	Pro Vice Chancellor Students

1.3 Apologies or Absent

Mr C Arntzen
Professor G Agyemang

The Chair thanked Dr Pittaway for helping to organise this first Board meeting at The Hive.

19/02 Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

19/03 Minutes

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th July 2019 [BG19/01] were confirmed as a correct record subject to correction of a typing error in item 45.4 and the following amendment: Mr M Harris was not present at the meeting.
- 3.2 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda
 - 3.2.1 Access and Participation Plan
The University's Access and Participation Plan has been approved by the Office for Students (OfS) with no modifications. The Plan has been published on the University website and is available on the Governors' portal. Updates will be given at future meetings.

19/04 Chair's Business

- 4.1 On behalf of the Board, the Chair congratulated the University for the number of awards for which it has been shortlisted.
- 4.2 The Chair had recently attended a University Open Day, Democracy Day, the Crick conference on sports coaching and the Disability Cricket series. He congratulated everyone involved in the events and reminded governors they have a standing invitation to attend Open Days.

19/05 Vice Chancellor's Report [BG19/02]

The Vice Chancellor presented his written report to the Board and drew members' attention to the following:

- 5.1 This meeting of the Board marks a series of firsts for the University and is a mark of how far the University has developed: the first time the University has been in *The Times* Top 10 for Student Experience and Teaching Quality; the first time any university has appeared on all three shortlists for University of the Year, Social Mobility Institution of the Year and Sustainability Institution of the Year; the first Provost's report to the Board. The University's values underlie its achievements in awards, for example the University is 1st among UK universities and 4th in the World in the *Times Higher Education* University Impact Rankings 2019 for Gender Equality. Despite being 6th in the UK for Teaching Quality in the *Good University Guide*, the University is 92nd in their overall ranking. This is due to the guide's methodology that gives equal weight to Teaching Quality and to Spend per Student where the University is in the lowest 10% as a result of efficiencies and innovations in providing facilities, such as The Hive where costs were shared with the County Council.
- 5.2 The Board noted the update from the Vice Chancellor on the financial outlook for 2019-20 and student admissions.
- 5.3 Members noted that with the appointment of the Deputy Vice Chancellor as Provost, with a particular focus on the University's academic provision, the Vice Chancellor would be able to focus more attention on representing, and raising the profile of, the University both nationally and internationally.
- 5.4 Members were pleased to note how students and staff had helped a member of the public in need during the recent heavy rain and felt this was representative of the culture of the University.

- 5.5 The Board received the report. Members noted it would be helpful to have updates at future meetings on strategic presentations.

19/06 Provost's Report [BG19/03]

The Provost presented the first Provost's report.

- 6.1 Undergraduate Teaching Measures: members noted the University's remarkable progress in the National Student Survey (NSS) and the 2% increase in overall satisfaction to 88.21% in 2019, which is 4% above the University's benchmark. Only 5 courses showed a significant drop in satisfaction. Members noted how courses where there is a drop in satisfaction are closely monitored and supported. The University has moved closer to its goal of all courses being in the top two quartiles, with 72% of courses in the top quartiles this year. Members also noted the University's progress in the rankings year on year for each of the NSS measures.
- 6.2 Postgraduate Teaching Measures: the University came second out of 103 universities for overall student satisfaction in the AdvanceHE Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES).
- 6.3 Members noted the Reward and Promotion schemes for staff and the link to the strategic objective relating to student retention. The Provost will update the Board at a future meeting on developing career pathways.
- 6.4 Progress on the Medical School is going well and the application has been allowed to progress to Stage 4 of the process. It is anticipated funded places will be announced in May 2020.
- 6.5 Academic priorities have been set for 2019/20, the top one being 'retention', with an emphasis on individualised support. The priorities are grouped under the heading: *Inspired, included and engaged: realising the potential of every student.*
- 6.6 The Provost would like to give the Board the opportunity to come and see some teaching; more details will be circulated in due course. Members are also welcome to attend the inaugural lectures of the newly appointed Professors.
- 6.7 The Board thanked the Provost and received the report.

19/07 Students' Union Business

- 7.1. The Students' Union officers gave a presentation covering key achievements in 2018/19, aims and objectives for 2019/20, campaigns and the Year Ahead. Points raised included:
- 7.2 In 2018/19, the SU was ranked 34th out of 131 in the WhatUni survey and achieved 78% satisfaction in the Course Experience Survey (CES) and 61% in the National Student Survey (NSS). Members noted the difference in these figures may be due to the CES surveying Years 1 and 2 whilst the NSS surveys Year 3 students. The CES figure was previously far lower and so the increase is very encouraging.
- 7.3 Other key achievements in 2018/19 were: turnout in the leadership elections was the highest and most diverse since 2012; RAG raised £37,057 for charity, a large increase on previous years; a Code of Practice was developed for the Academic Representation system; Change Week gathered 1080 ideas from students, which will be reviewed and taken forward; mental health and wellbeing

campaigning increased and there was huge success in the Hangar in engaging a wide range of students.

- 7.4 Aims and objectives for 2019/20 include wellbeing, student engagement, students knowing their course representative, democracy, recreation, mental health, a governance review of the SU, sports strategy plan, review of entertainment, review of communications, engaging with the local community and embedding new staff. It was suggested the SU could share what they do with the local young professional community.
- 7.5 SU campaigns for 2019/20 include the Night Bus, Become a School Rep, Volunteering, Plastics, Help & Advice Service, Getting Home Safely, Democracy and RAG.
- 7.6 The Board congratulated the Officers on the quality of their presentation and received the Students' Union report [BG19/04].

19/08 Severn Campus Update: Health, Well-being and Inclusive Sport *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

19/09 Reports form Committees and Academic Board

9.1 Audit Committee [BG19/05]

9.1.1 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

9.1.2 The Board also noted the Annual Internal Audit Report that gave an opinion of reasonable assurance that the University has adequate and effective arrangements to achieve management's objectives over:

- Risk management, control and governance; and
- Economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money) arrangements.

Reasonable assurance is the most that the internal audit service can provide.

9.1.3 The Committee approved the Internal Audit Plan for 2019/20 and considered the rolling report on implementation of internal audit recommendations.

9.1.4 The Board approved the recommended amendments to the presentation of the Committee's membership in the terms of reference.

9.1.5 The Board received the report.

9.2 Finance and Development Committee [BG19/06]

9.2.1 The Committee Chair presented the report.

9.2.2 The Board approved the recommended amendments to the Committee's terms of reference relating to officers in attendance at meetings.

9.2.3 The Board resolved to accept the offer of Green Asset Finance to fund green projects from Barclays Bank. The Board also resolved that the Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive and one independent governor, normally either the Chair of the Board or one of the Vice

Chairs, be authorised to sign on behalf of the University any such Agreement in the form produced to the meeting (see Appendix 2). The Board noted that the responsibilities for the day-to-day administration of the Facility will be as set out in the University's Schedule of Delegation.

9.2.4 The Board received the report.

9.3 Report from Nominations Committee [BG19/07]

The Committee Chair presented the report noting recruitment of new independent governors is ongoing. The Clerk noted actions identified from the Annual Review of members and thanked everyone for taking part. A review of Board effectiveness is due to be undertaken in 2019/20 and a report will be made in due course. The Board received the report.

9.4 Report from the Academic Board [BG19/08]

Mrs Hooper, the Governor Observer on the Academic Board, presented the report noting the Academic Board provides evidence and assurance of the academic work of the University. She recommended members look at the report in conjunction with the Provost's report. The Board received the report.

19/10 Articles and Bye-Laws [BG19/09]

10.1 Bye-law 1 has been reviewed to reflect current practice. The Board approved the Bye-Law.

19/11 Strategic Discussion – Politics and populism: governance in a “hostile environment” for universities

11.1 The Board received a presentation from Smita Jamdar, Partner and Head of Education, Shakespeare Martineau LLP, on 'Politics and populism: governance in a 'hostile environment' for universities'. The presentation covered the role of university governance and how it has changed; why there is a "hostile environment" for universities and how university governance can respond.

11.2 This was followed by a group discussion and question and answer session. The following themes were raised:

- the role of the Office for Students and ministerial priorities.
- what students could do to change the tone of the debate.
- students and alumni are the best ambassadors for telling the University's story.
- how much more is expected today of Governors.

19/12 Any Other Business

12.1 There was no other business.

19/13 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 25th November 2019 10am to 3pm, Charles Hasting Building, City Campus.