Board of Governors

Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2022,

EE2009, St John's Campus

21/29 Attendance

29.1 Present

Mr J Bateman OBE	Independent Governor, Chair
Mrs L Barber	Staff Governor
Dr D Beech	Independent Governor
Mr L Coiffait-Gunn	Independent Governor
Ms L Davies-Ward	Staff Governor
Mr S Devlin	Independent Governor
Mrs D Gant	Independent Governor
Professor D Green CBE	Vice Chancellor & Chief Executive
Mr M Hardy	Independent Governor
Mr D Iddon	Independent Governor
Dr C Jones	Independent Governor
Mr N Khan	Independent Governor
Mr L Lees	Student Governor
Mr A Noorani	Independent Governor
Rev'd Dr A Pettersen	Independent Governor
Dr S Pittaway	Staff Governor
Mr D Pocha	Independent Governor
Miss N Ricketts	Student Governor
Mr M Scriven	Staff Governor
Mr I Smith	Independent Governor

29.2 In Attendance

Mr R Bonham	Director of Finance & Resources
Mrs J Britton	Director of Communications & External Affairs
Mrs A Cope	Director of Human Resources
Ms H Johnstone	University Secretary and Clerk to the Board
Dr T Jones	Acting Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Students
Ms A Jordan	Deputy Provost
Mrs J Newland	Assistant Clerk to the Board

29.3 Apologies

Mr K Sorrell	Independent Governor
Mr R Mularczyk	Student Governor
Mrs S Speck	Independent Governor

The Chair welcomed Lerverne Barber, new Academic Staff Governor, to her first Board meeting.

21/30 Declarations of Interests

30.1 There were no declarations of interest.

21/31 Annual reports of the Remunerations Committees

[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]

Apart from the Director of HR who was already present, those listed as in attendance in item 29.2 joined the meeting after item 31.

21/32 Minutes

32.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2021 [**BG21/37**] were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

32.2 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

32.2.1 There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

21/33 Chair's Business

33.1 The Chair referred to the latest update from the CUC on the USS pension scheme and noted updates are available on the Governors' portal.

21/34 Research Integrity [BG21/38]

34.1 The Board received the annual report on Research Integrity 2020/21 and noted the update on recent developments in the HE sector in relation to Research Integrity, in particular the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. The wording relating to research misconduct is to be reviewed to ensure there is no ambiguity over the statement that there were no investigations of research misconduct in 2020/21 and no identified cases of misconduct.

34.2 The Board thanked the Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Research for his report and noted its timeliness, particularly as the inaugural co-chairs of the UK Committee on Research Integrity were about to be announced.

34.3 The Board approved the annual report of Research Integrity 2020/21, which will subsequently be published on the website. The Board is to receive the report on an annual basis.

21/35 Students' Union Business [BG21/39]

35.1. The Students' Union officers presented their update on the Students' Union activities and highlighted the success of Wellness Day and the very positive work in conjunction with Heads of School to support students. Student mental health and the decrease in student engagement were felt to be the most challenging issues currently. It was noted the decrease in student engagement was being seen across the sector and it is thought the pandemic has had a significant impact on student engagement. It was suggested employability and upskilling would be useful areas in which to support students and governors offered to support the Students' Union in these areas. Members noted the results of the Life Skills Survey.

35.2 The Board congratulated the Students' Union on all their work and received the report.

21/36 Vice Chancellor's Report [BG21/40]

36.1 Since writing his report, national restrictions relating to Covid-19 have been lifted and the Vice Chancellor reflected on the course of the pandemic at the University and noted the University had continued to function and hold events such as Graduation. As the Students' Union report highlighted, disruption caused by the pandemic was much more to do with wellbeing, both of students and staff.

36.2 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

36.3 The Vice Chancellor noted the significant government led changes underway in the organisation and delivery of teacher education. The University intends to continue offering initial teacher education and continuing professional development and has applied for re-accreditation to continue to do so, as all providers have had to do. An Ofsted inspection is expected this academic year and the Board noted the outcomes of Ofsted inspections at some neighbouring universities. The University is also concerned to develop tutors to help children to progress educationally and the Vice Chancellor has put forward proposals for how students could be trained to be tutors.

36.4 The Board noted the appointment of an interim Chief Executive and a new Director of Fair Access at the Office for Students, and the focus of the latter on developing partnerships between higher education providers and schools.

36.5 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

36.6 The Director of Communications and External Affairs gave a presentation on student numbers including an analysis of applications, comparison with other universities, the steps the University is taking to drive interest from potential students, including new course development and the prospects for growth. The presentation was followed by group discussions.

36.7 The Board received the Vice Chancellor's report.

21/37 Academic Governance

37.1 Acting Provost's Report [BG21/41]

37.1.1 The Acting Provost presented her report, highlighting the following points:

- Teaching: the University continues to maintain very high levels of face to face teaching and as restrictions are lifted further, looks forward to even more.

- Academic developments: a great deal of work is being done around developing the course portfolio and addressing the skills gap, through apprenticeships where appropriate. The Government's Lifelong Loan Entitlement (LLE) that will be available to students from 2025, will allow students to study in bite-sized chunks throughout their careers. The School of Education, in collaboration with the Learning Institute submitted a bid to the OfS Higher Education Short Course Trial Challenge Competition and secured £117K to develop 16 short courses. In addition, the School of Psychology and the School of Allied Health worked hard to secure funding for a contract with Health Education England to develop a Mental Health and Well-being Practitioner Course. There continues to be good progress on appointing core staff for the Medical School and planning for the first cohort of students. Work is also progressing on developing the course portfolio for the Dudley University Centre.

- Academic Governance: the University is currently engaging in three new OfS consultations relating to a new approach to regulating student outcomes, the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), and an approach to constructing student outcomes and experience indicators. The OfS have issued data sets to providers to assist them in understanding the implications of the proposals and University officers are currently working through them to assess the University's likely position. *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*.

37.1.2 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

37.1.3 The Board received the report.

37.2 Report from Academic Board [BG21/42]

37.2.1 The governor observer to Academic Board presented the report of the Academic Board meeting of 26th January 2022, highlighting there was much discussion around the three OfS consultations on regulating quality and standards and that the results of the REF (Research Excellence Framework) are due in May.

37.2.2 The Board received the report.

21/38 Reports from Committees

38.1 Nominations & Governance Committee [BG21/43]

[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]

38.2 Audit Committee [BG21/44]

38.2.1 The Committee Chair presented the report of the Committee meeting of 25th January 2022. The Committee received the annual management review of EcoCampus/ISO14001:2015, the University's Environmental Management System, and Energy Management System 50001:2018 and applauded the University's innovative work in this area. The Committee also received a presentation on the 2020-21 TRAC return (Transparent Approach to Costing) for UK Higher Education Institutions and reviewed the effectiveness of the internal and external auditors, noting the improved system in place for the reviews.

38.2.2 The Board received the report.

38.3 Finance & Development Committee

38.3.1 Finance & Development Committee report of the meeting of 8th February [BG21/45]

38.3.1.1 The Clerk to the Board presented the report of the Committee meeting of 8th February 2022 and noted the Committee had received an update on the University's financial position, an update on progress on capital developments and a paper on the University's aspirations for the next phase of its Capital Development Programme. *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

38.3.1.2 The Board received the report.

38.3.2 Bank Investment Options [BG21/45a]

[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]

21/39 Compliance with OfS Conditions [BG21/46]

39.1 The Board received an update on matters in relation to the OfS and noted in particular the recent consultations launched and recent announcements on changes to Access and Participation Plans. The OfS has rolled over the University's Access & Participation Plan on the same basis as the previous approval. The Board further noted there had been no reportable events to the OfS since the last report.

21/40 Subsidiary Companies

40.1 UW Wolves Impact Report [BG21/47]

40.1.1 The Board received the UW Wolves Impact report for 2020/21 that provides assurance to the University and the Board over the impact and value of the club during the year. The Board noted 2020/21 was a significant season for the club and the company, with the season heavily impacted by the pandemic and the decision towards the end of the period by the UW Worcester Wolves Board and the University, the parent company, to exit the BBL.

40.1.2 The Board noted the report.

21/41 Any Other Business

41.1 The Board noted the reduced volume of papers for the meeting. The Clerk to the Board is putting together guidance on report writing for authors of papers.

41.2 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

21/42 Date of Next Meeting

Board Development Session	16th March 2022 (virtual)
Board Meeting	3rd May 2022 (in person)