

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY 5  
NOVEMBER 2024 IN ROOM CG35 MARYLEBONE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

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PRESENT:	Professor P Bonfield (Chair) Professor D Anand Professor C Dormor Dr S Jarvis	Professor C Kalantaridis Professor A Linn K Patel
IN ATTENDANCE:	I Griffiths (Minute 24.52) P Harding (Minute 24.50 to 24.51) J Lamarque (Secretary) C Lloyd	B McPeake (Minute 24.49) C Molloy (Minute 24.53) N Nelson (Minute 24.53) E Standen (Minute 24.48 to 24.49)
APOLOGIES:	I Wilmot (Deputy Chair)	

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**24.46 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 24.46.1 **Welcome:** The Chair welcomed all members and attendees to the meeting.
- 24.46.2 **Apologies:** Members noted apologies as recorded above and noted that Caroline Lloyd, Director of Student and Academic Services (SAS) attended on behalf of the University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (USCOO).
- 24.46.3 **Declaration of interests:** Members did not declare any conflict of interest for the matters on the agenda.
- 24.46.4 **Requests to discuss starred items and business not on the agenda:** The Chair confirmed there were no requests to discuss starred items or items of business not on the agenda.
- 24.46.5 **Chair's business:** The Chair updated members on the increases in National Insurance contributions and student fees announced in the UK Autumn 2024 Budget. Members discussed the implications for the University.
- 24.46.5.1 **ACTION USCOO and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Education** to report back to UEB on the financial implications for the University and how to ensure a continuing high-quality student experience.
- 24.46.6 The Chair updated members on his recent visit to Sri Lanka for graduations.
- 24.46.7 The DVC for Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) updated members on the forthcoming away day on 3 December 2024 titled 'Going for gold in research' and including colleagues from the RKE Office. The Director of SAS suggested that relevant Professional Services (PS) colleagues are included in the away day and the DVC (RKE) and Director of SAS agreed to discuss the suggestion outside of the meeting.
- 24.47 STAYING SAFE: BUSINESS CONTINUITY GROUP UPDATE**
- 24.47.1 The DVC (Education)/Co-Chair, Staying Safe: Business Continuity Group reported that the Group had not met since the last UEB meeting.
- 24.48 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS PREVENT DUTY ANNUAL MONITORING RETURN**
- 24.48.1 Emma Standen, Prevent Lead/Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) presented the Office for Students (OfS) Prevent Duty Annual Monitoring Return (Document UEB 241105A).

- 24.48.2 The Prevent Lead informed members that there were five Prevent related incidents, with external advice sought in all cases and no referrals to Channel. Members noted that the Prevent Lead updated the risk register accordingly.
- 24.48.3 Members heard that the action plan has identified a need for refresher training on Prevent for colleagues and that the Prevent Lead will work with colleagues in People, Culture and Wellbeing (PCW) to provide such training.
- 24.48.4 Members discussed refresher training and details of the case studies.
- 24.48.5 **AGREED** Members recommend the Prevent Duty Annual Monitoring Return to the Court of Governors.
- 24.49 PROPOSALS FOR THE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES POLICY**
- 24.49.1 The Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) and Bryony McPeake, Deputy Director (PCW) presented the proposals for the Personal Relationships and Professional Boundaries policy (Document UEB 241105D).
- 24.49.2 The Deputy Registrar informed members that the new conditions of registration around harassment and sexual misconduct have been mapped into a project plan and the Personal Relationships and Professional Boundaries policy will set the direction for other policies.
- 24.49.3 Members noted that the scope of personal relations has been narrowed following the OfS consultation and that consultation on the policy will take place with the trade unions and colleague networks, with a final version ready for approval in Spring 2025.
- 24.49.4 The Deputy Director of PCW and the Deputy Registrar briefed members on the proposed changes and actions needed to meet OfS requirements.
- 24.49.5 The Deputy Director of PCW informed members that there will be an e-learning module to raise awareness from December 2024/January 2025.
- 24.49.6 In response to queries, members received confirmation that relationships between colleagues would not be in the scope of the policy and whether students who also worked for the University would be in scope.
- 24.49.7 Members comments included:
- Additional training and promotion are welcome.
  - A student in a relationship with another student may then be employed by the University in a 'relevant colleague' role.
  - UWSU is a separate entity.
  - There is a link between this policy and the Diversity and Dignity at Work and Study Policy.
  - Technical support colleagues should be included in the definition of 'relevant colleagues'.
  - Reference should be made in Section 3.3.1 Social Interactions about alcohol and other substances.
- 24.49.8 The Deputy Registrar confirmed that colleagues should only contact students via corporate systems such as Microsoft Teams, and not through WhatsApp, other social media platforms or using personal mobile phones.
- 24.49.9 Members supported Option 1 - a ban on intimate personal relationships over Option 2 – a requirement to disclose intimate personal relationships.
- 24.50 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS FIVE-YEAR FORECAST RETURN AND COMMENTARY AND FIVE-YEAR FORECAST FY 2024/25 TO FY 2028/29**
- 24.50.1 Phil Harding, Interim Director of Finance, presented the OfS five-year forecast return and commentary and the five-year forecast FY 2024/25 to FY 2028/29 (Documents UEB 241105B and UEB 241105C).

24.50.2 The Interim Director of Finance reported that the forecast does not include change to National Insurance contributions or student fees.

24.50.3 Members heard that the forecast is compliant with loan covenants.

24.50.4 **AGREED** Members recommend the five-year workbook and commentary to Resources Committee.

24.50.5 **AGREED** Members recommend the five-year forecast to Resources Committee.

## **24.51 VERBAL UPDATE ON THE EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31 JULY 2024**

24.51.1 The Interim Director of Finance informed members that the external audit is progressing well, that no issues have been raised and the report will be completed in time for the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 13 November 2024.

24.51.2 The Interim Director confirmed that he will circulate the External Audit report for year ending 31 July 2024 to members once it is received.

## **24.52 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER PERIODIC REVIEW 1 (INCLUDING OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTERS REVIEW OUTCOMES)**

24.52.1 Ian Griffiths, Risk and Resilience (R&R) Manager presented the Strategic Risk Register periodic review 1, which includes Operational Risk Register review outcomes (Document UEB 241105E).

24.52.2 Members heard that there are four risks outside the agreed innovation and risk appetite, two of which are borderline, and all have a reasonable range of controls and mitigations in place. The R&R Manager reported that PCW and Library and Archive compliance work is ongoing and is not a cause for concern.

24.52.3 Members noted that Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHW) compliance has been added to the risk register and received assurance on action being taken in response to the SHW internal audit.

24.52.4 Members noted that Safeguarding has been added to the risk register and noted that residual risk is scored quite highly while colleagues implement all necessary controls and mitigations.

24.52.5 The R&R Manager confirmed that compliance for two strategic risks outside of risk appetite will be monitored at a strategic level and that there are plans of action for both risks. Members noted that business continuity has an increased residual risk score pending submission of outstanding business continuity plans (BCPs) and were encouraged to follow up on any missing BCPs within their areas of responsibility.

24.52.6 **AGREED** Members recommend the Strategic Risk Register periodic review 1 including Operational Risk Registers review outcomes to Audit and Risk Committee.

## **24.53 SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

### **Annual report**

24.53.1 Niamh Nelson, Head of SHW presented the SHW annual report for 2023/24 (Document UEB 241105F).

24.53.2 The Head of SHW reported that where available the statistics in the report are compared with the sector; however, benchmark statistics are lagging so a full comparison is not possible.

24.53.3 The Head of SHW reported that:

- Reported accidents have reduced this year
- Sickness absence was lower than the sector with mental health absence significantly lower.
- A significant proportion of academic colleagues and some technicians are not taking all their annual leave.

- Mental health sickness absence is the second highest type by working days lost but it is difficult to ascertain if it is work related due to system issues experienced by the occupational health provider.
- The Organisational Development team has expanded and the work they are doing on the Professional Development Reviews (PDRs) is linked to wellbeing.
- Further training is being rolled out.

24.53.4 The Head of SHW suggested the University needs a learning management system that links a colleague's job role to the type of training they require.

24.53.4.1 **ACTION USCOO** to work with the Head of SHW to explore procurement of a learning management system that links PDR and training requirements.

24.53.5 Members heard that recently the USCOO's direct reports received a briefing from Eversheds that will also be delivered to UEB, the Court of Governors and Heads of Schools to help them understand their legal responsibilities.

24.53.6 The Head of SHW informed members that the University has appointed a Wellbeing and Engagement Lead.

24.53.7 **AGREED** Members recommend the Safety, Health and Wellbeing annual report 2023/24 to Resources Committee.

#### **Update on actions from the Colleague Wellbeing Survey**

24.53.8 Caragh Molloy, Director of PCW updated members on action in response to the recent Colleague Wellbeing Survey.

24.53.9 Members heard that the PDR process, Professional Development Academy and embedding the 'fewest things that matter' approach are progressing well and that focus groups for Associate Heads of Schools and Module Leaders have taken place.

24.53.10 The Director of PCW informed members that colleagues are unaware of the wellbeing support provided by the University and a new platform is being considered as well as communications to share what is available and providing reassurance about confidentiality.

#### **Internal audit report on health and safety management arrangements**

24.53.11 The Head of SHW confirmed that the report emphasised the management of health and safety risk and making sure that Schools escalate relevant risk to Colleges.

24.53.12 The Head of SHW asked for UEB support to implement the corrective actions, noting that the Health and Safety Management Profile (HASMAPP) audit highlighted matters that did not feature in the internal audit findings.

24.53.12.1 **ACTION USCOO** to discuss with the Head of SHW what support is necessary to carry out the corrective actions from the internal audit report.

24.53.13 Members discussed the learner management system and whether managers have completed the correct training.

### **24.54 STUDENT CONTINUATION**

24.54.1 The DVC (Education) informed members that attrition data is not yet available and that as attendance is lower than last year action will be taken to ensure students attend and engage.

24.54.2 Members heard that 60% of Personal Tutors (PTs) have engaged with tutor notes and that the Educational Group and Student Success Boards will support the organisation of communications from Module Leaders to their student groups.

24.54.3 The DVC (Education) reported that peer to peer calls are taking place and that students not attending will be contacted urgently.

- 24.54.3.1 ACTION** Heads of Colleges, DVC (Education) and Director of SAS to make sure that students who are not attending are contacted.

## **24.55 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING**

- 24.55.1 **AGREED** Members confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2024 (Document UEB 241105H) as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 24.55.2 Members noted an update on actions and matters arising from previous meetings (Document UEB 241105I).

## **24.56 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 24.56.1 Members did not raise any other items of business.

## **24.57 MEETING EVALUATION**

- 24.57.1 Members and attendees commented on the useful and open discussions and the opportunity to reflect and welcomed that the meeting stayed within the allocated time.
- 24.57.2 A member commented that it was good to see the reports and receive high-level presentations.
- 24.57.3 A new member of the committee welcomed the discussion on policy development.

## **24.58 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSON GUIDANCE**

- 24.58.1 **APPROVED** Children and Young Person Guidance (Document UEB 241105J) to be adopted with immediate effect.

## **24.59 HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT TO 31 JULY 2024**

- 24.59.1 **AGREED** Members recommend the Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery Statement to 31 July 2024 (Document UEB 241105K) to the Court of Governors.

## **24.60 LETTER OF REPRESENTATION**

- 24.60.1 **AGREED** Members recommend the letter of representation (Document UEB 241105L) to Audit and Risk Committee.

## **24.61 CAPITAL PROGRAMME REPORT**

- 24.61.1 Members noted the current financial position on the capital projects budget (Document UEB 241105M).

## **24.62 UNIVERSITY PLANNING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

- 24.62.1 **APPROVED** University Planning Committee terms of reference and membership (Document UEB 241105N) to be adopted with immediate effect.

## **24.63 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Regular meetings are 10.30am to 12.30pm (unless alternative time stated below) in Room RS109, Regent Street and via Microsoft Teams.

26 November 2024	29 April 2025
3 December 2024 – away day	13 May 2025
10 December 2024	27 May 2025
7 January 2025	10 June 2025
21 January 2025	24 June 2025
11 February 2025	7 July 2025 - evening (UEB dinner)
25 February 2025	8 July 2025 – all day (UEB away day)

27 February 2025 – away day and dinner  
25 March 2025  
8 April 2025

22 July 2025  
5 August 2025