Summary of Business for
Council Effectiveness and Statutes Review
Project Board

Title	**Project manager's report**
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Status	For information
Document type	Project update
Summary	This paper outlines the progress of the project since the last board meeting, covering working groups, open consultation and implementation of recommendations.
Previous consultation	18 February 2013, 11 March 2013, 20 March 2013, 10 April 2013
Resource implications	None.
Risk analysis	See attached risk register
Effective date of introduction	Immediate
Recommendation	**The Project Board is asked to** **NOTE the ongoing efforts to continue with the project and the delay in the timetable** **DECIDE whether to amend its membership and that of the working groups** **DISCUSS the approach to be taken regarding Council membership**

Council Effective and Statutes Review Project Board
Project manager's report

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1. Working Groups
Since the last meeting of the Project Board on 10 April 2013, we have been unable to finalise the membership of the working groups or arrange their first meetings. We are hopeful this will be arranged within the next week as UCU are holding their AGM on Wednesday 22 May at which they will decide whether to join the working groups and they have been requested to inform us of their decision by 5pm the following day.

The membership of the academic governance working group, with the exception of UCU, has been confirmed with the addition of Jeffrey Unerman, Head of the School of Management, and Mark Brown, a Reader from the School of Biological Sciences.

Once UCU have confirmed their decision surrounding participation, we aim to hold the first working group meeting for both the Statutes and Academic Governance workstreams in June and the first HR working group meeting in July once the new Director of HR is in post.

Work on the academic governance benchmarking has begun and the 25 English universities from the group of 31 which were used in UCU's benchmarking exercise have been contacted. The reception has been positive so far and responses have already been received. We hope to have a significant amount of data by the date of the first academic governance working group meeting.

Appendix 1 to this report details the approach of the academic governance working group and the questions which will be asked in the benchmarking exercise.

It should be **noted** that the programme has been delayed due to the unconfirmed membership of the working groups and as such there are no draft Statutes to consider at this meeting.

2. Consultation
Simon Higman, Emm Johnstone and Christine Cartwright hosted the first two open meetings, one for staff and one for students, at the end of April. The meeting for staff had a handful of attendees and unfortunately there was no interest shown at the student meeting. For the meetings in June we shall publicise further in advance and more widely around campus to raise awareness.

Appendix 2 to this report details a summary of the discussion from the meeting with staff.

Following the meeting, the Project Board is asked to **decide** whether to include a member of UCU on the Board and to **decide** whether to expand the membership of the working groups to include one elected member of staff.

3. Implementation of Recommendations
A number of recommendations were identified as being achievable in the short term. The outcomes of these are presented to the Project Board at CESPB/13/13 and will be presented to Council at its June meeting.

The Board is asked, in light of upcoming vacancies in Council, to begin the discussion about the size of the membership of Council as this is not something which cannot be decided by a working group. Presently, one lay member is due to stand down at the end of June, three elected members at the end of September and a further lay member at the end of December. Should it be decided that Council would benefit from a reduced membership, this is the year in which most vacancies are arising until July 2015.

Appendix 1

Review of academic governance

Meeting of Emm Johnstone, Christine Cartwright, Anna Sendall, 16 April 2013

Working group approach

The academic governance working group will consider
  1) *The business of the Board*
  - The nature of business conducted at Academic Board
  - Where each item of business is currently decided upon and where it would be best decided upon
  - Where the authority to approve matters sits for all categories of business
  - A map of how the committees involved in academic governance interact, etc.
  2) *The structures required to allow this business to be conducted*
  - Who should be included in the membership
  - What is expected or required from members
  - How documents should move through the committees map en route to approval
  - The timings and relative timings of committees, etc.
  3) *The documentation that supports the structures*
  - The Statute relating to Academic Board
  - All regulations relating to Academic Board and academic governance

Sector benchmarking

EJ and CC will conduct a benchmarking study for the working group, to complete and report in June 2013. This study will ask the following questions (draft as of 16 April):

1. What does your university understand to be the purpose of its Academic Board/Senate, and has this been formally mapped or reviewed of late?

2. Could you share an outline of your committee structure for academic governance, to show where matters are discussed and where decisions receive final approval?

3. What is the size and split of membership of AB/Senate, and when was this last reviewed?

4. How are members selected?

5. Are new members offered any induction?

6. How is the agenda managed and how are papers distributed, and how far in advance are the agenda and papers circulated?

7. Do you publish the minutes of meetings, and if so how long after the meeting and how widely?

8. How do you communicate with members in, and between, meetings to support the desired level of engagement?

9. How do you communicate with the wider professoriate to best draw upon skills and experience?

10. How is the relationship between the governing body and Senate/AB structured (e.g. joint members, reports between committees, level of academic representation on each body)?

Appendix 2

Report on the Staff Open Meeting held Thursday 25th April 2013, 12.00-13.00 in ALT 1

Simon Higman gave a brief overview of College governance and Christine Cartwright gave a guided walkthrough of the Project website. Emm Johnstone was available to assist with answering questions.

Although the meeting did not have a large turnout, valuable discussion was had nonetheless. The following report is a summary of the discussion.

Question: When would consultation with the recognised trade unions take place as it is not clearly stated on the project website?
Answer: The website will be updated to reassure staff that any recommendations which affect staff conditions will be consulted on in negotiations with the recognised trade unions on campus.

Question: Why is there going to be a review of Academic Board?
Answer: As a result of the survey of Council members, it was felt that the relationship between Council and the Academic Board was not as strong as it might be. For Council to be assured that Academic Board was conducting its duties appropriately, a review of academic governance was suggested. This proposal was first put to the Board for discussion, before the recommendation went to Council, where it was approved.
Thorough reviews of academic governance are not widespread throughout the sector and within the UK, research has only brought to light two recent examples, conducted by the University of Gloucestershire and University of Liverpool. The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education has recently updated its information about governance to include academic governance which suggests this is an area of increasing interest among the sector and we are among the first to undertake such work.
It must be remembered that the root and branch review we are conducting of the Academic Board is something which should be done for all committees on a periodic basis to ensure that they are in line with their current expectations and are equipped to deal with a changing Higher Education environment.

Question: Why can the working groups not report directly to Council instead of reporting to the Project Board?
Answer: The Project Board is needed to monitor and synthesise the potentially large amounts of information which could be generated by the working groups and to identify any other aspects of governance that required review. The Project Board will commission other working groups to undertake further work if necessary.

Question: Could UCU have a member on the Project Board?
Answer: This will be raised at the next meeting of the Board.

Question: Can the previous Council Effectiveness Reviews be made available online?
Answer: This would be investigated.

Question: How much is the project website used?
Answer: Google Analytics provided by IT show that between 15th and 22nd April, there were 484 page views.

Question: What is the timescale of the project and is it finalised?
Answer: It is not possible to place a definite timescale on this project due to the nature of the work being undertaken and the centrality of wide consultation to the project. The scale of the work has not yet been firmly mapped and so to impose restrictions on it would be a redundant exercise.

Question: What would happen if the working groups disagreed with the recommendations made by the Project Board to Council? Would there be the opportunity to make direct representation to Council if this was the case?

Answer: The College Secretary's Office would strive to facilitate good communication between the working groups and Council.

Question: Could UCU have two members on each working group?
Answer: This would unbalance the working groups as they were designed to be small in order to facilitate meaningful and constructive discussion.

Follow up statement: it is policy to send two members of UCU to meetings.
Answer: As the working groups are not a negotiation between the College and the UCU, this is felt to be unnecessary. The groups are established to look at areas of governance with a view to bring forward recommendations. Those requiring further consultation with the trade unions would then be raised in a negotiation process.

Question: Could the working group memberships be expanded to include one elected member of staff?
Answer: This will be raised at the next meeting of the Project Board.

Question: Would Council receive the reports of the Project Board a week in advance of their meeting?
Answer: Project Board papers will be circulated to all Council members with the other papers for the meeting a week in advance, as is standard practice.

Question: Is it possible for the recommendations from the Project Board to simply be noted?
Answer: The College Secretary will recommend that all reform-based recommendations be voted on and the vote will be recorded in the minutes, as is standard practice.

Question: Could it be made clear to Council when the time came for recommendations that those surrounding staff conditions would require consultation and negotiation?
Answer: Reassurance was given that Council would be made aware of the opening negotiation positions and they would be given regular updates on the progress of the process.

Question: Would the range of skills and interests deemed necessary to make up Council be shared?
Answer: It was stated that there is an ongoing piece of work regarding the skills matrix and succession planning for Council.

Question: How is it ensured that Council does not perpetuate an uneven distribution of skills and backgrounds?
Answer: The skills matrix identifies the areas in which we lack experience and it is through utilising this tool that we aim to achieve a well-rounded body of individuals.

Question: Could it be clarified if the Chair of Council has to be a lay member?
Answer: The RHBNC Act 1985 states in 6.3,
'There shall be elected from among the members of the Council a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman of the Council neither of whom shall be –
    a) in the employment of the College or of the University or of a School of the University; or
    b) a student of the College;'

By default then, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council must be lay members.