

# Academic Board

24 October 2018



## Actions

Ref	Action	Lead	Due Date
18/143	Submit a more detailed proposal on the proposed restructuring to Council	PJL	10 November
18/144	Consider the establishment of a Council oversight group to monitor the implementation of the new School structure.	DA	12 December
18/144	Submit a report to Academic Board in December to outline how risk will be mitigated during the implementation of the new structure while protecting 'business as usual'	DA	12 December
18/44	Provide regular updates on the progress of the implementation to Academic Board during the academic year.	PJL	Ongoing

Action from current meeting

Action completed since last meeting

# Academic Board

24 October 2018

M18/114-



## Minutes

Present: Professor P Layzell (Chair), Prof K Normington, Prof K Badcock, Prof J Fiadeiro, Prof M Humphreys, Prof D Gilbert, Prof H Nicholson, Prof J Knowles, Prof J Adam, Prof G Agyemang, Prof S Boogert, Prof J Brown, Prof A Chevalier, Prof K Cooper (until 3:30), Prof P Crang, Prof C Hanretty, Prof D Howard, Mr R Jago, Prof V Jansen, Prof J John, Mr S Kendrick, Prof J Parker-Starbuck, Prof B Rankov, Prof K Rastle (present on conference call), Prof R Schack, Prof E Scott, Prof C Townsend, Prof S Wright, Prof S Ansari, Prof C Bradley, Prof M Eschrig, Prof B Fitzgerald, Dr M Gee, Prof M Gold, Dr J Murdoch, Dr H Rui, Dr S Wolthusen, Prof E Schafer, Mr C Jones, Mr J O'Neill, and Ms H Hughes

Secretary: Mr R Hall

In attendance: Mr A Alway, Dr D Ashton, Ms M Ennis, Mr D Brown, Dr M Beck (Assistant Secretary), Ms C Beck

### 1. Apologies and welcome

Apologies received from Prof R Deem, Dr Y Zheng, Prof C Rees and Ms Wong 18/114

The following new members were welcomed to the Board: Prof K Badcock, Prof J Fiadeiro and Prof Humphreys in their new roles as Acting Deans, Mr Jago, representing Law, Prof Scott representing Computer Science, Mr C Jones, SU President, Mr J O' Neill and Ms H Hughes and Mr D Brown (in attendance). 18/115

The following new Heads of Department were also welcomed as members: Prof Jansen (Biological Sciences), Prof Crang (Geography), Prof Schack (Maths and ISG), Prof Hanretty (PIR) and Prof Wright (SMLLC). 18/116

Mr R Hall and Dr Beck were welcomed as the new Secretary and Assistant Secretary, respectively. It was noted that Ms C Beck, the Director of Student Administration, was attending as an observer. 18/117

It was also noted that Prof Rastle was attending by conference call. 18/118

### 2. Terms of Reference and Standing Orders

2.1 Paper AB/18/48 was RECEIVED and NOTED. The Terms of Reference and Standing Orders will require further updating in the light of the recent change of title of the Senior Vice-Principal (Academic), now Deputy Principal (Academic). 18/119

2.2 Paper AB/18/49 was RECEIVED. It was NOTED that Council had approved the membership. The nomination process for the 10<sup>th</sup> elected member of Academic Board is underway. 18/120

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting**  
Minutes of the meeting on 30 May were AGREED as a correct record. 18/121
4. **Matters arising**  
There were no matters arising. 18/122
5. **Actions taken by the Chair**
- 5.1 Paper AB/18/50 was RECEIVED. It was NOTED that the Chair had extended the terms of office of those appointed to serve on panels constituted under Statute 9 until 31 August 2019. Work was underway to fill vacant positions in Arts and Social Science and Science. 18/123
- The following error in the paper was noted: Prof Fransisca Mota – Murtado should read Prof Francisca Mota-Furtado. 18/124
- 5.2 Paper AB/18/51 was RECEIVED. It was NOTED that the Chair had approved the policy which took effect from the 1 October, the start of the 2019-20 recruitment cycle. Any feedback on the document could only be incorporated for the 2020-21 cycle. 18/125
- It was also noted that Ms C Marchant, Chief Executive of UCAS, would be visiting campus and meeting with staff and the Student's Union. Any staff who wished to raise issues should pass these on to the Deputy Principal (Academic) or the Deputy Principal (Operations). 18/126
- 5.3 Paper AB/18/52 was RECEIVED and NOTED. 18/127
6. **Unstarring of items**  
A proposal from Prof Bradley to unstar paper AB/18/65 was agreed. 18/128
7. **Principal's Report**  
Paper AB/18/53 was RECEIVED and taken as read. The Chair NOTED that while there had been a welcome improvement in the College's position in the Times Higher and Guardian League Tables and the Good University Guide, the College had dropped out of the top 200 universities in the Times Higher Work rankings. The Chair also highlighted the launch of the new Centre for Digital Creativity following the award of two new large grants. 18/129
8. **Reports from the Senior Management Team**
- The Deputy Principal (Academic) reported on the recent launch of the specification for TEF Year 4 and for the Year 2 pilot for subject level TEF. Changes being explored in the pilot include the introduction of two new National Student Survey metrics on learning resources and student voice, weighted at 0.5, and the inclusion of Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) data. Subject level TEF data will be released in January 2019. 18/130
- The Senior Vice-Principal (Academic, Strategy and Partnerships) noted that he was currently reviewing the academic planning round. 18/131

9. **Report from the Students' Union President**
- The Students' Union President updated the Board on the new academic representation system, which had been launched. There had been a pleasing number of nominations with over 1,000 students voting. One hundred and seventy-five of the new representatives had already signed up for training. 18/132
- He announced the launch of a new student-led award scheme, 'You're valued', which could be given to academic or professional services staff. It is the intention of the Students' Union to make these awards as publicly as possible. 18/133
- Finally, he noted that the Students' Union have raised the issue of Council Tax as it applies to graduating students. The College is currently investigating the official end date of students' studies and therefore when their Council Tax liability increases. 18/134
10. **Report from the Council**
- 10.1 Prof Ansari reported on the last three meetings of Council. The minutes of the April meeting were included in the Board papers (AB/18/54). The focus of the April meeting had been to reach a resolution on the appointment of the incoming Chair of Council and her remuneration. The 4 July meeting focussed, amongst others, on a report on the activities of the Students' Union, the gender pay gap, the Integrated Academic Strategy and 'Fit for Futures' Projects. At its most recent meeting on 10 October Council again discussed the appointment of the new Chair. At this meeting Council was informed of the proposal to dissolve the three Faculties and replace them with six Schools. There was enthusiasm for this and Council indicated that should Academic Board approve the proposal, they would be supportive. 18/135
- 10.2 Paper AB/18/54, Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 April 2018, was RECEIVED and NOTED. 18/136
11. **Student Wellbeing**
- The Chair NOTED that this item was being postponed to the December meeting of the Board so that sufficient time could be set aside to give this the attention it deserved and to discuss how the College might continue to support student wellbeing and meet its legal responsibilities in this regard. 18/137
12. **Academic Restructuring**
- Paper AB/18/56 was RECEIVED. The discussion on the paper was preceded by a presentation from the Deputy Principal (Academic). She outlined the fact that the context in which the College operates had changed significantly in the last five years, e.g. increasingly competitive recruitment market with a changed student demographic, static fees, rising costs. She and the senior management team did not believe that the current structure of the College was fit for purpose in this environment. A new structure was needed in order to enhance the consistency of student experience. It was proposed that six new Schools should be created and these would have greater control over their resources than the existing departmental structure allowed. There would be accompanying changes to representation on central committees which would enable the new Schools to have more involvement in strategic decision-making. To this end the six Heads of School would be members of the College Executive. Together these changes would contribute to making the College stronger, more flexible and more agile in responding to change and new ideas. She outlined for the Board some of the detail of the proposed structure and its benefits. 18/138

18/139

This was followed by a presentation from the Deputy Principal (Operations), who outlined the updated administration required to support the proposed new School structure and the rationale for having the new structures in place by 1 August 2019. While both Deputy Principals acknowledged the risks involved in moving to a new model by 1 August 2019, e.g. impact of uncertainty on staff, maintaining business as usual at critical points in the academic cycle, they also pointed out the risks associated with not changing, e.g. maintaining the slow speed of decision making in a challenging environment, not operating efficiently in this environment where income from student fees is static, but operational costs are rising.

18/140

The Students' Union were invited to put forward their views. They were supportive of the proposal, as they believed that the new structure would improve the student experience, a goal which both they and the College share. They had been assured that the College would seek to maintain the identity of Departments within each School given the close affiliation to and identity with a Department felt by students. Each School will include administrative staff with student-facing roles so that students have a clear point of contact in the School as they now have in departments. Although the new academic representation partnership agreed between the Students' Union and the College last year was based on a departmental structure, they felt that it was sufficiently flexible to be adapted to the proposed new School structure without losing any of its current benefits.

18/141

The discussion was opened to members of the Board, with the vast majority of members taking the opportunity afforded to them to express their views. During the discussion the following were raised as key risks:

- Lack of detail in the proposal as outlined in the Academic Board paper, with respect to, for example, the anticipated savings, one-off costs, changes to academic governance, changes to what constitutes an academic unit;
- The speed at which the new School structure will be implemented and the ability of the College to operate within this new model from 1 August 2019, both in terms of operational systems and in terms of academic governance and regulation;
- The loss of trust amongst staff with staff leaving and institutional memory being lost;
- The loss of visibility and identity of Departments in the new structure for students and staff, both internally and externally;
- The impact on student experience, in particular the NSS and PTES where the School office is not co-located with departments and staff do not understand the needs of students from different departments;
- In-year risks during the current academic year with additional stress on key staff at key times;
- The loss of what the College currently does well in Departments.

The Deputy Principal (Academic) and Deputy Principal (Operations) responded to the points and risks raised by members of the Board.

18/142

Several members of the Board who were in favour of the proposal also expressed concerns but argued that the risks were outweighed by the benefits which the Deputy Principal (Academic) had outlined and also the consequences of not changing at this point.

18/143

In response to the concerns expressed, the Chair agreed that a more detailed proposal would be submitted to Council which:

- clearly outlines for them the cost savings and balances these against the risks identified by the Board;
- provides assurances that the College is able to manage the identified risks.

	He also suggested that:	18/144
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Council oversight group might be set up to monitor the implementation of the new structure;</li> <li>• A report be submitted to Academic Board in December to outline how risk will be mitigated during the implementation of the new structure while protecting 'business as usual';</li> <li>• Regular updates on the progress of the implementation are provided to meetings of the Academic Board during the academic year.</li> </ul>	18/145
	Following the discussion the Board was asked to vote on the recommendation that Council dissolve the Faculty structure and replace it with 6 Schools. 28 members (of 40 present with voting rights) voted in favour of the recommendation and 5 voted against with the remainder abstaining.	
13.	<b>Professional practice promotion route</b>	
	Paper AB/18/56 was RECEIVED. The new criteria, which recognise professional practice and provide a route for career progression similar to those available for teaching-focused staff, were generally welcomed. Some concerns were raised about the comment that the notional 40% of time spent on research would be spent on practice and how this aligned with requirements set for time spent on research for teaching focussed staff. The Academic Staffing and Titles Committee would be asked to review the criteria in the light of comments made about alignment with those in the teaching-focused route.	18/146
	Following the discussion the criteria for the professional practice route were approved.	18/147
14.	<b>Annual report of Academic Board</b>	
	Paper AB/18/57 was RECEIVED. It was noted that this would be considered by Council at their next meeting on 10 November.	18/148
15.	<b>Student recruitment</b>	
	Paper AB/18/58 was RECEIVED. The College had experienced its largest intake to date but nevertheless failed to meet the targets set. While Home/ EU numbers had decreased the number of overseas postgraduate taught students had increased.	18/149
	It was noted that MSc by Research students are not reflected in the October count, particularly for the School of Biological Sciences. This has been raised with Strategic Planning and Change, who are investigating. They will correct the error in the November count.	18/150
16.	<b>Academic promotions</b>	
	Paper AB/18/59 was RECEIVED. Several corrections were noted:	18/151
	Mr Jago has been transferred from Senior Lecturer (Teaching Focused) to Senior Lecturer (Research and Teaching) and not promoted to a lectureship as indicated in the paper.	
	Two academic members of staff have been promoted to Professor and listed as such but with their previous titles: Prof Andreas Chatzidakis and Prof Helen Tregidga.	18/152

*(Secretary's note: Subsequent to the meeting it was noted that Professor Elena Giovannoni needs to be added to the list.)*

17. **Terminology used in relation to courses and modules**  
Paper AB/18/60 was RECEIVED. It was agreed to change the College nomenclature in relation to 'course units' and (degree) 'programmes' to 'modules' and 'courses', respectively and to implement this change as detailed in the paper. 18/153
18. **Proposed changes to constitutions and terms of reference**
- 18.1 Paper AB/18/61 was RECEIVED and amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Academic Board Executive were NOTED. 18/154
- 18.2 Paper AB/18/62 was RECEIVED and amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Academic Planning Committee were NOTED. 18/155
19. **Nominations for committees**  
There were no nominations for committees. 18/156
20. **Publication**
- 20.1 No items require broad dissemination around the College. 18/157
- 20.2 No papers were designated as exempt from the Freedom of Information Act requirements. 18/158
21. **Academic Board Executive**  
Paper AB/18/63 was RECEIVED. 18/159
22. **Academic Planning Committee**  
Paper AB/18/64 was RECEIVED. 18/160
23. **Research and Impact Committee**  
Paper AB/18/64 was RECEIVED. Prof C Bradley noted that the April minutes of this Committee included a summary of the gender of Impact case study leads as at April 2018. Men lead 58 case studies, while women lead 34. The Committee had agreed that this was something which needed to be kept under review and that further capacity should be built to address the gender balance and encourage leadership through activities such as mentoring and awareness raising. She noted that there had been no follow-up to this in the next meeting of the Committee which had taken place in May. 18/161
- The Vice Principal (Research Impact & Interdisciplinarity) acknowledged that most impact case studies were led by members of the professoriate, where men predominate. It was also acknowledged that there are not only equality issues in relation to gender but also to other protected characteristics. She is currently working with the 'On track' programme to embed the impact agenda into the research profile of early career researchers as a 18/162

starting point but noted that more work was needed in this area to address impact in the round.

24. **Departmental Grants Group**  
Paper AB/18/66 was RECEIVED. 18/163
  
25. **Teaching and Learning Strategy Committee**  
Paper AB/18/67 was RECEIVED. 18/164
  
26. **Quality Assurance and Standards Committee**  
Paper AB/18/68 was RECEIVED. 18/165
  
27. **Informal updates**  
There were no informal updates. 18/166
  
28. **Date of next meeting**  
Wednesday 12 December 2018 at 3pm in the Moore Annexe Lecture Theatre. 18/167