



Board of Governors

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 29th September 2020

20/01 *Attendance*

1.1 Present

Mr J Bateman OBE	Independent Governor, Chair
Mr C Arntzen	Independent Governor
Dr D Beech	Independent Governor
Mr J Bothamley CBE	Independent Governor
Mr S Devlin	Co-opted 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
Dr C Jones	Independent 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
Mr H South	Student 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
Professor S Greer	Deputy Vice Chancellor & Provost
Ms H Johnstone	Head of Governance and Regulatory Affairs (Clerk to the Board)
Ms T Manning	Vice President, Students' Union
Mrs J Newland	Assistant Clerk to the Board
Mr R Renton	Pro Vice Chancellor Students

1.3 Apologies

None

20/02 *Declarations of Interests*

2.1 There were no declarations of interest declared.

20/03 *Primary Responsibilities of the Board* [BG20/01]

- 3.1 The Board noted its Primary Responsibilities.

20/04 Minutes

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2020 [BG20/02a] and 30th June 2020 [BG20/02b] were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 4.2 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda: none.

20/05 Chair's Business

- 5.1 The Chair reported he had attended the University Garden Party in July and on behalf of the Board thanked Sian Hobday, Secretary to the University Executive, on her retirement for her many years of service to the University.
- 5.2 He noted various initiatives promoted by the CUC and that it is planned to bring the updated CUC Code of Governance to the future Board meeting.
- 5.3 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*
- 5.4 The Board Effectiveness Review is on the agenda for the Board session on 30th September. One of the areas highlighted in the review is the diversity of the Board. The Chair thought it important to address this issue and noted the Clerk to the Board had circulated a link to the Advance HE race equality charter for discussion on 30th September with a view to adopting the charter.

20/06 Schedule of Business [BG20/03]

- 6.1 The Board received for information the draft Schedule of Business for 2020/21; this is also available to members via the Governors' Portal.

20/07 Update on Welcome Week and Students returning to Campus

- 7.1 The Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor Students and Students' Union officers gave an update on the University's approach to dealing with the pandemic, especially in light of the recent media publicity around universities.
- 7.2 The Vice Chancellor noted the University took the decision early on, as discussed with the Board, to have a blend of face to face and online learning for this academic year. The approach so far has been very successful with active promotion of public health messages and working closely with local Public Health. The campus is reasonably busy but not crowded, due to implementing a stretched out timetable. There are currently a few student flats where students are self-isolating due to Covid-19 and the University has support measures in place for students who need to isolate. The President of the Students' Union noted that the general feeling among students on campus was calm.
- 7.3 The Pro Vice Chancellor Students gave an overview of the preparations and support put in place for the return to campus, both for staff and for students, and of communications with students. Working in partnership with the Students' Union, Public Health and the city has put the University in a good position. A very successful Welcome Weekend held outdoors at City Campus combined with staggered arrivals to accommodation meant a very relaxed welcome for students. Further initiatives such as meal kits available to order and advice for parents are planned. It was confirmed the meal kits will be affordable. The Students' Union gave details of virtual events arranged to ensure as many students as possible can get involved and other activities such as the Sports and Society showcase. Students have appreciated the different event formats. It was noted the number of positive cases of Covid-19 among students matches that in the wider local community.
- 7.4 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

20/08 Vice Chancellor's Report [BG20/04]

20/09 Students' Union business

9.1 Students' Union Presentation

- 9.1.1 The Students' Union officers gave a presentation covering key achievements in 2019/20, aims and objectives for 2020/21 and challenges ahead.

The SU was ranked 13th in the WhatUni SU rankings, up 21 places on the previous year and achieved 79% satisfaction in the Course Experience Survey (CES). Other key achievements included agreement of a new governance structure; raising over £23,000 for RAG (Raise and Give); 154 students achieved over 9000 hours volunteering; the creation of a new programme of recreational sports activities and ongoing support during lockdown.

Objectives for 2020/21 include addressing various aspects of student wellbeing, increasing the engagement and integration of international students, addressing gaps and increasing awareness of the academic representative system, addressing barriers faced in placement students in participating in sports and activities and supporting implementation of the SU governance review.

Challenges ahead are seen as maintaining a sense of community with all students, ensuring positive mental health and wellbeing and balancing student expectations with the reality of what is achievable.

- 9.1.2 The Chair congratulated the Officers on their presentation and ambitious agenda. Governors were asked to send any questions on the presentation to the Clerk to the Board. The Board received the Students' Union report [BG20/05].

20/10 Provost's business

10.1 The Provost's report [BG20/06]

[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]

10.2 Report of Academic Board [BG20/07]

- 10.2.1 The Governor observer on Academic Board highlighted 3 points from the report of the Academic Board meeting of 1st July 2020:

- The Provost's report demonstrated how fast the University has moved since July, for example work on digital poverty is now complete and students can use the Access to Learning fund.

- There was a passionate discussion on progress to reduce the BAME attainment gap and the need to build on good practice.

- The new Learning and Teaching Strategy and Research & Knowledge Exchange Strategy were both approved. It was noted they are derived from the strategic plan. The strategies are to be circulated to members.

- 10.2.2 The Board received the report.

20/11 Reports from Committees

11.1 Report from Audit Committee [BG20/08]

11.1.1 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

- 11.1.2 The Committee adopted the new CUC Higher Education Audit Committees Code of Practice that covers new areas such as the Committee assessing its effectiveness.
- 11.1.3 The Board were asked to approve recommended changes to the Committee's terms of reference to clarify membership and the Committee's responsibilities. It is intended to make student and staff governors full members of the Committee. The University's Articles need to be amended before this can happen and it is planned to make this change to their status for the next academic year. The Head of Governance and Regulatory Affairs confirmed it is intended to make staff and student governors full members across committees. It is also planned to establish a clear remit for the role of Governor Observer. The Board approved the Audit Committee's terms of reference.
- 11.1.4 The Board approved the update to the Covid-19 Risk Register that reflects the changes to the situation since the end of June 2020.
- 11.1.5 The Board received the report.
- 11.2 Report from Finance & Development Committee [BG20/09]
- 11.2.1 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*
- 11.2.2 The Committee considered the paper on the Severn Campus that is to be received by the Board on 30th September and commended all of the recommendations for approval. The Committee also had a robust discussion on the internal audit report on Estates – Capital Project Management.
- 11.2.3 The Board received the report.
- 11.3 Report of the Board Business Continuity Group [BG20/10]
- 11.3.1 Members received the report with an update on the work of the Group at its meetings in July and September 2020. The Board approved an extension of the remit of the Group until the end of November 2020 to allow for meetings if needed as the pandemic situation develops. The Board was reminded the Group has no delegated authority.

20/12 University Schedule of Delegation [BG20/11]

- 12.1.1 The Board received amendments and additions to the University Schedule of Delegation that included the Board's responsibility for compliance with the OfS Conditions of Registration and the delegated authorities to the University's two operational subsidiary companies, UW Developments Ltd and UW Wolves Ltd. It is intended to bring a full review of the schedule of delegation to the Board in July 2021. It was clarified contracts for residential and research specific accommodation go through UW Developments Ltd as it is beneficial for VAT treatment.
- 12.1.2 The Board approved the amendments. The complete schedule is available to governors on the Governors' portal.

20/13 Report items

- 13.1 Report on the use of the seal [BG20/12]
- 13.1.1 The Board received for information the report on the use of the University Seal.

20/14 Compliance with OfS conditions [BG20/13]

- 14.1 The Head of Governance and Regulatory Affairs presented an update on matters relating to the OfS covering the resumption of regulatory requirements, the DfE and BEIS policy paper on reducing the bureaucratic burden, the most recent data returns to the OfS and the annual review of the Student Protection Plan. It was noted no events had been reported to the OfS from July to September 2020 under

the Reportable Events requirements. The Board also received the Annual Report on Compliance with the Conditions of Registration.

- 14.2 The Board received details of the meeting held the previous week between the OfS and the University at which the OfS asked about finances, student numbers and course delivery. The meeting was positive and the OfS advised they would not schedule a further meeting.
- 14.3 The Board noted the report and the Annual Report on Compliance with the OfS Conditions of Registration.

20/15 Any Other Business

- 15.1 There was no other business.

Those in attendance at the Board meeting retired from the meeting. Members of the Board of Governors (see 1.1 above) plus the Director of HR, and Vice Chancellor for agenda item 16.1, remained. The Vice Chancellor left the meeting before agenda item 16.2.

20/16 Annual reports of the Remunerations Committees (Director of HR in attendance)

[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]

20/17 Date of Next Meeting

Second session of this Board meeting: 30th September 2020

Next Board meeting: 24/25th November 2020.