



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Office UEB/2020/0303/01  
Of  
The President &  
Vice-Chancellor.

## Minutes University Executive Board

**Date:** 4 February 2020

**Present:** Professor K Lamberts (KL) (in the Chair for items 1-6),  
Professor D Petley (DNP) (in the Chair for items 7-12),  
Professor J Derrick (JD), Professor S Fitzmaurice (SF),  
Professor M J Hounslow (MJH), Professor W Morgan (WM),  
Professor C Newman (CN), Mr R Sykes (RS), Professor C Watkins (CW)

**In attendance:** Dr T Strike (TS), Mr A Storer (AS) (Item 3), Mr A Carlile (AC) (Item 4), Mrs S Grocutt (SG) (Item 5), Ms M Nolan (MN) (Item 6) (MN), Dr R H Birch (RHB) (Items 6 and 7), Mrs V E Jackson (VEJ) (Items 7 and 8), Professor M Vincent (MV) (Item 10)

**Apologies:** Professor G Valentine (GV)

**Minute Secretary:** Dr E Smith (ES), Mr D Swinn (DTS)

### 1. Minutes of UEB held on 26 November 2019

1.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

### 2. Notes of UEB Away Day held on 10 December 2019

2.1 The notes were approved as an accurate record.

### 3. Closed Minute and Paper

### 4. Closed Minute and Paper

### 5. Closed Minute and Paper

### 6. Access and Participation Plan Next Steps (RHB and MN in attendance for this item)

6.1 UEB considered the proposals to support the implementation of the University's Access and Participation Plan (APP). The Office for Students (OfS) had approved the APP from 2020/21-2024/25, and the proposals would begin to be implemented during the first year of operation in 2020/21 under the coordination of an Access & Participation Strategy Group, Chaired by WM. In particular, UEB was asked to endorse recommendations in respect of: (i) the proposed approach for targeting activities concerning the recruitment, continuation, and attainment of underrepresented groups; (ii.) transitioning from the former OFFA budget to the new budgeting and reporting arrangements and (iii.) the proposed framework for supporting the research and evaluation activities that the OfS required and for internal and external reporting for the period to 2024/25.

6.2 During discussion, UEB welcomed the shared cost model put forward to manage APP-related activities. In particular, attention was drawn to the fact that the APP's focus on outcomes under the OfS would replace OFFA's previous expenditure-based reporting requirements and that it was appropriate to retain the overall APP budget at the current level. It was noted that a communications plan would be developed to update staff on the changed approach, including transparency around the shared cost model. With regard to research and evaluation, the activities of the Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Unit (WPREU) should be more internally focused, with oversight from an APP Research and Evaluation Group. It was noted that the need to demonstrate impact and positive outcomes was increasingly focused on direct institutional benefit rather than broader access and participation in HE. A number of existing University initiatives were relevant to APP objectives.

6.3 UEB endorsed the recommendations as set out in the related paper.

6.4 **Actions:**

- (a) A communications plan should be drafted to update staff on the changes being made to support the implementation of the APP.

**7. Closed Minute and Paper**

**8. Closed Minute and Paper**

**9. UEB Sub Group – Student Accommodation**

9.1 UEB considered the draft Terms of Reference and Membership for a UEB Student Accommodation Sub Group. Attention was drawn to the remit of the Sub Group, which included reviewing the University's current Student Accommodation Strategy and agreeing recommendations for short-, medium-, and long-term action to match student demand and enhance financial sustainability.

9.2 During discussion, UEB suggested that a representative of Estates and Facilities Management be added to the Sub-Group's membership. The Sub Group should also ensure that there were sufficient opportunities to consider the views of students in developing any recommendations.

9.3 UEB approved the formation of the Sub Group, subject to the additional member from EFM.

9.4 **Actions:**

- (a) The Vice-President for Education and the Director of Infrastructure would be invited to be members of the Sub Group.
- (b) UEB would be updated within two months on the Sub Group's work plan and the timescales to which it was working.
- (c) A recent report by external consultants would be shared with UEB members.

**10. Module and Programme Evaluations**

(MV in attendance for this item)

10.1 UEB considered the recommendations of a Task and Finish Group on Module and Programme Evaluations, which had been established to determine the policies, processes, and practices that would underpin the implementation and ongoing governance of a central system. Attention was drawn to the underlying principles of Module and Programme Evaluation, together with the decisions the Group had made regarding recommended practice, reporting, and questions and data. The challenge of embedding the platform at local level was noted; members of the Group would attend Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee meetings to explain the recommendations.

10.2 During discussion, UEB noted the following points:

- (a) The central system and its underpinning policies and processes should help to ensure consistency in practice.
- (b) The Task and Finish Group had made no recommendations about utilising Module and Programme Evaluation data in existing SRDS and promotion processes.
- (c) UCU had agreed on the core questions to include in the Module and Programme Evaluation. It was confirmed that the proposals would recognise that additional optional questions could be added according to Faculty or departmental need.

10.3 UEB endorsed the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group and the introduction of a standard model for Module and Programme Evaluation across the University.

10.4 **Actions:**

- (a) Further reflection would be given to whether departmental responsibility for module evaluation should sit with the Module or Programme owner.
- (b) The recommendation about reporting lines should clarify the role of Faculty Vice-Presidents and WM.

## 11. Report of the UEB Risk Review Group

11.1 UEB received and approved the Report, noting clarification that concerns expressed in the Faculty of Social Sciences' risk register related to issues identified by the PEG.

11.2 **Actions:**

- (a) The report would be corrected to reflect the clarification made above.

## 12. Round Table

- (a) Civil Engineering: MJH reported that the Chief Special Adviser to the Prime Minister had approached Professor Martin Mayfield on the subject of retro-fitting the UK's housing stock with a view to reducing carbon emissions.

**Action:** Further thought was required as to how to ensure that UEB were aware of interactions with Government officials.

- (b) Subject Access Request: TS updated UEB on a recent Subject Access Request.

**Action:** Guidance would be produced for staff on best practice in the use of email and social media at work.

- (c) Competition and Markets Authority (CMA): RS reported that Audit Committee had suggested that UEB consider the need for some central controls to ensure compliance. The migration of web pages to the new CMS system would provide an opportunity to ensure that information was accurate and consistent.
- (e) OfS Value for Money (VfM) Strategy: RS reported on plans to develop the institutional approach to VfM, following the publication of the OfS VfM strategy and a subsequent initial report to UEB and Audit Committee.
- (f) University Research Institutes: SH reported that interviews for professorial appointments had been organised and would take place in due course.