



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Office UEB/2020/2508/01  
Of  
The President &  
Vice-Chancellor.

## Minutes University Executive Board

**Date:** 16 June 2020

**Present:** Professor K Lamberts (KL) (in the Chair)  
Professor J Derrick (JD), Professor S Fitzmaurice (SF), Professor S Hartley (SH), Professor M J Hounslow (MJH),  
Ms J Jones (JJ), Professor W Morgan (WM),  
Professor C Newman (CN), Professor D Petley (DNP),  
Mr R Sykes (RS), Professor G Valentine (GV),  
Professor C Watkins (CW)

**In attendance:** Mr I Wright (IW),

**Apologies:** Dr T Strike (TS)

**Secretary:** Dr E Smith (ES) / Mr D Swinn (DS)

### 1. Minutes of UEB Held on 26 May 2020

1.1 The Minutes were approved as an accurate record.

### 2. Coronavirus Update

#### 2.1 UK Government/HE Sector

UEB noted that there had been another outbreak of COVID-19 in China, the extent of which was unknown, and that a local lockdown in Beijing had been implemented in response. If the situation persisted, the possible interruption of travel between China and the UK in September-October 2020 could impact on Overseas students from China moving to the UK to begin their studies. UEB would continue to monitor the situation.

### 3. Report of the UEB Risk Review Group

(Meeting held on 4 June 2020)

3.1 UEB received the report. Attention was drawn to the following Risk Register updates:

- Faculty of Science: Among the opportunities discerned were those in research, where the Faculty had secured some grants and hoped to capitalise on the enhanced public appreciation of scientists as a result of the pandemic.
- AMRC: UEB noted that the Risk Register had undergone a full refresh, and commended the work to improve its use and function.

- Professional Services: A range of work was ongoing to address the principal risks to this area, which clustered around financial sustainability and performance, compliance, student recruitment, and digital learning and teaching.
- Corporate Risk Register: There had been adjustments to 8 risks, largely to recognise the increased threat from COVID-19.

3.2 UEB approved the report and noted both the update and the most recent iteration of the 2019/20 Corporate Risk Register.

#### 4. Closed Minute and Paper

#### 5. National Pay Negotiations

5.1 UEB received an update on the National Pay Negotiations, which covered both the 2019 and 2020 Pay Awards. The main points raised included the following:

- 2019 Pay Award

The University and College Union (UCU) was still in dispute, and planned to ballot its membership over the Universities and Colleges Employers Association's (UCEA's) proposal of a 1.8% increase, which had been implemented from August 2019. Subject to the outcome, the UCU National Executive would consider its next steps.

- 2020 Pay Award

National negotiations had been postponed as a result of COVID-19. UCEA members had indicated a strong preference for a 0% increase due to the financial challenges resulting from the pandemic. Therefore, UCEA had proposed to write to Trade Unions to propose suspending negotiations for 2020 since it had no mandate to agree any increase, with some changes to lower grades to ensure that salaries maintained parity with the Living Wage.

5.2 During discussion, clarification was provided that, under the USS Scheme rules, contribution rates would increase in August 2021. It was possible that the 2020 Valuation, which was ongoing and due to conclude later this year, would result in lower contributions. However, this appeared improbable given the prevailing financial market conditions.

5.3 UEB endorsed the approach that Human Resources had taken to the National Pay Negotiations, which had been considered in the context of the overall financial position.

#### 6. Round Table

- (a) Start Dates for PGR Students: SH reported that a proposal was being developed to stagger the start dates for new PGR students in 2020/21, in response to applicant queries, to support the phased recommencement of on-campus activity and maximise the time available for overseas students to travel to the UK.

**Action:**

- (a) Further advice would be sought from Admissions and the University Secretary and capacity and formal approvals required, respectively, before a final proposal was presented.
- (b) UEB Task and Finish Group on Sexual Violence: GV provided an update on the establishment of the Task and Finish Group. Having noted that the Group was concerned with business processes and risk management in this area, UEB agreed that the Group should report to UEB rather than to Council via the Council Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee.

**Action:**

- (a) UEB's decision would be reported to the University Secretary, with guidance to be sought on the relevant governance and reporting arrangements.
- (c) UEB- Students' Union Sabbatical Officer Buddies: GV updated UEB on suggested changes to the system and sought feedback from Members.
- (d) SU President Elect: KL reported on an initial meeting with the SU President Elect.
- (e) Universities Minister: KL noted an upcoming meeting between a number of Vice-Chancellors and the Universities Minister, which he would be attending.