



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Office  
Of The  
President &  
Vice-Chancellor.

UEB/2018/2301/01

## Minutes

## University Executive Board

<b>Date:</b>	9 January 2018
<b>Present:</b>	Professor G Valentine (GV) (in the Chair), Professor Sir Keith Burnett (KB) (item 1), Professor J Derrick (JD), Mrs H J Dingle (HJD), Professor D Hadley (DH), Professor W Morgan (WM), Professor Dame Pamela J Shaw (PJS), Professor C Watkins (CW)
<b>In attendance:</b>	Dr T Strike (TS); Mrs R Arnold (RA) (item 1); Mr J Busson (JB) and Dr C Edgar (item 3); Mr I Wright (IW) (item 4)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr A Dodman (AD), Professor M J Hounslow (MJH), Professor D Petley (DP)
<b>Secretary:</b>	Ms S M Stephens (SMS)

### 1. President & Vice-Chancellor: UEB and the transition process

(Ruth Arnold in attendance for this item)

Following announcement of the President & Vice-Chancellor's intention to retire, KB indicated that he wished to ensure a smooth transition and would work in close partnership with members of UEB, Council and Senate to support the range of important initiatives currently in progress and to secure and progress the opportunities he had identified in the UK and overseas. It was suggested in discussion that consideration be given to a series of themed events focusing on specific aspects of the P&VC's contribution during his period of office and involving key stakeholders.

**Action:** Members were invited to offer views on matters on which the P&VC should focus during the transition period, as well suggestions as to events. RA would co-ordinate.

### 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2017

(UEB/2018/0901/001)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2017 were approved as an accurate record.

### 3. OFFA monitoring return

(UEB/2018/0901/002)

(James Busson and Christina Edgar in attendance for this item)

- 3.1 UEB considered the monitoring return for the 2016-17 Access Agreement, providing details of expenditure of additional undergraduate tuition fee income in the areas of access, student success and progression and financial support, as well as progress against agreed targets and milestones. It was noted that overall expenditure was in line

with the University's commitment to OFFA in cash terms, but higher than anticipated as a proportion of income, due to the large number of eligible students registering at the University. Good progress continued to be made against many of the KPIs, with 'no progress' reported only in respect of part-time mature intake numbers and full-time mature retention rates, the former reflecting national trends, and the latter small fall in continuation rates remaining below the national average.

### 3.2 **Action:**

- UEB agreed that the monitoring return should be recommended to the President & Vice-Chancellor for approval and submission to HEFCE, subject to amendment of the commentary to include reference to performance against the target for full-time mature students as well as that for part-time mature students.
- It was noted that an Access and Participation Plan would form part of the required submission for registration with the new Office for Students, and that the OfS would provide guidance on its priorities and expectations. Within the University, work was being undertaken to consider how future access expenditure should best be targeted. UEB should consider the Access Agreement again in March and November 2018, and dates would be identified.

## 4. **Strike pay deduction policy**

(UEB/2018/0901/003)

(Ian Wright in attendance for this item)

- 4.1 UEB considered a paper concerning the University's policy on withholding pay for participation in industrial action. This proposed that, following a Supreme Court ruling in May 2017 within the case of *Hartley & Others v King Edward VI College*, the divisor applied when withholding pay should be amended from 1/260<sup>th</sup> of annual salary to 1/365<sup>th</sup>. It was noted that the divisor of 1/260<sup>th</sup> was currently used across the HE sector and that most institutions were likely to implement this change. UEB agreed to recommend to the President & Vice-Chancellor that:
- the divisor for withholding pay for participation in future industrial action should be 1/365<sup>th</sup> of salary and that this should apply to staff on all grades;
  - potential claims for backpay based on the existing rate of 1/260<sup>th</sup> should be addressed as and when they arise.
- 4.2 UEB endorsed the core text of a message to staff and trade unions regarding industrial action and proposals concerning pay deductions, subject to amendment of reference to the suspension of USS scheme membership for staff taking industrial action to clarify that this is a USS rule.
- 4.3 IW provided an update on potential industrial action, noting that the outcome of UCU's ballot of its members would be known on 19-20 January, and that UUK was consulting on recently tabled proposals from the UCU concerning changes to USS. These involved increases to both employers' (from 18% to 23.5%) and employees' (from 8% to 10.9%) contributions. The University had already indicated in an earlier response that an increase in the employers' contribution above 18% was unsustainable, and there were concerns about the affordability of an increased employee contribution, particularly for staff on lower grades. UEB agreed to recommend to the President & Vice-Chancellor that this view should be communicated to UUK.

## **5. Report of the Strategic Advisory Group – Student Numbers and Fees**

(Meeting held on 11 December 2017) (UEB/2018/0901/004)

UEB received the Report, noting that discussion at the Group's last meeting had focused on the various actions being taken to promote the University to prospective students.

## **6. Report of the IT Sub-Group**

(Meeting held on 28 November 2018) (UEB/2017/0901/005)

UEB received the Report. The Sub-Group had been established to prioritise significant IT projects across the University, and it was noted that, following endorsement by the Sub-Group, a business case for a project to refresh the arrangements for storage systems (including maintenance contracts and technology) would be prepared for ECSG. Also noted was the Sub-Group's consideration of key IT-related risks, which would be managed as formal projects, with progress monitored by the Sub-Group and reported back to UEB via the Sub-Group.

## **7. Policy on portable heaters**

(Business conducted by correspondence)

Members had been consulted by correspondence during December concerning a new policy recently approved by the Health & Safety Committee on the use of portable heaters and had endorsed its implementation. The policy would prohibit the use of portable heaters in all but exceptional circumstances, with provision for Estates & Facilities Management to make alternative heaters available should the temperature fall below an acceptable level.

## **7. Round table**

- (a) VfM reporting: HJD reported that the previous arrangements for VfM reporting to HEFCE had been replaced by a mandatory Annual Efficiency Return. The University's draft return would be considered by Audit Committee on 22 January. Future reporting requirements under the new Office for Students were currently unclear.
- (b) Visits: PJS reported on recent visits, including that of the MRC to Neuroscience and that of the heads of the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Councils to explore opportunities for collaboration.
- (c) Biological Services: GV and PJS would meet to discuss possible options for the refurbishment or replacement of current facilities.
- (d) REF sub-panels: It was noted that Professor Bob Stern had been appointed to chair the Philosophy sub-panel.
- (e) UEB meetings: There would be no meeting on 16 January, and UEB would next meet on 23 January. DP would act as GV's deputy for purposes of UEB business during her absence on leave.
- (f) UEB away day: This would take place on 30 January and would focus on estates matters, with further consideration of the recent review of estates governance and the report of the efficient estate project led by MJH.
- (g) UEB-HoDs away day: This had taken place on 8 January. Members were invited to share any feedback with GV, including suggestions for future events.
- (g) VP Arts & Humanities: Members congratulated DH on her appointment to a Chair of Archaeology at the University of York, noting that she would leave Sheffield in

September. She would continue to act as interim VP until Susan Fitzmaurice's expected return in March, but would step out of UEB discussions where a conflict of interest might arise.