



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Office  
Of The  
President &  
Vice-Chancellor.

UEB/2018/1704/03

## Minutes

## University Executive Board

<b>Date:</b>	27 March 2018
<b>Present:</b>	Professor G Valentine (GV) (in the Chair), Professor Sir Keith Burnett (KB)(item 1), Professor J Derrick (JD), Mr A Dodman (AD), Professor D Hadley (DH), Professor M J Hounslow (MJH), Professor W Morgan (WM), Professor D Petley (DP), Professor C Watkins (CW)(items 4-10)
<b>In attendance:</b>	Dr T Strike (TS); Dr C Edgar (items 3-4); Ms L McCarthy (item 3); Mr J Busson (item 4); Mr J Baragwanath, Mr C Sirett, Mr A Storer and Professor K Ridgway (item 5); Mr A Cox (item 6); Ms G Tait (item 7); Dr R Birch (item 9)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mrs H J Dingle (HJD), Professor Dame Pamela J Shaw (PJS), Mr R Sykes (RS)
<b>Secretary:</b>	Ms S M Stephens (SMS)

### 1. Update on pensions and industrial action

KB provided an update, noting that the position taken by the University was consistent with that now being taken, with recent proposals providing for greater independence and transparency in the valuation. UCU's response to these proposals was awaited, and it was hoped that resolution could be achieved through the full and proper process now envisaged. Thanks were due to colleagues who had worked to mitigate the impact of the dispute on students, and especially to those in Security Services.

### 2. Student recruitment update

(UEB/2018/2703/002)

(Christina Edgar and Louise McCarthy in attendance for this item)

UEB considered an update on student recruitment and noted the position in respect of home and overseas recruitment to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, as well as the range of recruitment and marketing activities undertaken. The following points were noted in discussion:

- Action was being taken to include USIC figures in future reporting.
- The increase in PGT applications was due in large part to the popularity of Management School programmes, and the early closure of these and other high-recruiting courses had implications for diversity, with some overseas markets traditionally applying later in the cycle. The Management School's approach to recruitment was being reviewed, and action would be taken where possible to provide candidates with alternative offers.

- Modelling of PGT recruitment by the Faculty of Engineering highlighted the importance of conversion. LM would work with the Faculty to explore whether the significant latent variable demonstrated in the data could be better understood.
- The importance of academic staff input into conversion activity was noted, and LM would work with FVPs and HoDs to encourage wider participation.
- Attention was drawn to the University's position in terms of PGR recruitment compared with the Russell Group, and it was noted that Professor Maltby would bring proposals to UEB for interventions to support this area of recruitment. The importance of the PGT cohort as a pipeline for PGR recruitment was noted.

### **3. Access and Participation Plan 2019-20**

(UEB/2018/2703/003)

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

- 3.1 UEB considered the approach proposed by the Access and Participation Plan working group to preparation of the Access Statement and Access and Participation Plan required for registration with the Office for Students. Whilst there would be continuity with previous Access Agreement arrangements in terms of targets, investment, coverage and frequency, differences in the expectations of the OfS and OFFA included an increased focus on outcomes and on reducing the gaps in success and progression, as well as an expectation that providers would secure continuous improvement. It was also noted that the OfS would exercise a broader range of regulatory powers.
- 3.2 The following points were noted in discussion:
  - Notwithstanding the problematic data, a numeric target for BME attainment should be identified.
  - Attention was drawn to the need for further work to support BME student and staff recruitment and student attainment. The ECU-funded project looking at recruiting and supporting BME students in the Faculty of Arts & Humanities had potential for wider roll-out.
  - Clarification was provided concerning the approach to bursary spend, and it was noted that the working group was reviewing the balance between automatic bursaries and hardship/participation funds, while keeping to a minimum changes affecting students with a household income of less than £25k.
- 3.3 UEB endorsed the proposed approach, including the emphasis on deliverable outcomes. A final draft of the Access Statement and Access and Participation Plan would be presented to UEB on 17 April, in advance of submission to the OfS as part of the University's application for registration.

### **4. AMRC Group proposals**

(UEB/2018/2703/004)

(John Baragwanath, Colin Sirett, Andy Storer and Keith Ridgway in attendance for this item)

- 4.1 UEB considered a paper setting out proposals to establish three new AMRC centres – AMRC Cymru, AMRC North West and AMRC Derby – which would be presented to Council for approval on 16 April. In an accompanying presentation KR provided details of AMRC's potential growth in the UK and overseas, noting that drivers for expansion included opportunities arising from strengthening relationships with key partners, as well as the limited space available for further development in

Sheffield/Rotherham. Other initiatives, including a range of advisory work, were also noted.

- 4.2 In a detailed discussion UEB members raised questions and concerns in relation to a number of issues, including: identity and branding and the AMRC's relationship to the University; the AMRC's contribution to the wider University; potential risks and mitigations associated with managing rapid expansion, in terms for example of guarding against the dilution of the AMRC's mission and loss of control and quality; potential conflicts and overlaps between different areas of the expanding AMRC; and the extent to which University and AMRC international strategies were in alignment or whether potential conflicts existed.

- 4.3 The following points were noted in response:

- The approach to branding and identity was complex, and whilst it would be desirable from an institutional perspective for the University's brand to be clearly flagged, there were instances where it would be appropriate to place greater emphasis on the AMRC, for example when a proposed development was located in the vicinity of another university. Regardless of branding, all AMRC partners and government agencies were aware that the AMRC was part of the University, and grant funding reflected this.
- In revising the paper for consideration by Council, reference would be made to the AMRC's contribution to the wider University, including in relation to research impact, reputational gain and strategic partnerships. Examples of initiatives benefitting other areas of the University would also be provided and reference made to the nature of the AMRC as a not for profit entity, with funding provided for specific purposes.
- Reference would also be made to residual risks. It was noted that the developments did not involve a University contribution, would initially employ existing staff and were likely to grow and succeed, but that in the event that they did not become going concerns, the University would in two of the three cases be left with residual capital assets.
- It was noted that Council would wish to understand how any risks associated with managing growth, such as dilution of mission, reduction in quality or loss of control, would be mitigated.
- Costings for the three centres would as far as possible be presented in a consistent format.
- Each proposed opportunity had a particular USP, grounded in a specific area of AMRC activity, linked to a key partner organisation and with a 15-year planning horizon. It was suggested that this could helpfully be included in the paper, together with an indication of any potential overlaps or conflicts with existing AMRC or wider University activity.

- 4.4 **Action:**

TS would liaise with the AMRC leadership team and colleagues in Estates and Finance to establish what approvals may be needed within the Council scheme of delegation.

It was agreed that the discussion had given UEB a better understanding of the AMRC's vision and ambition and that arrangements should be made for periodic updates in the future. A strategic evaluation of the AMRC would form part of Council's away day on 9 July.

**5. Annual report of the Sport Sheffield Board**  
(UEB/2018/2703/005)

(Andy Cox in attendance for this item)

- 5.1 UEB received the annual report of the Sport Sheffield Board prior to its consideration by Council, as well as a presentation from AC outlining Sport Sheffield's scope and vision (covering health and wellbeing as well as sport), key themes, activities and ambitions.
- 5.2 The report noted that Sport Sheffield's financial position showed a deficit, and it was confirmed that a five-year plan was in preparation and would seek to address this. Given pressures on capital funding, it would be advisable for Sport Sheffield to explore other sources of support and identify financial streams that were less likely to be affected by external market pressures.

**6. Staff Survey**  
(UEB/2018/2703/006)

(Gill Tait in attendance for this item)

UEB considered a proposal to undertake a full Staff Survey in 2018 and agreed to recommend to the President & Vice-Chancellor that the Survey should take place, with the launch date to be confirmed, taking into account the position in relation to industrial action (UEB agreed that it would not be appropriate for the Survey to be undertaken during a period of industrial action). Proposals relating to changes to a number of questions were endorsed, with the proviso that the overall length of the Survey should not be increased. Proposed arrangements for staff communication were also endorsed.

**7. Students' Union relationship agreement**  
(UEB/2018/2703/007)

It was agreed that consideration of the revised Students' Union relationship agreement should be deferred to a later meeting.

**8. Report of the Risk Review Group**  
(Meeting held on 7 March 2018) (UEB/2018/2703/008)

- 8.1 UEB approved the report, noting that the revised Risk Register would be presented to Council on 16 April. At the request of Council, consideration had been given to those risks with a high/high residual rating to determine whether the residual risk was acceptable or whether further action should be sought. Also at Council's request, health and safety risks would, where appropriate, be embedded within existing risks, and this would be reflected in the next iteration of the Risk Register, to be presented to Council in July.
- 8.2 The Group had considered three Faculty risk registers. Greater alignment with significant challenges had been requested in one case.
- 8.3 It was noted that the University's compliance with the ongoing OfS registration conditions would be monitored by the Risk Review Group, with reports provided to Audit Committee.

**9. Round table**

- (a) UEB away day: Members had been consulted about arrangements for the May away day and arrangements would be confirmed shortly.
- (b) UEB meetings: The meetings scheduled for 3 and 10 April would be cancelled, and UEB would therefore next meet on 17 April.