

Guidance on agenda items and papers for UEB

A. Why should this item be on the UEB agenda?

Before requesting to add business to a UEB agenda please consider why UEB time is needed and whether it could be dealt with effectively in a different way, e.g. email, or delegated powers.

It should be clear how an item relates to UEB's remit (see Section C for UEB's terms of reference).

Items could fall into one of the following categories:

1. Setting strategic direction/policy (including interpretation of external environment);
2. Providing a steer on implementation of strategy, and on University priorities;
3. Planning and setting goals and targets;
4. Performance monitoring and review;
5. Financial forecasts, budgets and resource allocation;
6. Sharing information and intelligence;
7. Providing a collective UEB view, for internal or external purposes;
8. Providing a steer or agreeing action on mission-critical or high risk operational issues;

B. Guidance on writing papers for UEB

UEB receives a large volume of information on a wide range of subjects, and UEB members each have a significant portfolio to manage. It is important that papers are prepared with this in mind so that UEB receives only what is necessary to make a decision/provide a steer on the particular matter at hand. Business will flow more smoothly and meetings will be most effective if papers:

- are concise (i.e. a maximum of 3 sides);
- have a very clear but brief statement at the beginning of paper explaining the core issues (e.g. what UEB are being asked to do and why);
- provide a brief summary of where the item has been discussed before (e.g. University committees). Who has already been consulted?
- are clear whether any decisions that UEB may make are implementing existing Senate and Council policy (and may be reported to these bodies); or require UEB to make recommendations or proposals to Senate and Council;
- indicate what happens next (e.g. responsibility for action; report to a University committee; consultation; communication; response to external body);
- include the author's name and the date of the paper, and indicate the UEB 'sponsor';

It may be useful to consider the following questions when writing for UEB, where relevant:

1. To which University goal or strategy does it relate? How?
2. External and internal context?
3. Competitor analysis?
4. Clear evidence base? Is this/can this be made available to UEB? (e.g. via the 'Personal Document's function in iBabs, the UEB Google Drive, or by email)
5. Is there a proposal?
6. Where alternative options have been considered, are these explained?
7. Are the decisions required from UEB highlighted at the start of the paper?
8. Are the formal recommendations clearly stated at the end of the paper?
9. What are the next steps proposed, after UEB has considered the item? These may include:

- a) Actions to be progressed by named UEB member/s
- b) Actions to be progressed by other group/individual
- c) Governance route? To Council/Senate/internal committees
- d) External return or response
- e) Communications strategy required?
- f) For further discussion (why and where?)
- g) More information required, for specific purpose/decision

Closed Minutes and Freedom of Information:

The formal minutes of UEB meetings are published on the web for staff to see but UEB papers are not generally made widely available. The presumption is that items and their minutes will be open, unless there are specific reasons for a closed item, as outlined in UEB's Freedom of Information and Data Protection Guidance, available to download from the UEB webpages:

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/ueb/uebguidlines>

When writing and submitting a paper, please identify in advance whether the paper, or parts of the paper, are confidential and should be regarded as closed business. If the item and/or minute should be closed, please indicate under which section of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the exemption would apply; and for how long.

C. The University Executive Board's terms of reference

To understand and interpret the strategic environment in which the University operates, including dissemination of analyses and consultation on the strategic choices facing the University;

To provide steer and leadership on the academic and development strategy of the University;

To propose the University budget;

To receive, approve and monitor Faculty and Professional Service 5 year plans

To monitor and review the University performance (and that of its constituent faculties and services) and opportunities for development to optimise their contribution and impact within the University and national and international academic communities;

To enable the rapid and effective exchange of policy, funding and performance information to enable informed strategic discussions within the UEB, the faculties, and professional services.

To develop an annual operating plan stating the key priorities for development within each academic session of the University;

To monitor and advise key leaders on mission critical operational issues and academic/service coherence leaving the responsibility for delivery to the PVC faculties and Heads of Professional Services as appropriate.

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