

UCEN Manchester Board

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 30 November 2018 at 10am in Room OP116/117

Present: Kimoni Bell, Paula Cole, Cllr John Hacking (Chair), Lisa O’Loughlin (Principal), Peter Winter

In Attendance Rachel Curry (Vice Principal Planning and Performance), John Evans (Vice Principal Quality and Standards) Jennifer Foote MBE (Company Secretary and General Counsel), Susan Holden (Director of Quality, Standards and Strategic Partnerships), Lindsey Johnson (Vice Principal Curriculum and Support) Kile Moyana (Assistant Company Secretary and Legal Officer), Jane Nickisson (Director of Curriculum, Teaching , Learning and Assessment), Wendy Pennington (Director of Student Experience and Engagement), Debbie Sanderson (Divisional Finance Director College and Income Team) and Michael Walsh (Vice Principal and Dean)

Part A

24/18	<p>Part A minutes of the meeting of the UCEN Manchester Board held on 6 July 2018</p> <p>The Part A minutes of the meeting of the UCEN MCR Board held on 6 July 2018 were received and approved as an accurate correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>
25/18	<p>SED / QIP 2017/18</p> <p>The Board was presented with a comprehensive self-evaluation document which was based on HE specific methodology of self-assessment. The report denoted improvements on retention and pass rates in comparison to the previous year. Evidence of strengths and weakness were included as summaries giving a holistic picture of the HE SED report.</p> <p>Upon reviewing the data outlined in the report, the meeting sought clarification on causal factors that were having an adverse impact on teaching and learning quality standards. Principalship confirmed this to be made up of a number of factors including assessments approach, assessments feedback, NSS outcomes. The Board also made reference to the upward trend in Engineering. It was established that the department had previously undergone a challenging phase with structure of facilities and that improvement was beginning to show through. The Principal thanked the team for all the effort and time dedicated in producing a much more granular SED and a detailed illustration of improvements and strategic activities.</p>

<p>26/18</p>	<p>APR Update</p> <p>Following on from the outcome of the Annual Provider Review (APR) in February 2018, work had since been underway in producing a comprehensive compilation of reports pertaining to learner experience and outcomes and an action plan to improve quality standards. These were presented in the overarching annual assurance statements appended within the report. Approval of these statements was sought and the importance of their submission were stressed to the Board as they would inform the outcome of the eligibility assessment conducted by OfS during/as part of the transitional registration process. In summary, the reports illustrated a robust assessment of high quality standards of performance, progress metrics and the resultant action plan. The Board was invited to consider and approve the assurance statements in readiness for the submission deadline. Assurance was given to the meeting that the statements had also been rigorously challenged and reviewed at the recent Academic Board meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Annual Provider Review be approved.</p>
<p>27/18</p>	<p>Academic Board Update and Minutes</p> <p>The Board received the minutes of the Academic Board for information. It was considered best practice for student representatives (being the President of the Student Council or similar) should be invited to attend some or all of the Academic Board.</p> <p>The Board endorsed the suggested course of action to retain TEF Year 2 and extend for another year as opposed to applying for TEF Year 4. However, although extension was given to 2021, it was duly noted following that, that there would be a more stringent assessment carried out at subject level, subject clusters and at overall provider level. The Chair challenged the principalship to be prudent and mindful of the impact TEF has on prospective students on choice of institution to study, progression and retention rates.</p> <p>The Vice Principal and Dean reassured the meeting that the management of a strategically fit for purpose curriculum strategy was underway in readiness for the next Academic Board meeting.</p> <p><i>Paula Cole left the meeting at 11:45am.</i></p>
<p>28/18</p>	<p>Office for Students Application Update</p> <p>The Board received an update with respect to the above. It was confirmed that UCEN Manchester was not on the register as yet. Submission date is still on track for May 2019 with an anticipated result to be announced by September 2019. Feedback from OfS suggested there was a back log on processing. Henceforth regular checks and progress update would be obtained and provided to the Board in due course.</p> <p><i>Rachel Curry and John Evans left the meeting at 12:07pm</i></p>

<p>29/18</p>	<p>NSS Report and Student Survey Update</p> <p>The Board received an amalgamated report of the above for deliberation and scrutiny. Detail of survey results, feedback and participation rates were submitted. Headline figures revealed a decline in NSS participation rates although on programme level overall good performance from the survey was recorded.</p> <p>The board challenged the reason behind the low participation rates and asked for an explanation on a management mechanism in place to tackle the issues. In response, it was explained that the student voice strategy was fully embedded with a student group with the aim of uplifting participation in the future. In addition, emergent themes from the survey included concerns with programme handbooks, communication and assessment feedback. Assurance was given to the Board that remedial action was in place to address these issues.</p> <p>In response to a query raised, it was confirmed that impact of future enrolment based on feedback obtained from the NSS would be better reflected after its publication in July 2019. Governors urged the team be mindful of NSS outcomes being a key TEF and quality assurance metric and could directly impact internal progression. It was concluded that NSS outcomes should be managed strategically and effectively.</p>
<p>30/18</p>	<p>Academic Governance Structures</p> <p>The Board was advised on the detail of a robust and rigorous performance monitoring cycle for HE governance. Governors were pleased to note the structure implemented.</p> <p>In response to a query, it was established that whilst appropriate oversight at a corporate level was undertaken by the UCEN Manchester Board, it would evidence best practice if there was a degree of independent membership or involvement as part of the academic governance structure. It was considered that an external observation of processes would add to the value of independent and impartial monitoring and performance approach.</p>
<p>31/18</p>	<p>Strategic Challenges</p> <p>The Board was provided with a brief report for information on policy landscape within the HE sector, particularly in respect of potential strategic challenges as a result of Brexit.</p>
	<p>----- Chair</p> <p>----- Date</p>

The meeting closed at 12:30 pm