

## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Governors held on Thursday 9 February 2017 held in the Vice Chancellor's Boardroom, St Mary's University, Twickenham.

### **Present:**

Rt Rev Richard Moth (Chair)  
Mr Francis Campbell (Vice-Chancellor)  
Mr Edward Acton (Dialled into meeting)  
Mr David Hartnett (Dialled into meeting)  
Ms June Mulroy (Dialled into meeting)  
Dr Maureen Glackin  
Mr Jonathan Walsh (Dialled into meeting)  
Mr Zander Lavall  
Ms Anne Moran (Dialled into meeting)

### **In attendance:**

Mr John Unsworth (Interim Chief Operating Officer)  
Ms Beatrice Veerasingham (Finance Director)  
Mr Mark Sudbury (Senior Director of Global Engagement)  
Mr John Charmley (Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic Services)  
Mr Andrew Browning (Clerk to the Governors)  
Ms Nadine Burdjugow (Assistant to the Clerk)

**Apologies:** Mr Richard Finn, Mr Stuart Kemp, Mrs Sue Handley Jones

**(Clerk's Note:** Stuart Kemp and Sue Handley Jones both provided notification to the Clerk as to how they wished to vote in the two resolutions to be discussed at the meeting and their votes are therefore included in the voting numbers detailed below)

The meeting commenced with a prayer led by the Chair.

## **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interests.

## **2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- 1.1 Sue Handley-Jones who had chaired the previous meeting that took place on 22 November 2016 had confirmed by email that she was happy with the minutes. The minutes were therefore approved.

## 2 MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 As this was an extra meeting of the Board of Governors with a time estimate of only one hour it was agreed that any matters arising from the meeting that took place on 22 November 2016 would be held over until the next board meeting on 6 April 2017.

## 3 Tuition Fees

### ***To approve a resolution to setting fees for Home/EU Undergraduates for students studying in 2017–18***

Paper 1 refers

This was presented by Beatrice Veerasingham who together with Udey Chowdhury and John Unsworth had produced a paper that proposed the following:-

- An increase in fees by the full extent allowed under the TEF for all Year 1 students, £9,250.
- That an increase applies to Year 2 students of £9,100, increasing by inflation in their final year.
- That Year 3 fees are retained at £9,000 on the basis that their expectation when starting their studies was likely to be that fees would not change.
- That fees for foundation year courses be increased to £4625.

Consultation had taken place with the Student's Union regarding these proposals and SMT had considered these and recommended to the Board of Governors that they be approved and implemented.

The Board discussed in particular:-

- The process that had been undertaken in terms of consulting with the Student's Union and that concerns had been raised regarding the increase of the fees particularly by first year students.
- A Fees Guidance Booklet is sent to all students in their welcome pack at the time of their enrolling at the University which includes a provision that states that "All fees are subject to an inflationary increase in subsequent years". There is similar wording in the Student Finance Policy at paragraph 2.1.
- Whether the changing of the fees would comply with consumer legislation. Consideration was given to the Fees Guidance Booklet the Student Finance Policy.
- Concerns were raised about the terms relating to Foundation Courses and the terminology used to describe these.
- There was consideration of what other Universities had done. Some Universities had increased their fees across all years. Others had kept their fees the same.
- That the University needs to ensure that all materials that it puts out both paper and online relating to fees need to be consistent and that steps need to be taken to ensure that this is the case.

Prior to voting on the resolution it was proposed by the Vice Chancellor that the passing of this resolution was provisional on legal advice being obtained to confirm that the wording contained within the Fees Guidance Booklet were not inconsistent with other information that had been provided to students:

The Board **voted on the following resolution:**

That for the Academic year 2017/2018 there should be:-

- An increase in fees for all Year 1 students to £9,250.
- That there be an increase for Year 2 students to £9,100.
- That Year 3 fees are remain at £9,000.
- An increase in fees foundation year courses to £4625

10 governors voted in favour

1 governor voted against

The resolution was therefore passed.

**(Clerk's Note:** Legal advice has been obtained following this meeting. The Chair of the Board of Governors and the Vice-Chancellor have both reviewed this advice and the resolution is confirmed as being passed)

***To approve a resolution setting fee increases for the academic year 2017 -2018 for International Undergraduates (including Foundation and Study Abroad)***

Paper 2 refers

This was presented by Beatrice Veerasingham who together with Udey Chowdhury and John Unsworth had produced a paper that proposed the following:

- That fees for International Undergraduates (including Foundation and Study Abroad) and International Research students increase by 2%.
- That fees for Home Research students increase by 2.8%.

Beatrice Veerasingham said that the fees for International and Home Research students needed to be published for the next academic year. Having carried out research into the market it was felt that the University did not have the capacity to increase the fees any more than that.

Mark Sudbury said that the proposed increase would not put the University at a disadvantage compared to its competitors as the increase this year was modest.

Similar to the resolution passed in relation to Home/EU students above, it was proposed by the Vice Chancellor that the passing of the resolution was provisional on legal advice being obtained to confirm that the wording contained within the Fees Guidance Booklet were not inconsistent with other information that had been provided to students.

The Board **voted on the following resolution:**

That for the academic year 2017/2018:

- Fees for International Undergraduates (including Foundation and Study Abroad) and International Research students should increase by 2%.
- Fees for Home Research students should increase by 2.8%.

10 governors voted in favour

1 governor voted against

The resolution was therefore passed.

**(Clerk's Note:** Legal advice has been obtained following this meeting. The Chair of the Board of Governors and the Vice-Chancellor have both reviewed this advice and the resolution is confirmed as being passed)

It was made clear that the Board wanted the University to ensure that all students and prospective students were provided with the necessary information relating to fees as soon as possible.

## **22 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Thursday 6 April 2017 (5pm)

Thursday 29 June 2017 (5pm)

## **SPRING GRADUATION CEREMONIES**

Saturday 18 March 2017