124 Welcome and Apologies

124.1 The Chair welcomed as a new member of the Board: Professor F Grant, Director of Learning and Teaching, School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society. The Chair also welcomed: Ms A M Dalton-Pillay, Secretary of the University, in connection with the item on University Learning and Teaching Committee: Draft Terms of Reference (see Minute 132); Mr K MacAskill, Student Induction and Transition Manager, in connection with the item on Retention (see Minute 127).

124.2 The Chair reported that Professor M L D Wong, Deputy Vice-Principal, Malaysia, was now a member of the Board, but had given apologies for the current meeting.

124.3 Apologies for absence were as recorded above.

125 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board approved the Minutes of the meeting of 5 October 2016.

126 Matters Arising Not Otherwise on the Agenda

126.1 The Board noted the report on matters arising from the meeting on 5 October 2016.

126.2 Academic Management Structures: Board of Studies (Minute 6)

The Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) reported that, during his recent visits to the Dubai and Malaysia Campuses, he had observed some variability in the extent to which Boards of Studies were operating effectively; it was clear, however, that there were several notable examples of ongoing, cross-campus collaboration and well-established global academic teams, of which Dubai and Malaysia staff were fully part.

126.3 General Degrees (Minute 97)

The Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) reported that a discussion on general degrees would take place at the next Senate meeting on 14 December 2016; a report would be provided to the Board at its meeting on 11 January 2017.

126.4 Learning and Teaching Administrators Forum (Minute 112)

The Board agreed that the Learning and Teaching Administrators Forum should be discontinued, as its function was now being more effectively discharged through topic-specific working groups, particularly those related to SARP.
Global Learning and Teaching KPI's (Minute 114.2)

The Board noted that the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), the Director of Planning and the Planning Manager had met to discuss the provision of global KPI's (ie Dubai and Malaysia as well as UK) for all L+T KPI's (global retention KPI data had already been produced by the Planning Manager). It was noted that the Planning Manager would discuss the development of such KPI's with the Vice-Provosts at the Dubai and Malaysia Campuses.

Student Union – Review of Academic Representation

The Board noted that the Student Union still required School representatives for its working group to review and revise academic representation. It was noted that there was now insufficient time for the group to conclude its review and report by April 2017; however, the review would still be undertaken, albeit over a longer period of time, with perhaps a pilot being run in 2016/17. It was agreed that the Student Union should discuss further with Directors of Learning and Teaching the operation of the group, including the role of School representatives and anticipated time commitment.

Learning and Teaching Strategy: Retention Quarterly Reports

The Board noted that, at its meetings in April and May 2016, it had been agreed that Schools would submit quarterly reports to the Learning and Teaching Board on actions taken to address retention. It was further agreed that the Academic Registrar should likewise report, on a quarterly basis, on the implementation of the Retention Strategy and Operational Plan by the Registry Services Directorate. In addition, it was agreed that the Planning Manager would provide Schools with retention data on a quarterly basis to facilitate the production and updating of their reports. It was noted that, as part of the preparation process, meetings were held with each School to discuss retention, the data and the report template.

The Board noted that the first such quarterly reports had been provided as follows:

- School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society
- School of Engineering and Physical Sciences
- School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences
- School of Social Sciences
- School of Textiles and Design
- Registry Services (including update on Retention Strategy Operational Plan)
- Planning Office (data)

School Quarterly Reports on Retention: Key Areas for Action within each School

Each of the Directors of Learning and Teaching highlighted the one key action in relation to retention which would be taken forward within their School during the coming months. In summary, the key areas for action were:

- Investigating more thoroughly the circumstances of individual leavers in order to identify trends and to target action more appropriately and effectively – improved information and monitoring were key in this respect;
- Focusing on the Personal Tutor system as a mechanism for early intervention, including increased emphasis on training for Personal Tutors;
- Introducing a more proactive approach to contacting students who have disengaged, eg letters in addition to emails;
- Enhancing communications at key points, such as option choice, performance in assessment, feedback and on key processes such as temporary suspension of studies.

The Board noted that some of the main themes and points emerging from the School reports were as follows:

- vast majority of Y1 students did not fail to progress due to academic reasons, but for other reasons such as: financial reasons, particularly overseas (economic situation in Dubai); change of discipline (ie to subject not offered by HWU); change of institution –
usually closer to home;
- the most common, consistent action across all Schools was around Personal Tutoring, including uptake of training and use of the Personal Tutor for early intervention;
- across all Schools, there was increased emphasis on monitoring and on analysis of reasons for leaving.

127.4 Retention Operational Plan and Registry Services

127.4.1 The Academic Registrar reported that a monthly retention meeting of key staff within Registry Services Directorate (RSD) would be held to focus on implementation of the University's Retention Strategy and Operational Plan. It was also reported that Schools would be able to seek advice and assistance from the RSD Retention Group in taking forward their own retention actions.

127.4.2 The Board noted the current progress towards the Retention Operational Plan, highlighting in particular the number of “red” actions which had as yet to be progressed.

127.5 Personal Tutoring

127.5.1 The Board noted that there continued to be variability across Schools in the number of academic staff who had participated in Personal Tutor training sessions and in the number of new students who had met with their mentor by the end of teaching week three. It was further noted that there would be a discussion of Personal Tutoring at the Court Away Day on 11 November 2016 and, in preparation, the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) would be contacting all Directors of Learning and Teaching to ascertain the percentage of academic staff who had participated in Personal Tutor training.

127.5.2 The Board agreed that, as a key action related to retention for the Board as a whole to progress, there should be a continuing emphasis on Personal Tutoring, including participating in training and in meetings between Personal Tutors and students. In this context, it was agreed that:

- training/briefing for Personal Tutors should be provided in Dubai and Malaysia to the same extent as at UK campuses. It was agreed that the Student Induction and Transition Manager should discuss this with the Vice-Principal at the Dubai Campus and Malaysia Campuses, including the opportunity for training key individuals in Dubai and Malaysia, who could in turn roll out training more widely;
- case studies used in the Personal Tutor Training sessions had been developed for Dubai and Malaysia contexts, as well as UK; these should be shared with Directors of Learning and Teaching so that an overview could be gained of key issues and challenges in all locations.

127.6 Approval of Retention Quarterly Reports

The Board approved all School Retention Quarterly Reports and noted progress towards the Retention Strategy Operational Plan. The Board agreed to continue its focus on retention, not only because retention was a national KPI (including for TEF), but also, and more importantly, to improve the student experience.

127.7 Next Steps

The Board noted that Schools and Registry Services would be invited to submit their next quarterly reports on retention by 20 February 2017, for consideration by the Board as a whole on 1 March 2017.


128.1 The Board noted that, as per the agreed process, Action Plans had been provided by Schools, relevant Professional Services and the Student Union outlining responses to 2016 NSS- and PTES-related issues.

128.2 The Board considered the NSS-PTES Action Plans, which were presented in turn, from the following:
Discipline areas within the Schools of:

- Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society
- Engineering and Physical Sciences
- Information Services
- Registry Services
- Mathematical and Computer Sciences
- Social Sciences
- Textiles and Design
- Student Union

128.3 Common Issues

128.3.1 The Board considered a summary of the key themes at School and University level, and endorsed the following common issues as institution-wide topics which the Board should take forward at future meetings and through appropriate University fora:

- feedback: raising awareness; promptness; level of detail; usefulness; frequency; adherence to School policy; School review.
- staff availability, helpfulness, skill in teaching and engagement with students (particularly research active staff). In addition, for PGT, insufficient contact time.
- clarity of assessment procedures: marking criteria; deadlines; scheduling; School review (incl. moderation); links to learning outcomes; use of formative assessment.

In addition to the above, for PGT:
- Increased opportunities for skills development in: presentation/communication.

128.3.2 The Board raised or noted the following points in relation to the above common issues:

- feedback, staff engagement and assessment procedures had likewise been identified as the most common, recurring issues in NSS2016. As a consequence, there was a pressing need to ensure that action was taken in 2016/17 to address these issues;
- there should be some high-level publicity messages around these four themes, highlighting them as key areas for action across the institution as a whole and also communicating effectively to students actions taken by the University in these areas;
- the four themes were related to the four strands of the Global Learning and Teaching Project (see Minute 131); this could provide an additional mechanism for progressing these issues at a senior level;
- Schools across all campus locations would benefit from development/training sessions in areas such as providing efficient and effective feedback – there was no obvious means at present by which such help could be sought or provided.

128.4 Summary of Key Actions: Schools, Professional Services and Student Union

The Board noted a range of issues specific to particular disciplines, Schools or Services, which each individual responsible for the area in question would be taking forward. The key areas for action being taken forward by Directors and the Student Union were:

- clarifying and rationalising feedback; mapping feedback to learning outcomes; sharing good practice in quality and volume of feedback; piloting new feedback initiatives; feedback as two-way process between staff and students; 2-week turnaround for coursework feedback;
- enhancing Y4 personal development opportunities;
- improving engagement of PGT students in shaping their learning experiences;
- addressing staff engagement with teaching and in supporting students, particularly in terms of recognition and reward for teaching and in parity of esteem with research; using PDR to discuss teaching-related roles;
- addressing exam and teaching timetable issues;
- more proactive engagement between the Careers Service and Schools, with a focus on improving the student experience;
- identifying the reasons for low satisfaction with the Student Union.
128.5 Approval and Use of Action Plans

128.5.1 The Board approved all Action Plans, with the exception of Accountancy, Economics and Finance in the School of Management and Languages, which had as yet to be submitted.

128.5.2 The Board identified a range of Action Plans which would require close monitoring to ensure that actions were progressed and completed. The Board was assured that, in each case, measures were in place to address this.

128.5.3 The Board agreed that the Student Union should collaborate with Schools in addressing issues related to student representation and engagement. It was further agreed that the Student Union should consult with each Director of Learning and Teaching with regard to sharing of NSS-PTES Action Plans with School Officers.

128.6 Annual Survey; Dubai and Malaysia

The Board noted that the Annual Survey provided the mechanism by which NSS-type questions were asked of final year students in Dubai and Malaysia. It was noted that there had been delays with the publication and analysis of results of the first Annual Survey (high level results were available; School-specific results would be issued shortly); however, this would be addressed with the next iteration of the survey, which would be launched at the same time as NSS and would, therefore, facilitate comparison and analysis of the student experience across all campuses in the same key areas.

128.7 Next Steps

128.7.1 The Board agreed that the Action Plan from Accountancy, Economics and Finance should be submitted by 28 November 2016, for consideration by the Board at its next meeting on 7 December 2016.

128.7.2 The Board noted that Schools, relevant Professional Services and the Student Union would be invited to submit updates on their NSS-PTES Action Plans by 20 February 2017, for consideration by the Board as a whole on 1 March 2017. It was agreed that all contributors should review the Action Plans of other areas with a view to sharing expertise in common issues.

128.7.3 The Board agreed that Schools should identify several examples of key actions taken which could be used by the Planning Manager in producing School-specific NSS briefing presentations; University-level actions should likewise be highlighted.

129 NSS and PTES 2017

129.1 The Board noted that substantial changes would be introduced for NSS 2017 following the recent sector-wide consultation, including:

- 9 new questions on student engagement;
- updated questions on: assessment and feedback; learning resources;
- personal development questions will be optional;
- choice of optional questions to be agreed with student representatives; possible additional optional questions from 2018, eg employability, entrepreneurship and careers; support for specific learning needs; well-being.

129.2 The Board agreed that Directors of Learning and Teaching, Directors of relevant Professional Services and the Student Union should take into account the new and revised NSS2017 questions in their updated NSS-PTES Action Plans, which were due for consideration by the Board at its meeting on 1 March 2017.

129.3 The Board agreed that the Clerk to the Student Survey Management Group should contact Directors of Learning and Teaching with regard to an early or later launch date for PTES 2017.
Teaching Excellence Framework: Update

The Board noted the update on recent developments related to the Teaching Excellence Framework (both UK-wide and within HWU). In terms of national developments, the Board noted the following:

- HEFCE had recently published TEF Year 2 core metrics for all participating HEI’s;
- TEF Year 2 guidance had been published, which included the information on the application, submission and assessment processes (due 26 January 2017); HWU would be participating in TEF Year 2.

The Board noted that, within the University, the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) had provided a presentation - and facilitated group discussions - on TEF at the Senate meeting on 5 October 2016. It was agreed that, in future instances, the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) should circulate in advance to the Board a copy of presentations relating to TEF or to other key learning and teaching developments which were being given to the Senate.

Discussion Item: Transformational Initiatives – Global Learning and Teaching: Academic Framework

The Board noted that, at forthcoming meetings, the Discussion Item slots would be dedicated to the University’s Transformational Initiative on Global Learning and Teaching. At each meeting, there would be a focus on one of the four Projects which formed part of the overall initiative:

- Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching
- Learning and Teaching Academy
- Academic Framework
- Global Learning Experience

The Board noted that this approach was intended to ensure that the Board was fully engaged in each of the four projects as they progressed through the University Leadership Forum.

The Board agreed that any comments, proposals or suggestions related to the Academic Framework should be forwarded to the Head of Academic Quality, who would in turn ensure that these were communicated to the Project Lead. It was further agreed that the Project Leads for all four strands should be circulated to the Board for information.

University Committee for Learning and Teaching: Terms of Reference

The Secretary of the University reported that the University’s academic committee structure was being revised as part of the wider review of governance. It was noted that the Senate had approved, at its meeting on 5 October 2016, the establishment of three primary committees of the Senate for: Research; Learning and Teaching; Quality and Standards. As part of the wider consultation, it was noted that the proposed Terms of Reference for each of the new Committees were being presented by the Secretary of the University to current, equivalent Board or Committee, with a view to approval by the Senate at its meeting on 14 December 2016.

The Secretary of the University highlighted the following points related to the proposed Terms of Reference of the University Committee for Learning and Teaching:

- the Committee would have a joint reporting to the University Executive (matters such as resources and staff) and to the Senate (matters related to academic governance);
- a Clerks’ Network would be established to ensure that the Committees of the Senate were discharging all responsibilities related to the specified remit;
- the principal changes with regard to composition related to the addition of three members of the Senate appointed by the Senate and to the formal nomination of a Vice-Chair (as yet to be determined);
- the number of meetings per academic year should be reviewed by the Committee.
(currently 10 per year for the Learning and Teaching Board);

- an additional clause related to the provision of advice by the Committee had been incorporated into the remit in response to discussion of the equivalent Terms of Reference by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Board.

**Action**

132.3 The Board raised or noted the following points in its discussion of the proposed Terms of Reference of the University Committee for Learning and Teaching (UCLT):

- the UCLT could not be a joint committee of the Senate and the UE because the University needed to adhere to the requirements of the Scottish Code for HE Governance, which specified that the Senate had to be the primary academic body with responsibility for the academic vision and mission of the institution. However, there would still be scope for the UE to discuss strategically important academic matters such as retention and NSS (as per section 1 g);
- the separation of assurance and enhancement functions between UCLT and the University Committee for Quality and Standards would continue as at present; moreover, as at present, UCLT would continue to consider annual summary reports of assurance activities, given the ongoing, Scottish sector enhancement-led approach to quality assurance;
- consideration should be given to the provision of five (as opposed to three) members of the Senate being included in the composition, as this would ensure representation from all Schools. It was proposed, however, that one of the Senate representatives could be a Sabbatical Officer of the Student Union, and need not be from within a School; it was agreed that the Secretary of the University and the Student President should discuss this further in advance of the Senate meeting;
- as Clerk to the Senate, the Secretary of the University would be “in attendance” at all Committees of the Senate;
- addressing requirements related to equality and diversity could be particularly challenging given the proportion of ex-officio members; however, this was an area which was being considered across all committees;
- all committees should aim to reach decisions by consensus, rather than voting; in this context, it was agreed that section 8 b should be strengthened and prefaced by a reference to making decisions by consensus;
- aspects such as induction and non-attendance were already being addressed: the Senate had approved an attendance policy for both the Senate and its Committees.

132.4 The Board agreed that the above points should be forwarded to the Project Officer of the Senate Effectiveness Review. It was further agreed that the following should be circulated to the Board:

- Terms of Reference of the University Committee for Quality and Standards;
- Attendance Policy for the Senate and its Committees;
- key documents related to the Senate Effectiveness Review, such as the Statement of Primary Responsibilities.

**M.King**

133 **Student Union Item: Learning and Teaching Partnership Agreement 2016/17**

133.1 The Board noted that, for the Student Union item, a proposed Learning and Teaching Partnership Agreement 2016/17 had been developed. It was noted that most Scottish HEI's had developed Student Partnership Agreements, which set out how the institution and the Student Union/Association would work together to improve the student experience. It was noted that, in preference to a more general, less useful Agreement, the Head of Academic Quality and the Student Union had developed an Agreement specifically focused on learning and teaching, which would address both the Union’s academic plans for 2016/17 and also the key areas where the Learning and Teaching Board would wish to collaborate with the Student Union in 2016/17.

133.2 The Board approved the Learning and Teaching Partnership Agreement 2016/17, noting that the three areas of collaboration for 2016/17 would be: review of academic representation; Graduate Attributes; assessment. It was noted that a progress report would be submitted as part of the Student Union’s Annual Report on Learning and Teaching, which would be considered by the Board at its meeting on 10 May 2017.

**S.Union M.King**
The Board noted that, as part of its *Standing Agenda Items*, a twice-yearly review of the learning and teaching sections of the University’s Risk Register was conducted (May and November). The Board approved the current Learning and Teaching Risks as accurate and agreed that this should be notified to the Senior Risk Administrator.

**Papers for Information on SharePoint**

The Board noted the following paper, which had been provided for information on the Board’s SharePoint site:

  [https://intranet.hw.ac.uk/ps/registry/ar/lt/LTB%20Meeting%20Papers/Forms/AllItems.aspx](https://intranet.hw.ac.uk/ps/registry/ar/lt/LTB%20Meeting%20Papers/Forms/AllItems.aspx)

**Agenda Item for Next Meeting: Contract Cheating**

The Board agreed that the Discussion Item at the next meeting should focus on “Contract Cheating”, given the scale of this issue as a global problem in higher education. It was agreed that the focus of the discussion would be on establishing an institutional position.

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Board will be held on Wednesday 7 December 2016, 2.15 pm, Anderson Room, Library. The meeting will be preceded by a meeting of the Directors of Learning and Teaching at 1.15 pm.