The Chair welcomed to the meeting: Dr S Thomas, Director of Learning and Teaching, School of Textiles and Design, who was attending her first meeting as a member of the Board.

Apologies for absence were as recorded above.

The Board approved the Minutes of the meeting of 10 June 2015, subject to the following amendment to Minute 67.2:

- Multiple entry points (for ALP’s as well as campus locations) could be managed effectively through Banner from 2016/17; while the necessary systems developments were taking place, the current workaround processes would continue; while the necessary systems developments were taking place, Academic Registry and Schools would be able to manage with the current workaround processes to allow further intakes in January 2016 and beyond until the revitalisation programme of work was complete;
- Discussions with Schools regarding the management and operation of Progression and Award Boards would take place after graduation;
- The Regulations would be reviewed and amended, as appropriate, as part of the wider activity of Ordinances and Regulations Committee in reviewing all the Ordinances and Regulations;
- Programmes which had been given temporary approval for a January start date at the Dubai and Malaysia Campus would require further temporary approval until the systems were in place for January 2017 intake.

The Board noted the report on matters arising from the meeting on 10 June 2015.

The Board noted the range of infrastructure and AV developments which had been progressed through the release of contingency funding, and also noted that various upgrades had been undertaken at the Scottish Borders Campus; there had been widespread communications to staff and students regarding the refurbishments, which included the “James Watt Study Hub”. It was agreed that the Student Union would provide an update, for the next meeting on 21 October, on student views of the upgrades.

The Board endorsed the proposal from the Chairs of the Learning Environment Committee and the Learning Spaces Management Group that Schools should be actively involved in,
and have the opportunity to influence, future learning and teaching space developments, in collaboration with Campus Services. It was agreed that all Schools should ensure that they were represented at all meetings of the Learning Spaces Management Group; representation could alter between meetings as a means of ensuring ongoing attendance. It was noted that the Student Union was still considering the means by which students could be represented, as the seven planned meetings would be a significant commitment on the part of one individual.

87.3.2 The Board endorsed the approach of having Space Project Board items as the first agenda item at each meeting of the Learning Spaces Management Group, rather than having separate Project Board and separate LSMG meetings. In this way, attendance from Schools and the Student Union would be manageable (through the aforementioned system of alternating representatives). The Board agreed that it was imperative for Schools and the Student Union to be fully engaged in learning space developments and to consult with colleagues as required in order to ensure that future developments addressed academic needs.

88 Learning and Teaching Strategy: Updated Learning and Teaching Strategy Operational Plan and Timeline

88.1 The Board noted that, as per the Strategic Process for the Learning and Teaching Strategy (see paper LTB/15/62 and Minute 101), an updated Learning and Teaching Strategy Operational Plan and Timeline had been produced, which took into account the modifications and re-prioritisation as agreed by the Board at its meeting on 10 June 2015. It was also noted that the Operational Plan highlighted (through the “traffic light” colour-coding) progress to date. It was further noted that a copy of the Operational Plan had been provided to the Principal.

88.2 The Board agreed that the Operational Plan should be amended as follows:

- The item on learning and teaching promotion criteria should be colour-coded as “amber” to reflect the fact that while the promotion criteria for learning and teaching had been revised, there was still progress to be made in increasing promotions through this route;
- The item on sharing good practice in learning and teaching should be separated out to make clear that while the Board had approved an institutional approach to sharing good practice (March 2014), there was still significant progress to be made in sharing practices across the institution.

88.3 The Board approved the updated Learning and Teaching Strategy Operational Plan and Timeline, subject to the above amendments, and agreed that it should be used as a basis for progressing 2015/16 learning and teaching strategic developments.

89 Learning and Teaching Strategy: Key Activities for 2015/16

89.1 The Board noted that, as per the Strategic Process for the Learning and Teaching Strategy (see paper LTB/15/62 and Minute 101), an overview of key activities for 2015/16 had been produced (see paper LTB/15/61 for full list; Minute 100), which included:

- Development of a Retention Strategy;
- Discussion around the integration of student learning skills development and academic development for staff;
- Progressing the HWU Graduate Attributes (through the Curriculum Working Group).

The Board noted that, in addition, several, key topics related to the Learning and Teaching Strategy would now be progressed through the new Thematic Review process (see paper LTB/15/56 and Minute 95); for example, it was proposed that the first topic for review in 2015/16 would be technology-enhanced learning and teaching.

89.2 The Board approved the planned activities for the Learning and Teaching Strategy in 2015/16.
Learning and Teaching Strategy: Strategic Process for 2015/16

The Board noted that the strategic process for the Learning and Teaching Strategy in 2015/16 was documented in full in paper LTB/15/62 (see Minute 101), and that Directors of Learning and Teaching and Directors of Professional Services were encouraged to familiarise themselves with the aspects of the process of particular relevance to them, such as:

- Updating School/Service Learning and Teaching Strategies and Enhancement Plans, and submitting revised documents for approval by the Learning and Teaching Board (at the meeting on 15 June 2016);
- Annual meetings with the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the Head of Academic Quality (to be combined with Annual Monitoring and Review meetings).

The Board noted that a series of changes had been made to the Learning and Teaching Strategy Strategic Process, as agreed by the Board at its meeting on 10 June 2015:

- The 2016 Learning and Teaching Strategy Discussion meetings would be combined with the Annual Monitoring and Review Discussion meetings (to be held in spring 2016) to consider progress in 2015/16 and to look ahead to plans for 2016/17. Separate meetings would continue to be held with the six Professional Services involved in implementing the Learning and Teaching Strategy;
- Schools could invite individuals in addition to the Director of Learning and Teaching and Director of Academic Quality to attend the meeting;
- The School/Service Enhancement Plan would form the basis for discussion at the Annual Meeting;
- All Schools and Services would be invited to provide their updated strategies/plans to the Board for consideration and approval at its meeting on 15 June 2016.

The Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) encouraged Directors of Learning and Teaching and Directors of Professional Services to review and update their Enhancement Plans every 3 or 4 months to facilitate ongoing implementation and regular monitoring and updating, rather than utilising only at the year-end in advance of the Annual Meeting.

Learning and Teaching Strategy: Update on Implementation

The Board noted recent progress in implementing Learning and Teaching Strategy:

- A Case Study on the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy was submitted to the Higher Education Academy in July 2015 (£10,000 was awarded for the production of the Case Study). The Case Study was due to be published in full by the Higher Education Academy Scotland, together with a more succinct Executive Summary.
- The Curriculum Working Group met for the first time on 23 July 2015: discussion focused on the HWU Graduate Attributes, which had been identified by the Learning and Teaching Board as the key, initial priority for the Group (and also highlighted in the ELIR Technical Report). A report, and a series of recommendations, would be provided to the Board at its meeting on 21 October 2015.
- Numerous upgrades had been made to learning and teaching spaces at all campuses during the summer period in order to enhance the physical learning environment (see Minute 87.2).

The Board’s Committees and Groups: Reporting Structure; Chairs and Clerks

The Board received, as a tabled paper, the Board’s reporting structure and a list of Chairs and Clerks of the Board’s formally constituted committees and groups. It was noted that, with the Learning Environment Committee now fully operational, its three sub-groups (VLE Management, Learning Spaces Management, and Inter-Campus Communications) would now be reporting to the Board via the LEC. It was further noted that a meeting of all Clerks would be held on 17 September in order to clarify and agree methods of reporting to “parent” committees and scheduling meetings. It was noted that a schedule of all meetings of the Board, its two Committees and its five sub-groups would be produced in
due course. The Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) emphasised that, while a number of groups had previously operated in a relatively ad hoc way, all committees and groups had now been formally established and could, therefore, proceed in a formal manner to progress their designated areas of business. In addition, the importance of effective collaboration, through the various groups, with the Professional Services and across all campuses was emphasised.

91.2.2 The Board noted that, similar to the Learning Spaces Management Group (see Minute 87.3.1), there had been variability in securing representation from Schools for both the VLE Management Group and the Inter-Campus Communications Group. It was agreed and emphasised that all Schools should ensure that they were represented on both groups; as per Minute 87.3.1, alternating representation would be permitted.

91.2.3 With regard to membership, the Chair of the VLE Management Group requested that Schools should nominate two types of representative: a technology-orientated representative and an academic champion.

92 National Student Survey 2015: Results and Process

92.1 The Board noted that, as per its Standing Agenda Items (see paper LTB/15/64), the Summary of Results of the University’s scores/performance in the National Student Survey (NSS) 2015 had been provided for consideration. It was also noted that the results and analysis were augmented by detailed subject-based results and by open comments, which had been previously circulated to the relevant individuals. The Board thanked the Planning Manager, Planning Office, for the detailed analyses.

92.2 The Board noted that, in addition to the results, the University Executive approved, at its meeting on 27 August 2015, a revised process, as proposed by the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), for addressing issues raised by the results. In summary, Learning and Teaching Board would now be formally responsible for managing actions taken in response to NSS.

92.3 The Board noted that the NSS open comments provided detailed information for the Professional Services to identify and act upon pertinent issues raised by students. It was agreed Schools should use their NSS Action Plans to draw particular matters to the attention of the Professional Services.

92.4 The Board agreed that, in order to provide sufficient timescales for Schools and Professional Services to develop NSS Action Plans in a consultative manner, local NSS Action Plans (Schools, Professional Services, and Student Union) should now be submitted to the Board for consideration at its meeting on 11 November 2015. The Board agreed the following with regard to the NSS Action Plans:

- Action Plans should be high-level summaries only, and not detailed analyses;
- There should be one Action Plan per discipline area in Schools or per department within Professional Service Directorates;
- Schools/Professional Services could produce a School/Service level summary to capture common themes;
- The Student Union should provide its own NSS Action Plan;
- The Head of Academic Quality would draft an NSS Action Plan template to facilitate reporting to, and subsequent monitoring by, the Board;
- Schools could use the relevant section of the NSS Action Plan template to highlight particular issues for Professional Services;
- Action Plans should be submitted by 2 November for the meeting on 11 November 2015; an update should be provided by 22 February for the meeting on 2 March 2016.

93 Retention: Interim Report from the Retention Working Group

93.1 The Board noted that, at its meeting on 6 May 2015, it had approved the establishment of a Retention Working Group to scope out the parameters of an institutional approach to retention. As agreed by the Board, a progress report had been produced by the group for consideration by the Learning and Teaching Board at its meeting on 16 September 2015.
93.2 The Board noted the key points from the report as follows: 

- In discussion of possible future approaches to retention, the Group identified, at its first meeting on 30 June 2015, two fundamental factors for Heriot-Watt University: (1) Identity, Community and Belonging; (2) Retention as Everyone’s Responsibility.

- The emerging conclusion from the discussion of future approaches was that the University needed to focus primarily on “Identity, Community and Student Engagement with their Community” in terms of its future approach to retention. A high-level vision of the HWU Community within which students were actively engaged should be scoped out.

93.3 The Board endorsed the above approach, and noted that the Retention Working Group would provide a final report, including draft Retention Strategy, for consideration, with a view to approval, at the meeting on 21 October 2015.

94 Discussion Item: Integrated Approach to Student Learning Skills and Staff Academic Development

94.1 The Board noted that the present discussion item – Integrated Approach to Student Learning Skills and Academic Development for Staff- followed on from a discussion on student learning skills at the Board’s meeting on 10 June 2015 (see Minute 68). In terms of next steps, the Board had agreed, at its meeting on 10 June 2015, that a proposal for an integrated framework for student and staff academic skills development should be produced for consideration at its meeting on 16 September 2015. The Board also noted that the discussion topic was one of the priority areas for development highlighted in the Learning and Teaching Strategy, namely: to provide a single, integrated service offering learning skills development for students and academic development for staff.

94.2 The Board discussed a range of issues around the strategic objective to provide a single, integrated service offering learning skills development for students and academic development for staff, and noted the current provision, recent changes and various planned developments. It was agreed, in terms of next steps, that the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) would meet with the Academic Registrar for further discussion. It was agreed that the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) should report back to the Board in due course.

95 Proposed Process for Thematic Review

95.1 The Board noted that, at its meeting on 10 June 2015, approval had been given in principle for a proposed new process: Thematic Review, which would be led by the Learning and Teaching Board and would have an enhancement focus (rather than being wholly retrospective and driven by problems). The Board had agreed that the Head of Academic Quality should produce a process, which drew on thematic review processes at other HEI’s, for consideration and approval by the Board at its meeting on 16 September 2015 (Minute 76.3).

95.2 The Board approved the process for Thematic Review, including the proposed schedule and list of topics, and agreed that arrangements for the first topic – technology-enhanced learning and teaching – should be taken forward by the Quality and External Partnerships team.

96 Survey of Learning and Teaching Board Effectiveness

96.1 The Board noted that, at its meeting on 6 May 2015, it had been agreed that, in advance of the major committee review to be undertaken by the Secretary of the University, it would conduct a small scale effectiveness review of its own operation amongst members. An overview of the survey responses was provided to the Board at its meeting on 10 June 2015, at which it was agreed that an analysis of the responses, together with any proposed recommendations, should be provided to the Board for consideration at its meeting on 16 September 2015.
96.2 Recommendations

96.2.1 The Board considered each of the recommendations proposed as a means of further enhancing the effectiveness of its operation and agreed that the following should be put in place:

- The role of the Board in strategic decision-making and resource allocation should be clarified and made more prominent, e.g., learning and teaching infrastructure and investment; development of VISION and investment;
- There should be a Student Union item on each agenda;
- Directors of Learning and Teaching should continue to represent the interests of their Schools across all campus locations, highlighting particular campus-specific issues as appropriate;
- Directors of Learning and Teaching should continue to request a slot at a Board meeting in order to discuss School-specific items which would be of relevance to all Schools;
- There should be more opportunity for discussions about staff and student experiences, spending less time on discussing systems and processes, provided that the former were focused at the strategic level (with operational matters being the responsibility of SLEC);
- All the topics highlighted for discussion in 2015/16 should be added to the Board's agendas at the appropriate point, with the addition of a discussion topic on internationalisation;
- The various proposals for improving the Board's engagement with the wider University community should be taken forward:
  - A particular emphasis should be placed on engagement with the following: campuses other than Edinburgh; ALPs; IDL students; Professional Services; the wider student body.
  - As a standing item, a regular report from the University Executive on the activity of the Board should be incorporated into the Matters Arising Report;
  - Two of the Board meetings per annum should be held in Schools.

96.2.2 The Board noted that the two recommendations related to the role of the Directors of Learning and Teaching would be considered at a forthcoming lunchtime meeting of the Directors of Learning and Teaching.

97 QAA ELIR3: Outcome and Technical Reports; Action Plan

97.1 The Board noted that the University’s QAAELIR3 Outcome and Technical Reports were published in July 2015, and were on the QAA website at: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/provider?UKPRN=10007764#.VeauIFRwbcs. It was also noted that, in addition to the formal Areas for Development outlined in the Outcome Report, further areas for consideration had been identified in the more detailed Technical Report. Both the formal Areas for Development and the additional areas for consideration had been incorporated into the ELIR3 Action Plan. The Action Plan also included areas for development which HWU itself had identified in the Reflective Analysis.

97.2 The Board noted that the Action Plan was endorsed by HWU’s QAA Scotland representative at the University’s Annual Discussion Meeting with QAA Scotland on 1 September 2015. It was also noted that an initial version of the Action Plan was presented to the Learning and Teaching Board at its meeting on 10 June 2015, and had subsequently been updated to reflect recent progress and comments by QAA Scotland.

97.3 The Board approved the revised ELIR3 Action Plan, noting that progress towards the Action Plan would be monitored by the Quality and External Partnerships team, with oversight by the Board, on a six-monthly basis. The Action Plan, and regular updates, would also be provided to relevant parties, such as the Audit and Risk Committee and the Quality and Standards Committee.
Annual Strategic Review Report 2014/15

As part of its *Standing Agenda Items* (see paper LTB/15/64), the Board considered its annual strategic review report on developments from the previous session. The Board approved the report, and agreed that it should be forwarded to the Quality and Standards Committee and the Senate for information, and to the University Executive for consideration.

M.King

Learning and Teaching Board Handbook 2015/16

The Board noted that, as part of its *Standing Agenda Items* (see paper LTB/15/64), an updated version of the Learning and Teaching Board Handbook had been produced. The Board approved the Handbook, and agreed that it should be published and circulated to Board members as well as other relevant parties.

M.King

Key Areas for Development 2015/16

The Board noted that, as part of its *Standing Agenda Items* (see paper LTB/15/64), a final version of the Key Areas for Development 2015/2016 had been provided for consideration. It was noted that a draft was approved at the meeting on 10 June 2015, subject to the addition of areas for Thematic Review. The Board approved the Key Areas for Development 2015/2016, noting that it would inform the Board’s agenda for the academic year ahead.

Learning and Teaching Strategy: Updated Strategic Process

101.1 The Board noted that the University’s process for the development, implementation and monitoring of the Learning and Teaching Strategy was set out in *Learning and Teaching Strategy: Strategic Process* document. Several minor updates had been made to the process document in accordance with developments agreed by the Board at its meeting on 10 June 2015 (see Minute 90).

Directors LearnTeach P.Travill

101.2 The Board noted the updated strategic process document, and encouraged members, as relevant, to review the document in order to be acquainted with the process for the year ahead.

Minutes of the Joint Meeting with the International Strategy Board

102.1 The Board noted that as part of its *Standing Agenda Items* (see paper LTB/15/64), an annual joint meeting was held with the International Strategy Board to progress learning and teaching matters related to the International Strategy and the Learning and Teaching Strategy. The Board noted the Minutes of the most recent joint meeting, as held on 16 June 2015.

102.2 The Board noted that a working group had been established to consider staff development provision for ALP Approved Tutors; the first meeting was held on 25 August 2015, from which representatives from EBS, SML and EGIS had been invited to scope out the key features of staff development provision for ALP Approved Tutors.

2015/16 Meeting Dates, Membership, Standing Items and Learning and Teaching Reporting and Committee Structure

The Board noted the 2015/16 Meeting Dates, Membership, Standing Items and the diagram illustrating the Learning and Teaching Reporting and Committee Structure.

Papers for Information

The Board noted the following papers, which had been provided for information:
Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Board will be held on Wednesday 21 October 2015, 2.15 pm, Court Room, Lord Balerno Building. The meeting will be preceded by a meeting of the Directors of Learning and Teaching at 1.15 pm.