

## AHUA Southern Regional Group

The next meeting of the Southern Regional Group will be held at 10.30am on Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2017 at the Doubletree by Hilton London- Westminster.

A map and directions may be found at <http://doubletree3.hilton.com/en/hotels/united-kingdom/doubletree-by-hilton-hotel-london-westminster-LONWMDI/maps-directions/index.html>

Nearest tube stations are Pimlico Station (Victoria Line) and the Westminster Station (District, Circle and Jubilee Lines).

Coffee will be available from 10am and a sandwich lunch will be available at approximately 1.00pm.

**Professor Neil Marriott**  
Regional Convenor

### AGENDA

- 1 **Welcome to New Members**
- 2 **Minutes**
  - 2.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017 attached
  - 2.2 Matters arising from the minutes
3. **TEF Year 2 Lessons Learned & TEF Year 3 Specification Review**
4. **HEFCW Update**  
*Celia Hunt - Director of Strategic Development, HEFCW*
5. **Update on agency merger between LF, ECU and HEA**  
*Alison Johns - Chief Executive of the Leadership Foundation*
6. **AOB**
7. **Date of next meeting – Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018, London (Venue TBC)**



## **AHUA Southern Regional Group**

Minutes of a meeting held at 10.30am on 2<sup>nd</sup> June at Doubletree by Hilton, London

### **Present:**

Matthew Andrews, Rebecca Davies, Jayne Dowden, Adrian Parry, Robin Geller, Sophie Egleton, Mark Humphriss, Richard Messer, Ross Renton, Michael Shore-Nye, Helen Watson, Bridget Woolven, Jonathan Wylie, Nicola Dandridge, Christine Abbott, Danielle Lloyd, Time Greenacre, Anne Miller

### **Apologies received:**

William Callaway, Stephen Dudderidge, Christopher Ellicott, Keith Lampard, Cathy Lambert, Marion Lowe, Jonathan Pink, Emma Potts, David Sharkey, Peter Seddon, Victoria Holbrook, Celia Hunt

### **1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed Attendees to the meeting.

### **2. Previous Minutes**

Minutes of meeting held on 17th February 2017 agreed

### **Matters Arising**

2.2 There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### **3. Funding Council Updates**

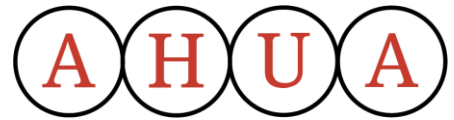
3.1 As the meeting was being held in the pre-election period no updates were received from the Funding Councils.

### **4. Ambitious Futures – Christine Abbott**

4.1 Christine Abbott gave a presentation on the graduate training scheme "Ambitious Futures" (AF).

Christine noted that the Ambitious Futures team are keen to promote the scheme to grow it and increase uptake.

The purpose of the scheme is to attract, develop and retain exceptional talent in our Universities - nurturing and promotion HE leadership.



In the 15 month scheme (and will be extended to 18 months in 2018) graduate trainees are recruited by your home institution who offer the 1st and the 3rd placement with the 2nd placement in a host institution.

The scheme delivers high calibre and high energy trainees and the benefits include; and injection of new thinking from different University settings and that the scheme creates development opportunities for existing staff as placement managers, advisors and mentors.

A list of the partnership HEIs was shared, clarifying that there is an opportunity for others to join. There is representation for AHUA on the Ambitious Futures Member Board alongside colleagues from the University of Nottingham which is where the AF team are based. There are around 20 applicants per place on the scheme, with a HE retention rate of 82%. One clear advantage is the potential to increase diversity of staff.

There is active work being undertaken to increase the diversity of trainees who participate.

The home institution pays the salary for the Trainee (22k to 28k p.a) with an AF management fee of £8.3k plus VAT per trainee (18/19). This covers administration, support, and the selection process.

It was noted that there is a wide variety of placements, for example from change management to student experience.

The AF is developing their alumni network- noted that particular benefit from the trainees having placements outside of their host institution.

Danielle Lloyd (an AF Trainee) gave an update on her experiences, she is hosted at Oxford, and is on her placement in University of the Arts. She noted the benefits of the diversity of her placements, as well as the mix between working in the Registry, Human Resources and Widening Participation and Outreach.

Questions from the group included whether AF would become a route to offer apprenticeships and AF are exploring this option, noting there is a connection with the UUK "Trailblazer" work on apprenticeships.

The group noted that extending the scheme to 18months will be beneficial for future employment opportunities for the trainees. Christine explained that trainees are offered employability support, in particular at the AUA conference on applying for posts.

4.2 The Chair thanked Christine and Danielle for a most interesting session.

## 5. Update from Nicola Dandridge, Chief Executive, Universities UK

Nichola noted that as we are in the pre-election period there is inevitable uncertainty as to who the Minister and Secretary of State for Education will be post the election.



Nichola focussed her discussion on the general election manifestos, and invited contributions and comments on the commitments in relation to the key themes; fee regimes, TEF, Institutes of Technology and translational research.

The group discussed the sector review of the TEF focussing on issues including; the deliverability of subject level TEF, the metrics used, the three levels of awards and whether the TEF provides navigable useful benchmarked information to students.

The post-election implementation of the HE Act was discussed including how we can work with the OfS on the regulatory landscape, UKRI and the forthcoming Stern Review publication due later this month.

There is due to be a livestream of a talk by Michael Barber (OfS) at UUK. Nichola will send the link to AHUA.

5.2 The Chair thanked Nichola for a most interesting session.

## **6 Alison Wheaton – LFHE Board Diversity/Vacancy Project**

6.1 Alison Wheaton the Project Manager at LFHE for the Board Diversity / Vacancy Project (BVP) gave a presentation to the group regarding the project. The project is looking at the potential in the sector to look at increased diversity on HEI boards/governance.

She wanted to brief the group on the project, get feedback and update the group on the Governance 2020 survey

The aims of project are to increase the diversity of University governing board membership by widening the potential pool of candidates and possibly to create a supported sector-wide portal/website to publicise vacancies. The project is not a repository or matchmaking service of prospective candidates.

Project has a Steering Group and has been funded by HEFCE to undertake a scoping exercise.

The evidence base feeding into BVP shows that 36% of board members women and noted that HEFCE have target of 40%, and she is also looking at other sectors, particularly FTSE 100, NHS and the Parker Review on ethnicity (late 2016) "at least 1 by 2021"

In March 2016 AHUA members gave feedback to a survey by the BVP - 75% of respondents were broadly supportive but expressed some concerns and raised some issues on how to drive traffic/interest of prospective candidates.

Alison shared the current thinking in the BVP – which is the need to address both the demand (advertising vacancies) and the supply (strong candidates), and that the project should widen to focus on wider diversity opportunities - not just focussing on gender.

In the discussion sessions the group raised the option for executive search firms to increase diversity. Members who had used search firms found this increased the diversity of candidates and successful recruitment of diverse boards.



Discussion also included a recent positive experience at Gloucester using an organisation called "Board Apprentice" based in Jersey, who assist with the pipeline of talent. At Portsmouth have used Women on Boards to increase women on the governing body.

Alison noted that the survey for governors would be circulated next week

6.2 The Chair thanked Alison for a most interesting session.

## **7 AOB**

- Please see the attached paper from Celia Hunt at Higher Education Funding Council for Wales regarding developments in Wales.
- The Group discussed possible speakers for next meetings and these included:
  - David Willets
  - The new CEOs for OfS and UKRI
  - Information Commissioner on GDPR
  - Merger of JISC, HESA
  - LF, ECU changes
  - Nick Hilman
  - Mark Leech from WONKHE
  - Mark Courver from UCAS
  - Claire Marchet new UCAS Chief Exec

## **8 Future Dates**

- Thursday 14th – Friday 15th September 2017, Autumn Conference, Nottingham Trent University
- Friday 2nd March 2018, Executive Committee, London
- Monday 9th - Wednesday 11th April 2018, Spring Conference, University of Manchester
- Friday 15th June 2018, Executive Committee, London
- Thursday 13th September 2018, Executive Committee, University of Warwick
- Friday 14th September 2018, Autumn Conference, University of Warwick
- Friday 7th December 2018, Executive Committee, London

The possible dates for next regional meetings: 3rd November 2017, 16th February 2018, 1st June 2018 were discussed as previously the Group had wanted to revisit the pattern that meetings were normally held on Friday's and in London.

The Group agreed to move meetings held during school half term dates; therefore the 1st June 2018 would be moved to 25th May 2018, and the 16th Feb meeting to the 23rd Feb 2018.



The Group agreed to keep meetings on Fridays.

The Group also agreed to move the May 25th 2018 to a location outside of London with Reading, Cardiff, Bath or Bristol as possible options - Robyn Geller agreed to undertake a doodlepoll to see which location would work best.

Action: Robyn Geller to circulate a doodlepoll to determine the location of the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 meeting.

## Report from HEFCW,

### **Diamond review** (<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/highereducation/reviews/review-of-he-funding-and-student-finance-arrangements/?lang=en> )

- ☐ New arrangements for student fees and funding Wales from 2018/19
- ☐ Further information will be published by Welsh Government in the near future (has been held up by the election) in relation to arrangements for 2018/19
- ☐ Additional sector funding via HEFCW is unlikely to emerge before 2019/20.
- ☐ HEFCW officers are in discussion with WG officials about work on a range of Diamond recommendations. In particular we have already commenced work on our remit to develop prices for a 'basket of goods' to be agreed with Government for each institution. We hope to consult on the 'goods' to be included and the arrangements in the near future. There is also likely to be further work on 'costs of study' and monitoring of part-time and postgraduate fee levels.
- ☐ Part-time arrangements will continue as they are with a longer term intention for part-time to be regulated.
- ☐ Bursary arrangements for Nursing/Midwifery studies in Wales will continue in 2018/19 and, as in 2017/18, applicants will need to commit to work for at least two years in Wales. They will not normally be part of the FTUG fees and funding regime.

### **Hazelkorn review** (which is this: <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/reports/review-of-the-oversight-and-regulation-of-post-compulsory-education-and-training-in-wales/?lang=en>)

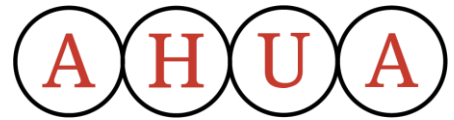
- ☐ A proposal to establish a joint HE/FE Post-16 Council in Wales to replace HEFCW.
- ☐ A White Paper (ie more of a Green Paper consultation on new arrangements) will be published by Welsh Government in the near future (possibly ahead of the Diamond review response). There is a stakeholder seminar on 12 June.
- ☐ The focus at present appears to be on developing the legislative framework, and could therefore be some years in development.

### **Recurrent Funding**

- ☐ We hope to publish the funding allocations for 2017/18 after the election.
- ☐ A 'headline steers' communication, inviting comment on proposals, was sent to heads of institutions in March.

### **Apprenticeships**

- ☐ Welsh Government is keen to see expansion in higher level and degree apprenticeships;
- ☐ Arrangements in Wales are quite different to those in England. The apprenticeship levy will not work in the same way and funding options are under consideration.



- ☐ HEFCW is providing a small amount of funding in 2016/17 for the development of degree level qualifications which could sit on apprenticeship frameworks in future (this was the original circular: [http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars\\_2016/W16%2047HE%20Supporting%20Strategic%20Change%20Fund.pdf](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars_2016/W16%2047HE%20Supporting%20Strategic%20Change%20Fund.pdf) A workshop for funded providers was held on 19 May and a further event is planned.
- ☐ Degree level frameworks are still being developed in Wales, with the emphasis on Engineering, Advanced Manufacturing and Information Technology.
- ☐ We are participating in the QAA work to develop a benchmark statement for higher level apprenticeships and an interim statement has been published: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Interim-statement-on-Degree-Apprenticeships.pdf>

### **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)**

- ☐ Welsh HE providers are able to apply for the TEF but this is optional and separate to any rises in fees. Not all universities applied in Wales.
- ☐ HEFCW officers have been involved in drawing attention to the differences in a Welsh context and gaining proportionate representation from Wales amongst assessors/Panel membership. We await the publication of the outcomes after the election.

### **Part time and Postgraduate loans**

- ☐ Part-time loans will continue as they are in Wales for the present (topped up by HEFCW's part-time credit funding where fundable).
- ☐ Part-time is likely to become regulated in Wales (ie will follow FTUG provision, which is covered by fee and access plans) but we understand that part-time regulation will not come in for several years (see Diamond review above);
- ☐ Postgraduate loans have been introduced in Wales for 2017/18, which will be similar to arrangements in England  
<http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/practitioners/products/postgraduate-loan.aspx#.WRnYaGw2xaQ>.  
Arrangements for 2018/19 are still being discussed but are part of the Welsh Government's response to Diamond.

### **HEFCW's new Corporate Strategy**

- ☐ Given the reduction in funding and the constraints of regulatory tools, Council has agreed that the new corporate strategy should focus on what HEFCW does: funding, regulating, influencing, working in partnership with students, and being an efficient organisation. We hope to publish a draft for consultation after the election. This will include measures for HEFCW. It will not include any measures or targets for the sector. There will be a separate consultation on sector performance measures (not targets) later in the year.





- There is no apparent intention to publish the draft HE strategy, submitted by HEFCW to the Welsh Government in December 2016. Further work is being taken forward by WG officials to develop a joint HE/FE strategy taking account of Hazelkorn.

### **Quality Assessment Framework and HE (Wales) Act 2015**

- Quality arrangements continue to be developed in consultation with regulated institutions and other interested parties. This includes the requirement that Governing Bodies commission, normally within a six year period, an external review from a body on the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies (EQAR). Universities Wales have contracted with the QAA to provide this service over the next six years.
- HEFCW officers are in discussion with HEFCE regarding the 'gateway' process (for any new applicants for specific/automatic designation) and hope to develop something similar for Wales. HEFCW is already involved in the HEFCE tenders for work on transnational education (QAA, recent consultation); external examiners training (HEA); and governor training in academic governance (LfHE). We hope to pilot arrangements for including academic governance matters in triennial review during the summer, to inform a consultation later in the year.
- Other than quality (with ongoing development) the final element of the infrastructure related to the HE (Wales) Act 2015, the Financial Management Code, has been laid in the National Assembly for 40 days, under the negative resolution process, which is due to end in early June. We are also developing procedures for dealing with allegations concerning institutions which will be subject to consultation.
- Fee and Access Plans 2018/19 have been submitted and are under consideration and some requests for supplementation information will be circulated imminently. The process for varying plans has been developed and will be circulated soon. Variations are not required for changes to student numbers (ie over or under recruitment) but income changes will need to be taken into account and explained in the monitoring process.