Unreserved Business

minutes

Board Meeting on 13 November 2013

Present: Professor Cardwell (Chairman), Dr Cook, Dr Dixon, Professor Ford, Professor Forsyth, Dr Hiley, Dr Lasenby, Dr McLarty, Dr Padman, with Dr Maxwell as Secretary and with Ms Fage, Ms Gannon and Ms Watts in attendance.

Apologies: There were none

3972 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2012 were approved.

3973 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

Matters for Discussion

3974 College graduate fee levels

3974.1 Single Unified College Fee (Paper 4816)

The Board received a paper from the Colleges’ Committee, proposing that the colleges receive a flat fee for each graduate student.

While it welcomed the positive aspects of the report:

• greater transparency in fees;
• the proposal is cost-neutral;
• the college fee, which has been difficult to justify to the Research Council, would be removed;

• the overseas fee would be stabilised;

the board still had concerns about the report. It particularly felt that the flat fee of 1/3rd of the University fee had not been justified. The variability of provision within colleges had not been addressed and a flat fee would not encourage it to be.

It was agreed that this report required further consultation and the Board asked to reconsider the report when this had happened.

3974.2 College fee for MEd and MSt
(Paper 4817)

The Board received a paper from the College Bursars recommending that the College fee for part-time courses should rise from 20% of the full-time fee to 50%, with effect from Michaelmas Term 2013.

The Board agreed that the report

(i) should be taken to the Education Committee;

(ii) should be deferred until the single unified college fee has been considered (Minute 3974.1).

3975 International engagement
(Paper 4818)

The Board received a draft paper from the International Strategy Committee about the recruitment and admission of overseas students.

It was agreed that experience is required when judging international qualifications. Since some education systems do not prepare candidates well for the rigour of the University, it was suggested that the University might consider introducing a diploma type qualification in order to ease the transition of such students.

The Board agreed that the problem should be owned by the education side of the business, which should be assisted by International Strategy. It was noted that the issue is much affected by immigration legislation.

3976 Points Based Immigration
(Paper 4819, 4842)

The Board agreed that:
• for students who are re-sitting or repeating examinations, ie for those in receipt of an examination allowance, the Degree Committees must stipulate the participation period which will be used to define the period of sponsorship;

• students who are writing-up are required to be resident for the full duration of the course (four calendar years) and must apply for leave to work away if they leave Cambridge to write up;

• minor corrections should be completed within three months, major corrections within six months, resubmission of the thesis should be completed within 12 months unless otherwise stipulated by the Degree Committee.

The Board noted that the University had undergone a mock Tier 4 compliance audit: UPIs, colleges and the Cambridge Theological Federation were a particular area of concern as the University is expected to own or lease the premises where students are taught.

Ms Fage reported that the Cambridge Theological Federation would sponsor shared students because it is already sponsoring its own students. It was thought unlikely that the UKBA would understand the University’s relationship with the Colleges.

The Board agreed to

• confirm the legal status of the UPIs within the University’s tier 4 licence;

• the relevant contact points should be mapped and applied, to total 10 per annum, and to develop contacts procedures for authorised absence.

3977 Report on the CISS and Chess competitions 2012
(Papers 4837, 4839)

The reports were received. It was noted that the new mark scheme had been used for the first time and that the best results were obtained when the (schools ?) moderated their results.

The Board noted that the number of students declining grants had increased. Ms Gannon will ascertain whether these students were from the EU and, therefore, only offered partial funding. The Board again expressed its concern that the University fails to attract the best students because funding is incomplete and awarded later than that of other universities.

The Board expressed its approval of the new home/EU scholarships award system, although there was concern about the complexity and work load. Ms Gannon was asked to provide more guidance on the interpretation of the (instructions ?)
There was support for devolving support to the schools.