

## **ADVISORY BOARD NOTES**

The Advisory Board met on the 08 December 2014.

Professor Sambell provided an overview of recent activity, as follows:

*Academic Board met on 05 December 2014 and considered a proposal for a new academic structure in which schools become the primary academic unit. Academic Board agreed to disestablish the three existing faculties with effect from 1 August 2015. Six schools will be formed including a new single unified Business School created by the merger of the three current schools within the Business Faculty.*

This document captures the feedback by the Advisory Board in relation to the new structure.

### **Feedback relating to Subject Groups:**

- Concern was raised relating to the retention of branding across multiple and diverse subject groups within a new unified Business School.
- This was countered with an argument that the School of Creative Industries also spans a large range of disciplines/ subject areas, but successfully retains branding across those disciplines.
- Similarly a suggestion was made that aligning research centres to subject groups could also promote external branding.
- It was noted that the term 'Subject Group' is not externally recognised and it might be appropriate to rename Subject Groups to promote external identity this could include aligning them to REF UoAs.
- The role of the Subject Group Leader (SGL) within the new structure was discussed and it was proposed that the responsibilities aligned to the SGL role should evolve and develop in the new structure.
- The administrative burden associated with the SGL role was considered a barrier to achieving effective academic leadership.
- Devolution of authority to SG level was welcomed, although it was noted that the degree to which this can occur across schools is variable based on critical mass.

### **Feedback relating to the support for the schools**

- It was noted that Faculty administration currently supports two-layers (Dean of Faculty and Head of School) therefore in the new structure it was suggested that this could be revised to support Heads of School and SGLs.

- The need for developmental support was identified for some SGL role holders within the new structure, given the intent to devolve more responsibility at this level.

**Feedback relating to school sub-structures:**

- It was acknowledged that it would be beneficial to have a consistent set of assigned duties and responsibilities within each school, aligning to the governance structure.
- There was recognition for the need to allow bespoke duties, in some of the schools, where appropriate.
- Views were expressed that duties/responsibilities could be assigned on a rotational basis, allowing opportunities for progression and experience, whilst also promoting staff buy-in and shared accountability amongst peers.
- Views on the appropriate length of rotational allocation were varied, with a view that a 5-year term might be appropriate.
- It was stated that the PDR process should serve as an appropriate mechanism for identifying capability and development opportunities within the school.
- Again, the degree to which this would be feasible would be dependent on critical mass within each school.
- The inward facing and outward facing demands of the new Head of School role were cited, with a view that administrative support and delegation of authority need to be better managed to facilitate the achievement of these demands.
- Recognition for the need for leadership capacity was expressed, although there wasn't a strong preference for or against appointing Deputy Heads of School.
- A view was expressed that sub-structure responsibilities need to be carefully managed to avoid unnecessary replication across each school.
- There was a specific concern around the new Business School, resulting in a top-heavy structure.
- It was noted that there needs to be clear definition between allocated duties and substantive posts/roles within the sub-structure.
- There was a view expressed that there could be a potential conflict of interest where a leadership role requires balancing school-based activity and

University strategic activity, with a suggestion that each school could be expected to commit a proportionate amount of resource to strategic activities.

**Feedback relating to communications and timescales:**

- There was a request for the timescales for implementation to be communicated to all staff.
- There was acknowledgement that other strategic projects need to be communicated and aligned.
- It was suggested that discussions with Heads of Schools should occur as soon as possible to determine the sub-structure duties