

## ADVISORY BOARD NOTES

The Advisory Board met on Wednesday 25th March 2015.

In Alistair Sambell's absence Jo Clayton convened the meeting and gave an update under the following headings:

### Project update and next steps

- The Advisory Group was reminded of the March Project Update email that had been sent to all on 11th March.
- Interviews for the Deans of Schools and Dean of Learning & Teaching (L&T) will be held on 30th and 31st March 2015 and interim arrangements had been put in place for the Business School and the School of Arts and Creative Industries. As no applicants have come forward for these positions they will be advertised externally.
- Once Deans are in place, five roles will be created in each School, to lead on Research, Internationalisation, Student Experience, Quality Enhancement and Learning & Teaching and to act as links between the School and University committees and the Assistant Principals, Dean of Research and Dean of Learning & Teaching.
- An interim lead of school support services will be recruited from the current Heads of Business Administration, to finalise and implement the new school support services structure.
- The Board asked about a change in title for Subject Group Leaders and while this subject is outwith the scope of the current project, it was agreed that this would be noted and brought to the Vice Principal's attention.
- In terms of timescales:
  - the Deans of School will be in place by 1st April 2015 with the School substructure roles filled as soon as possible thereafter, so that the new committees can be convened with effect from 1st August 2015.
  - the interim lead of school support services will produce a proposal on the new structure of school support services by the end of May. The Board expressed concern about the lack of information available on this subject and in particular wished it to be recognised and noted that the Business School was undergoing a different and more complex change. It was agreed that a "one size fits all" solution would not be suitable across six Schools, hence the appointment of the interim lead of school support services, who will be charged with finding the optimum solution in each case.

### Committee Structure

David Cloy outlined the new committee structure, which was endorsed by the Academic Board on 6th March. Work is ongoing to finalise constitutions, remits and terms of reference in time for final approval at the Academic Board in June. David provided an overview of the structure and Board members were directed to the Academic Board SharePoint site (link below) and the March Project Update email, both of which contain links to full information on the new structure.

[https://staffworkplace.napier.ac.uk/Services/corporateaffairs/gms/academic\\_board/staff\\_access/Lists/Meeting%20Papers/Attachments/82/06-AB\(14-15\)44%20Initial%20AB%20Review%20Report%20and%20Proposals%202014-15.pdf](https://staffworkplace.napier.ac.uk/Services/corporateaffairs/gms/academic_board/staff_access/Lists/Meeting%20Papers/Attachments/82/06-AB(14-15)44%20Initial%20AB%20Review%20Report%20and%20Proposals%202014-15.pdf)

## Communications

Amal Palin provided feedback on the results of the Internal Communications Survey, to which there had been 380 respondents, 99% of whom said they were aware of the proposed changes to the University's structure. Few of the respondents were academics and it was acknowledged that further work was required to engage more fully with academic staff.

All past communications are now available on the University Structures Project intranet pages. The Project Update email dated 11th March was criticised for being too vague, but since no conclusion had been reached on the proposed new structure for school support services, there had been little to report.

On a more positive note, 1300 staff have viewed the University Structures Project intranet pages, with 10,000 page views, a "best ever" hit rate for the University.

In terms of other communications, it was explained to the Board that the Service Directors meet for a project update on a monthly basis and that information from these meetings is being cascaded to staff.

## Systems Work Stream

In addition to the Service Directors' Work Stream, Campbell Millar explained that there is also a Systems Work Stream, which focuses solely on systems. Three workshops have been held with systems owners to map out the change process and to ensure that business critical systems are ready for the new structure on 1st August.

## Advisory Board feedback

- The Board raised a number of issues:
  - Finance usually permits a period of grace after 31<sup>st</sup> July for late invoices, will there be a different cut-off point this year?
  - If a SAF is submitted in July, will it automatically go to the correct line manager after 31<sup>st</sup> August?
  - Will there be any changes to Barclaycard authorisation for line management?

It was reiterated that the Systems Work Stream is in place to deal with issues of this type, and the Project Team will ensure that these are flagged.

- It was noted that several Board members had received positive feedback on communications and that there was a general feeling among staff of being included and informed, leading to a willingness to see the changes through. However, it was commented that this optimism is not shared by the Business

School and it was agreed that some communications targeted specifically at this School might help.

- From a workload point of view, the question was asked whether there are any major returns or reports to be made in August, to institutions such as HESA or the Scottish Funding Council. It was confirmed that issues such as these are being tracked by the Service Directors' Work Stream and there are no red flags on their risk trackers at present.
- The Board asked for reassurance that there will be a team in place to deal with issues arising as a result of the changes, after 1<sup>st</sup> August and it was confirmed that members of the Project Team would still be available to deal with issues arising after this date.
- The Board was reassured that online prospectuses had already been updated to reflect the new structure.

#### Next Meeting

The general consensus of opinion was that another Advisory Board meeting was required, mainly to discuss changes to school support services. A date will be set around the end of May, once more information is available on this topic.