



## **HEADS OF UNIVERSITY CENTRES OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

Minutes of meeting of the Executive Committee held on 18 May 2017 at IBMS, Coldbath Square, London.

Present: Dr Craig Donaldson, Dr Sue Jones, Professor Jacqueline McCormack, Dr Claire Pike, Professor Valerie Randall, Dr Linda Walsh, Mr Merfyn Williams, Professor Yvonne Barnett, Professor P Gerry McKenna (Hon Executive Secretary)

In Attendance: Ms Jocelyn Pryce, Ms Jill Rodney

Apologies: Professor Kevan Gartland (President), Mr Andrew Usher, Mr Alan Wainwright, Professor Hilary MacQueen, Professor Julie McLeod, Dr Ian Locke (Hon Treasurer)

1. It was agreed that in the absence due to illness of the President (Professor Gartland), the Past President (Professor Barnett) should chair the meeting.
2. The Committee expressed its best wishes to Professor Gartland for a speedy recovery and welcomed Ms Jocelyn Pryce, Head of Registration and Training at IBMS, to the meeting as a replacement for Mr Wainwright.
3. The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 15 February 2017 were noted and approved. Thanks were expressed to Professor Jacqueline McCormack for drafting the minutes.
4. It was noted that the outcomes of the TEF exercise were due to be published in June 2017.

5. It was noted that a detailed HUCBMS submission drafted by the Hon Executive Secretary, Professor McKenna, had been submitted by the due deadline for the REF consultation exercise.
6. It was noted that David Sweeney, Director of Research, Education and Knowledge Exchange at HEFCE has been appointed Chair-Designate of Research England which will oversee the next REF exercise. The Hon Executive Secretary, had written to him expressing the congratulations of HUCBMS.
7. The Committee discussed the uncertainty regarding future UK participation in EU programmes following Brexit. The particular potential difficulties arising from the land border between the UK and Republic of Ireland were noted with concern.
8. **Irish matters.** Professor McCormack provided a report.

The continued underfunding of HE in Northern Ireland and its political uncertainty were noted.

The Committee was informed of IBMS involvement in the development of a Laboratory Information Management System and in the consultation by the NI Pathology Network Board on pathology services.

A postgraduate conference organised by IBMS-accredited HE providers on the island of Ireland is scheduled to take place in Sligo on 19 June 2017. A meeting on CORI-related issues is also scheduled.
9. **Welsh matters.** Mr Williams provided a report.

The Committee noted with concern that due to funding constraints, redundancies were being planned in Welsh universities.

The development of a new biomedical sciences programme at Swansea was noted. Applications for BMS undergraduate programmes remain strong.

It was noted that Bangor has introduced a physician associate programme and that apprenticeship training in BMS is being developed.
10. **Scottish matters.** Dr Walsh provided a report.

It was noted that there has, as yet, been no movement in Scotland to introduce apprenticeship training in BMS. The formulation of and recognition of best practice continues.

Although applications to BMS programmes remain strong, some academic staff redundancies are envisaged.
11. Professor Barnett reported on HUCBMS Travel Awards. Following discussion it was agreed that funds should be directed towards attracting international speakers to the annual HUCBMS conferences. This will be particularly important as the UK leaves the EU and looks to develop new international partnerships. Professor Barnett

agreed to liaise with the British Council on possible cooperative initiatives in this regard.

12. Professor McCormack updated the Committee on the HUBS/HUCBMS/IBMS Joint Workshop on 'Teaching maths to biologists using non-digital games' to be held at the University of Sheffield on 30 June 2017. All involved were commended for this innovative initiative.

13. Professor Randall and Ms Pryce reported on recent activities of the IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee. This included the development of the Education and Training Session at the IBMS Congress which will take place on 24-27 September 2017 in Birmingham.

It was noted that there are vacancies on the IBMS specialist advisory panels. These will be advertised shortly.

14. Ms Rodney reported on other IBMS matters including:

- The introduction of an experiential route to Fellowship which should be of interest to academics,
- The desirability of encouraging eligible members of the academic community to stand for IBMS Council,
- The decision to co-opt an additional academic member to Education and Professional Standards Committee, and
- The development of video-conferencing facilities at IBMS headquarters.

15. Professor McCormack reported on the activities of the Royal Society of Biology's Education Advisory Committee including dissemination of key commitments within political parties' election manifestos, and revised RSB priorities.

16. The Hon Executive Secretary had received a written report from Professor MacQueen on recent HUBS activities including:

- Spring meeting (including the Biosciences HE Teacher of the Year award)
- Winter meeting (which will be held in November 2017 at the Natural History Museum).
- Early Career lecturers Forum: this is now up and running,
- Journal: plans are still ongoing to launch a practitioner-focused bioscience pedagogic journal.
- Open Educational Resource (OER) – usage is being monitored.

Dr Jones informed the Committee that the dates of the Bioscience Summit will clash with HUCBMS 2017. The Committee expressed the hope that such clashes would be avoided in future.

17. The Committee noted that correspondence had been received from Professor Shelley Heard providing an update on the development of the HCS Apprenticeship Programme. Dr Donaldson provided a further update including funding and approval procedures (see Appendix 1 attached).  
It was noted that there was a disparity of funding of practitioner training programme placements across England and Wales. Also that the Academy for Healthcare Science is examining the equivalence of qualifications.
18. The Committee discussed the desirability of having discussions on areas of mutual concern with other subject associations represented in the QAA Biomedical Sciences benchmarking exercise. The Hon Executive Secretary agreed to follow this up in consultation with the President.
19. The Committee approved the academic and social programme for HUCBMS 2017. Thanks were expressed for the efforts of all involved in putting together an excellent programme for the 25<sup>th</sup> HUCBMS conference. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to hold a reception during 2017-18 at the Houses of Parliament to celebrate 25 years of HUCBMS and to produce a booklet outlining its history and achievements. The Hon Executive Secretary agreed to follow up on these suggestions.
20. The Hon Executive Secretary informed the meeting that he would be visiting the University of Essex on 19 May 2017 to meet key personnel, inspect the facilities and discuss proposed arrangements for HUCBMS 2018. It was noted that it is planned that HUCBMS 2019 would take place in Dublin.
21. It was noted that the HUCBMS 2017 AGM would be asked to approve an increase in the annual membership fee from £195 to £225.
22. The Hon Executive Secretary informed the meeting that he would be writing to members seeking nominations for election to the Executive Committee at the AGM.

## **HUCBMS Executive Committee (18.05.17)**

### **Appendix 1**

#### **Healthcare Science Higher Degree Apprenticeships**

The Healthcare Science Practitioner Degree Apprenticeship has been approved for delivery and the Standard can be located at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-standard-healthcare-science-practitioner-degree-apprenticeship>

The Standard had been allocated to funding Band 15, the highest funding band available. This allows employers to recover up to a maximum of £27,000 from the levy, to cover training, learning and assessment costs, including the End Point Assessment.

#### Information for Providers

HEIs planning to offer integrated degrees will have to register on the Register of Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations (RoAAO). It is therefore advised that when the Register opens, HEIs have considered the relevant information/process for applying to the Register, ready to submit their applications to it. Detailed information on applying to the register is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-apprentice-assessment-organisations-how-to-apply>.

In addition, all HEIs planning on offering HCS degree apprenticeships must register on the Education and Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (ROATP) as soon as possible if they are not already on this Register. The relevant information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-of-apprenticeship-training-providers>

HEIs must apply separately in relation to every apprenticeship standard, ie Business, Nursing, Healthcare Science.

Employers and trusts seeking to become providers of apprenticeship learning must also register on the ROATP.

Organisations intending to deliver Level-6 apprenticeships from September 2017 needed to apply to join the register by Friday, 7th April since the next opening date to apply for registration will be too late for a September round degree start.

The National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS) agreed to apply to the ESFA to join the RoAAO become an Assessment Organisation (AO) for this Standard. This will enable employers who choose to use a non-integrated degree programme for their apprentices to identify from the outset an organisation to provide the EPA at the end of the apprenticeship. Other organisations may, in the future, also become available to provide AOs in these circumstances.

### Information for Employers

Please see the Apprenticeship Funding and Performance-Management Rules for Training Providers, [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/600852/PROVIDER\\_V2\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/600852/PROVIDER_V2_FINAL.pdf) for full details of what the funding from the apprenticeship levy can fund.

Important points to note:

- the apprentice must have a contract of employment which is long enough for them to complete the apprenticeship successfully
- the cost of the apprentice's wages must be met by the employer
- funds from an employer's digital account must only be used to pay for training and assessment, including end-point assessment
- employers can recover up to a maximum of £27,000 from the levy, to cover training, learning and assessment costs
- although funding can be used to pay for apprentices to re-take mandatory qualifications or the end-point assessment, the maximum funding which an employer can recover from the levy is £27,000
- Apprentices cannot be asked to contribute financially to the direct cost of learning or assessment, so the employer/HEI must agree who meets the cost of repeating failed modules.
- funding is available for an apprentice to undertake an apprenticeship at the same or lower level than a qualification they already hold, **if the apprenticeship will allow the individual to acquire substantive new skills** and you can evidence that **the content of the training is materially different from any prior qualification** or a previous apprenticeship

*This means that whilst the apprenticeship levy can be used for reskilling, the Healthcare Science Practitioner Degree Apprenticeship cannot be used to draw down funding to support graduates with a Biomedical Science degree to complete the IBMS Registration Training Portfolio post-graduation.*

Guidance has been sought on whether the same would apply to someone with a Biochemistry, or Microbiology degree.

*The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BIS) have advised that an HEI needs to make the decision concerning any prior learning as set out in the funding rules, specifically*

*211.17. Confirmation that you have accounted for prior learning that affects the learning*

*or the funding of any of the apprenticeship and adjusted the price accordingly.*

*This information could include:*

*211.17.1. information from the individual's personal learning record*

*211.17.2. details of previous qualifications including modules/units undertaken compared to the content of the apprenticeship, demonstrating how they are materially different*

*211.17.3. skills gap analysis, demonstrating the new skills needed by the individual and how the apprenticeship will address these*