

**Minutes of the meeting of the University Academy of Engineering School  
Advisory Board  
held at 4.00 pm on Thursday, 21 May 2020  
Trafalgar Street, London SE17 2TP**

**Present**

Chris Mallaband (Chair)  
Safia Barikzai  
Alex Drake (Vice-Chair)  
Philipp Herzberg  
Zakir Matin  
John Taylor

**Apologies**

Veronica Allen  
Karen Fowler  
Jacqui Collins

**In attendance**

Michael Broadway  
Dan Cundy  
Dominique Phipp

**1. Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed the members and attendees to the meeting. The above apologies were noted.

The SAB noted that Karen Fowler has not attended the last three meetings. The SAB had valued her contribution. The Chair asked the Secretary to contact her to confirm if she feels able to continue to be a local governor.

The SAB noted that Tony Roberts has stepped down from his role as a local governor but remains a local governor at the UTC. The SAB thanked Tony for his valuable contribution.

**2. Declarations of interest**

No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting**

The SAB approved the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record.

**4. Matters arising**

The SAB noted that its previous request for additional resources to support students sitting GCSE and A-level exams had been well received by the

Quality Committee. However, due to the pandemic these resources were now better used elsewhere.

The SAB noted that School senior leaders made a request for additional capital expenditure for more Chromebooks, which has been signed off by the CEO.

Year 11 performance – this would be covered later in the meeting.

Public premium – this would be covered at a future meeting, including the intended impact of activities for the next academic year.

Review of indicators used in reporting trends and benchmarks in Principal's reports - The SAB noted that development of a Governance dashboard is underway. The dashboard will streamline and centralise the process of information gathering and reporting and give structure to principals reporting to governors.

Grease production - The Chair noted that he sent a message of congratulations to the Head of Drama.

Year 11 attendance - The Chair requested to see the attendance record of students prior to the lockdown.

The Chair explained that a significant part of this meeting will be spent discussing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the huge changes that have occurred since the last meeting.

## **5. Questions for the Principal**

The SAB discussed what the Academy is doing to ensure the rigour and quality of assessments. A governor questioned if the number of assessment points in KS4 is sufficient if a student is not making progress and commented that the quality and reporting of assessments doesn't seem consistent.

The Principal responded that school policy is to give students a 'working at' grade and 'target' grade based on their marks in four summative exams during KS4. This approach offers four opportunities for feedback to the parent/student, including a full report on the student's progress and an annual Parents' Evening. He explained that the School does not issue predictive grades.

The Chair asked how students know if they are on track to achieve their target grades, or if their performance is behind. The Principal explained that students receive increasingly detailed feedback throughout the academic year. The Principal added that UAE and UTC are developing shared reporting standards.

The Chair asked to see a selection of reports given to parents on their child's performance at a future meeting. The Principal agreed to provide a selection

for the SAB to review at a future meeting and consider if they are sufficiently clear and jargon free.

The Principal noted that the assessment policy is under review, as the pandemic has challenged the existing format and delivery of assessments. He will provide an update on this work at a future meeting.

## 6. **Update on pay policy**

The SAB noted that the SBA Board has previously discussed and approved the pay policy.

The Chair explained that the new policy is in line with policy across the sector. In amending the policy, a 'no detriment' approach has been taken and the new policy will benefit many of staff. A small group (less than five individuals) would be worse off under the new policy however, so their current salaries will be protected for two years.

A separate review of teacher's working conditions (working hours, annual leave etc.) will be undertaken.

The Chair thanked all staff involved in the pay policy review. The Principal explained that the new policy should deliver very positive change for the School in the medium to long-term. In the short term a £64k increase in budget is necessary, dependent on performance management outcomes this year. The Principal confirmed that this budget increase is manageable

## 7. **Principal's report - focus on online school**

The Principal gave a presentation on the School's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SAB received a tour of the online teaching system, Google Classrooms, from the perspective of a student working from home during lockdown.

### Teaching

The Principal explained that early into lockdown feedback from teachers and students showed that continuing the pre-lockdown school timetable, providing five lessons per day, was not feasible. Students, teachers and parents were overwhelmed and couldn't guarantee their presence for lessons. A new simplified timetable was launched of:

- Three lessons per day, which are uploaded to Google Classroom before 9am. Work for all three lessons must be completed by midnight the day before their next lesson in that subject. The daily lessons may take longer than three hours to complete.
- PE and dance activities are regularly posted online as well as three form times per week, one school assembly per week, and one book club session per week. Staff are investigating the possibility of posting book club books to students' home addresses.

The SAB discussed how students will recover lost time studying the academic curriculum during the pandemic. The SAB noted that students have been given the opportunity to do as much work as they want to during the pandemic on top of the compulsory three lessons per day. The Principal added that work has begun on a plan for catching up with the academic curriculum after lockdown (a “recovery curriculum”). The recovery curriculum will include support for students negatively affected by the social and emotional challenges of lockdown.

The SAB discussed how teaching of the practical elements of courses is being conducted. It was noted that the School does not have the capacity to post materials to students’ homes. It was suggested that the LSBU ambassadors and students could provide elective courses or lesson plans.

The Chair asked if the teaching materials shared online are available to students at any time, or if they are removed after a short period. The Principal explained that the online database of teaching material is currently available to students for the foreseeable future, and materials are not removed. He added that the database growing throughout the pandemic will be available for teaching staff to utilise again in future.

The Chair also asked if teachers can interact with students in real time, or if there is a delay in helping students with their home-working. The SAB noted that teachers can give same-day responses to questions sent by students via email, typically within a few hours of receipt or less.

The SAB discussed how other schools are operating during the pandemic. It agreed that the Google Classroom environment developed by the School is impressive. The Principal noted that the School plans to move towards more live teaching sessions, ideally at least one every day.

A training day is planned for the 5 June 2020 to discuss development of teaching practices and encourage constant improvement. The day will also focus on how staff can support one another through this difficult period.

### Student engagement

The SAB noted the average student engagement scores throughout the pandemic with the online learning resources is around 30-45%. This means that 30-45% of students are completing every piece of work. The Principal explained that though this figure appears low, it is double the national average. The SAB noted that difficult circumstances at home, such as sharing of home resources, are contributing to these figures. The Principal explained how teachers are responding to low engagement with work set, for instance by contacting the child’s parents after nine pieces of work set are not completed.

### Student and staff welfare

The SAB noted that the School has identified 95 vulnerable students. These students are receiving additional support through regular phone contact with Student Services and the SLT. Five staff are dedicated to providing this support full time. Some students receive daily phone calls and regular video calls from teachers to talk through their lessons. If the School cannot make contact, the matter is referred to educational welfare or social services as necessary.

The SAB discussed how students can log concerns. It was noted that all students already know how to contact the School's safeguarding team. The SAB discussed the level of supervision the School has over student-teacher interactions. It was noted that all live lessons are now held through 'Google meet' which is a secure environment. All lessons are recorded, as are any teacher-student phone calls. Zoom calls are not recorded, but parents know how to contact safeguarding resources at school with any concerns. It was noted that teachers phone the child's parents first, before the call is passed to their child.

The SAB discussed staff welfare, which is an area of concern. It was noted that numerous staff have contracted COVID-19 or are struggling with its impact. Every member of staff has different circumstances, but broadly many are lonely and struggling with the amount of hours now required to be spent behind a computer screen. The Principal shared how the School is supporting staff through check-in phone calls, weekly staff quizzes etc.

### Reopening

The SAB discussed plans to gradually reopen the School. As per Government guidance, the School intends to open for year 10s (particularly for those not engaging with work at home) in the coming weeks.

The SAB encouraged involving all parties in decision-making about the reopening of the School, as it is an emotive topic, at the earliest opportunity. The Principal confirmed that consultation about the proposed plans will include parents, staff, Governors, SABs, and trade unions prior to the final decision being made by the Board. Staff surveys will be used to understand the needs and demands placed on staff, and their views on the plans. Guidelines on students exempt from face-to-face teaching will be provided to parents.

### Year groups performance

The SAB discussed Year 11 performance. The Principal explained how their grades have been assigned and noted that overall a modest improvement in results is forecast. It was noted that no league tables will be published this year, as school performance cannot be assessed accurately due to the pandemic. The SAB noted that a full graduation assembly and prom will be held for the graduating Year 11 students when possible.

The SAB noted that the Year 13 grades for 2020/21 are better than last year.

The Chair requested data on how many Year 6 students have chosen the School as their first choice. This information is to be provided out of committee.

The SAB noted the current Year 12 application numbers, which are very impressive.

#### SDP update

The SAB noted that the Quality Committee is reviewing the timeline for development of these plans and the School Development Plan will be completed in draft form by the end of the academic year.

#### Staff turnover

The SAB noted healthy and low numbers for turnover of teaching staff, with most vacancies filled for next year, and support staff.

The Chair acknowledged how fast the world has changed in the past few months and congratulated the School's spectacular response.

#### **8. Policy review**

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

#### **9. Quality committee update**

The SAB received this feedback earlier in the meeting during the Principal's report.

#### **10. Governors' visit form**

The Board noted the Governors' Visit Form, completed for a visit on 5 March 2020.

#### **11. Any other business**

The Vice-Chair thanked the School for supplying goggles to Lewisham Hospital for use as PPE equipment. He noted that the response from UAE and other schools across the local area was overwhelming.

**Date of next meeting  
4.00 pm, on Thursday, 9 July 2020**

**Confirmed as a true record**

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..... (Chair)