APROVED MINUTES OF MEETING

Academic Assembly

Wednesday 26 October 2022 at 13.15

Virtual meeting via TEAMS

Present:

Dr Alan Hayes, Chair and 44 attendees

In attendance:

Karina Bradshaw, Faculty Librarian
Andrew Hutchinson, Head of Library Operational Services
Dr Nicky Kemp, Director of Policy, Planning & Compliance until item 760
Dr Catherine Pink, Head of Library Research Services
Emily Pollinger, Project Manager (Education)
Helen Rhodes, Faculty Librarian
Katrin Roberts, Faculty Librarian
Hannah South, Head of Library Academic Services

Secretariat

Dr Caroline Harris, Secretary

Introductory items

753 - Welcome and Quorum

The Chair welcomed attendees and new members.

754 - Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

755 – Membership and Terms of Reference

It was noted that the Chair had been appointed until 31 July 2024.

Members were reminded that the Terms of Reference for Academic Assembly were available on the web: http://www.bath.ac.uk/statutory-bodies-committees/academic/index.html

756 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting - AA22/23-01

The minutes of the previous meeting of Academic Assembly held on 3 May 2022 were approved.

757 - Actions and Matters Arising - AA22/23-02

The Action Log was noted.

APROVED MINUTES OF MEETING

Part I

758 – Relevant Decisions of Senate

It was noted that the minutes of meetings of Senate may be viewed at: https://www.bath.ac.au/publications/?f.Type%7CY=Minutes&f.Department+or+group%7CX=Senate

The Chair brought attention to the following decisions:

June:

- delegation of authority to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) to make the necessary changes to temporarily suspend Regulation 15 for this year for a group of students affected by technical issues over the examination submission deadline.
- the adoption of the Framework for Research Institutes, Beacons, Centres and Groups with associated changes to Ordinances.
- to recommend to Council the Statement on Research Integrity.
- to recommend to Council amendments to Ordinances in relation to sabbaticals.
- in relation to Curriculum Transformation:
    - the PGT Assessment Regulations version 22-23.1 for use in academic year 2022/23 by CT courses in the Faculty of Engineering & Design.
    - specifications for generic Postgraduate exit awards.
    - the direction of intended further work to take place across summer / autumn 2022 on undergraduate assessment regulations for 2023/24 and for a subsequent version of postgraduate taught assessment regulations for 2023/24.
    - the delegation of authority to the Chair of EQSC to approve work undertaken by the Director of Academic Registry across summer 2022 to implement regulation change to NFA-PGT, NFA-UG, and IMCA documentation related to the implementation of agreed assessment regulations changes.
- the disposition of revision and assessment days for the 2022/23 academic year chart and the dates for Graduation Ceremonies in 2022/23.
- in relation to courses of study:
    - the merger of Curriculum Transformation Committee (CTC) functions into Courses and Partnerships Approval Committee (CPAC), including relevant revisions to CPAC and S/FLTQC Terms of Reference;
    - the adoption of the draft Academic Framework (10 Credits) for use with all new and transformed courses;
    - the retention of the current academic framework under the new title Academic Framework (6 Credits) for continued use with pre-transformed courses;
    - revisions to University of Bath award titles and levels of credit within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ);
    - revisions, including title change, to QA3 Approval of New Courses of Study;
    - revisions, including title change, to QA4 Amendments to Courses of Study and Units and Approval of New Units.
- the revised Student Complaints procedure and the proposed amendments to Student Regulation 7 and Student Regulation 8, and to recommend to Council the revised Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedure.

- the Regulations for the 2022/23 academic year.
- the delegation of authority to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) to approve amendments to the Regulations for Student Apprentices in time for the start of the 2022/23 academic year.
- in relation to Senate:
    - to remove the provisions for the co-option of members to Senate and to replace them with provisions to allow regular attendance.
    - the regular attendance of the Director of Education and Student Services at Senate.
    - to remove provisions in relation to casual vacancies and to replace them with vacancies for full terms.
    - the proposal for handling a likely period of parental leave required by a member of Senate and noted the intention to bring forward a Senate parental leave policy in the 2022/23 academic year.
    - to simplify the election mechanism by which members of Senate were appointed to Council.
    - to fix the term of Senate members of Council at three years, irrespective of the duration of the remainder of their term on Senate.
    - the amendments to the Standing Orders.
    - to recommend to Council the amendments necessary to implement these changes, with an effective date of 1 August 2022.
- the following new courses on the recommendation of the Curriculum Transformation Committee:
    - the MSc Strategic Retailing, to commence in 2023/24.
    - the MSc Biotechnology (Healthcare Technologies) and MSc Biotechnology (Sustainable Biotechnologies), to commence in 2023/24.
    - the MSc Biotechnology with Entrepreneurship, to commence in 2024/25.
    - the MSc Zero Carbon Futures, to commence in 2023/24.

October

- amendments to EQSC terms of reference.
- a revised policy on Admissions and Support for Students under the age of 18.
- revised membership of Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee.
- to recommend to Council an Export Control Policy.
- to establish a Curriculum Management Academic Working Group to develop principles for future course design and approvals, and its Terms of Reference.
- revised membership of the University Doctoral Studies Committee.

A member commented that the revised policy on Admissions and Support for Students under the age of 18 had been discussed at the Senior Tutors Forum and it was felt that it had been brought in with little communication and that it appeared to be heavy-handed when considering trips and other activities.

Action: Chair to provide this feedback to the Director of Education & Student Services.

759– Elections – AA22/23 – 03

Academic Assembly noted details of Academic Assembly representatives on University committees.

760 – Groups Advisory to the Vice-Chancellor.

The Vice-Chancellor attended for this item and thanked the Chair for providing the chance to engage with the Assembly. They presented the PowerPoint attached to the minutes.

Members received the following responses to questions:

- The Boards structure would be communicated more widely, now its clarity was established.
- Senate remained the principal governance committee but during the pandemic the Education Board was able to deliver agile operational needs to support teachers and researchers and was complementary to Senate.
- The Vice-Chancellor would consider providing principle University Executive Board decisions to Senate for information as were provided previously.

The Chair thanked the Vice-Chancellor for sharing this information with Academic Assembly.

761 Reflection on Staff Social Space

Professor Jane White introduced the item, reporting concern from colleagues over the lack of social space on campus for academic staff, with the Claverton Rooms not having re-opened. Concern was also expressed that departments may now be expected to provide staff social space, which would be a change of University operation. It was noted that the Wessex Restaurant was being refurbished, but that it was a small space.

During discussion the following points were made:

- Lack of catering facilities was embarrassing when entertaining external researchers or partners and did not enhance research culture or staff satisfaction.
- There was a risk of a vicious circle with lack of facilities discouraging working on campus which would result in less use of facilities.
- Omnibus, the staff society, had conducted a survey on this topic with the following results from 615 respondents in 16 days:
    - 76% of respondents were very or somewhat disappointed with current facilities
    - 61% did not have a space where they could take a break from their role, separate from students
    - 90% felt it extremely/very important to have a separate space away from students
    - 66% felt isolated/lonely at work
    - 98% were interested in a dedicated space for non-formal gatherings.
    - Despite no question about the Claverton Rooms 36% of the respondents mentioned the loss of the Claverton Rooms as having a negative impact, not only to their social and break space but also to the collaborations and research innovations that were discussed over informal gatherings.
- Student-free space was required as had been available prior to the pandemic.
- The issue was not only relevant for academic staff.

Action: Chair/Rajani Naidoo to take forward.

762 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The Chair talked through the slides attached to the minutes to provide information on the forthcoming TEF.

763 Academic Integrity

The Chair introduced the topic; assessments were a balance between coursework and examinations, needing assurance that student submissions were their own work. More electronic examinations could dilute academic integrity as they were not in the presence of the student when they were taking the assessment.

The School of Management had used Inspira for online exams for year 2 students onwards as a trial. They were online, using the students' own device (or borrowed from the School) but in a room on campus. A pre-downloaded browser locked access to the internet and a scanner was used for diagrams and mathematical equations. Training had been provided on the type of questions suitable.

Action: Rob Branston to provide a verbal update on use of Inspira to the next meeting.

764 Academic Assembly Review Update – AA22/23 – 04

The Assembly noted the update on review actions.

Part 2

765 – Programme of Meetings for 2022/23- AA222/23-05

Academic Assembly noted the programme of meetings and the 2022/23 Annual Plan:

- Tuesday 2 May 2023 at 12.30pm, by TEAMS, to include the Vice-Chancellor's statutory address.

766 – Any Other Business

There was no business raised.

The meeting closed at 14.40

Please contact the Governance Team If you require any further assistance regarding this meeting.

Academic Assembly
October 2022

Boards and Committees

- At University Executive Board, we have been reviewing the function and structure of the Executive Boards and sub-boards.

- Our aim is to have more transparency and clarity about where issues are being considered and decisions are being made, and by whom.

- We also want to strike the right balance between the agility needed to respond quickly when needed, whilst also enabling members of the University community, including staff and student representatives, to be engaged in rich conversations to inform decisions.

University Executive Board

- University Executive Board (UEB) advises and supports the Vice-Chancellor and President in the discharge of their responsibility to Council for maintaining and promoting the good order of the University. The Board is the principle operating committee of the University. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor has been delegated authority by the Vice-Chancellor to chair these meetings in their absence.

- UEB membership has been slightly expanded to include the Chief Information and Digital Officer (CIDO), the Director of Campus Infrastructure, Director of Campus Services, and Director of Education and Student Services.

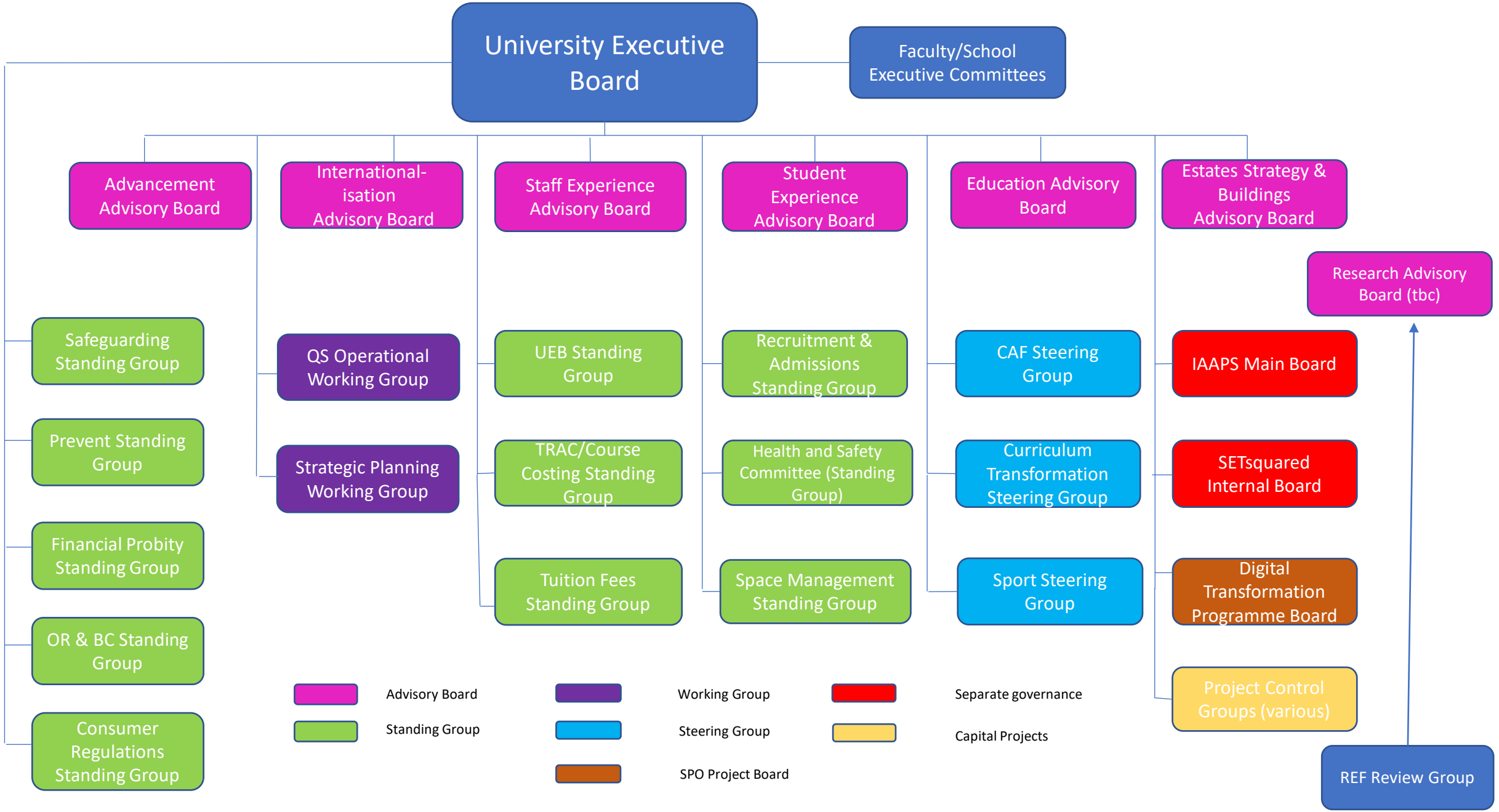
- For a period of six months, UEB will meet every other week and a smaller group, UEB Standing Group, will meet in between. All papers will be available to both groups and the terms of reference are the same. This approach is being piloted and will be assessed at the end of the period.

- The membership and ToR are published online: https://www.bath.ac.uk/teams/university-executive-board/

Sub Boards and Committees

- There were previously a whole range of different types of committees reporting into University Executive Board.

- To provide transparency and a level of consistency, we have now agreed a standard nomenclature for the following:
  - Advisory Boards
  - Standing Groups
  - Steering Groups
  - Working Groups
  - Capital Project Control Groups


University Executive Board
Faculty/School Executive Committees
Advancement Advisory Board
International-isation Advisory Board
Staff Experience Advisory Board
Student Experience Advisory Board
Education Advisory Board
Estates Strategy & Buildings Advisory Board
Research Advisory Board (tbc)
Safeguarding Standing Group
Prevent Standing Group
Financial Probity Standing Group
OR & BC Standing Group
Consumer Regulations Standing Group
QS Operational Working Group
Strategic Planning Working Group
UEB Standing Group
TRAC/Course Costing Standing Group
Tuition Fees Standing Group
Recruitment & Admissions Standing Group
Health and Safety Committee (Standing Group)
Space Management Standing Group
CAF Steering Group
Curriculum Transformation Steering Group
Sport Steering Group
IAAPS Main Board
SETsquared Internal Board
Digital Transformation Programme Board
Project Control Groups (various)
REF Review Group
Advisory Board
Standing Group
Working Group
Steering Group
SPO Project Board
Separate governance
Capital Projects

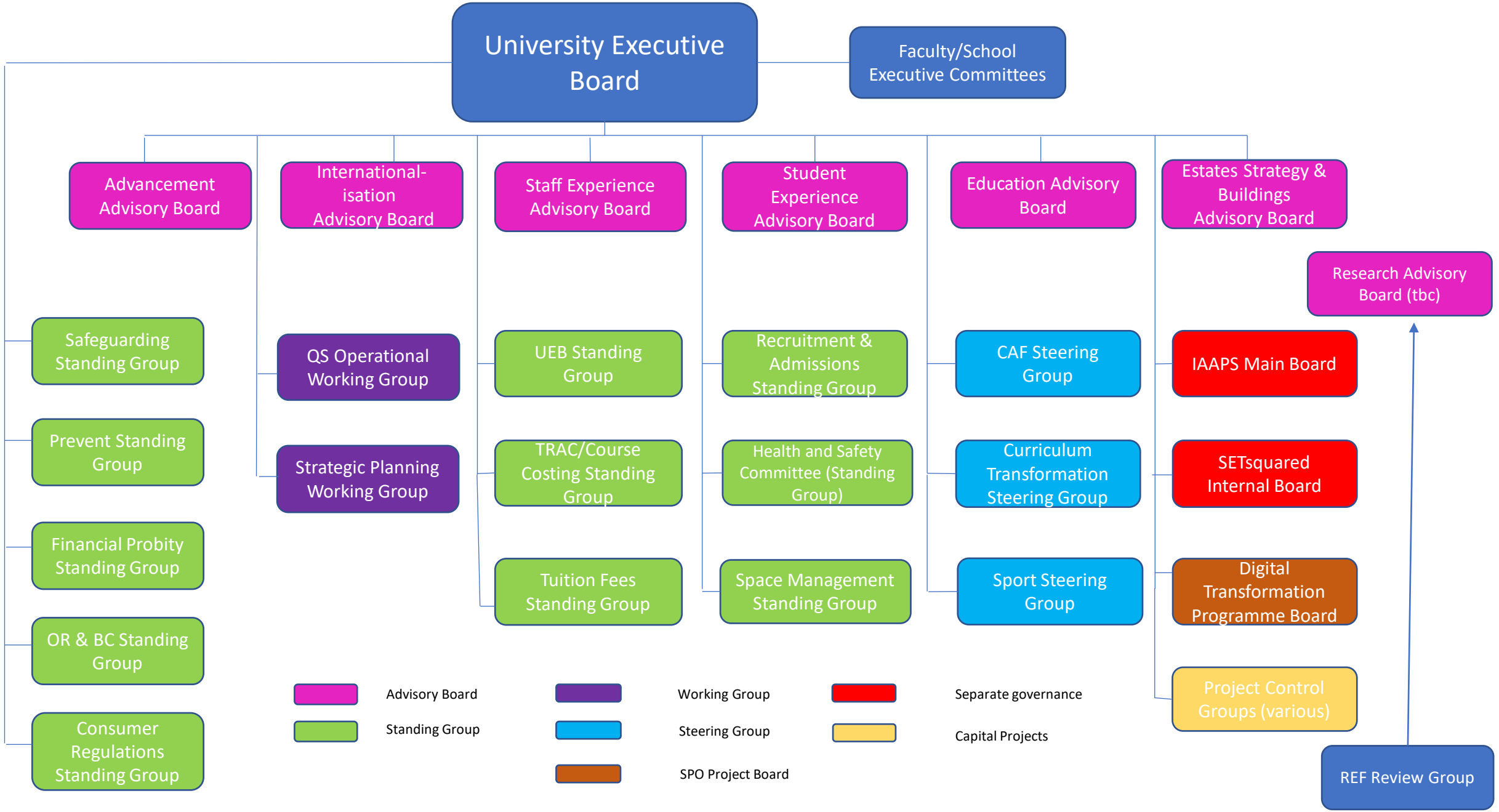
UEB and its sub-Boards and Committees

- **Advisory Boards** are sub-boards of UEB e.g. the Staff and Student Experience Advisory Boards. They are advisory to their respective Chairs in the discharge of their executive functions, who may bring resulting papers and recommendations to UEB if required. We've developed a standard ToR for these boards. Advisory Boards report to UEB, and are also accountable to Senate for matters within their remit.
- **Standing Groups** are established to have detailed oversight of key business processes, on behalf of UEB, for various aspects of institutional business and/or compliance e.g. Safeguarding, Health & Safety Committee, Recruitment & Admissions. These are advisory to UEB.

UEB and its sub-Boards and Committees

- We have a number of **Steering Groups** and in future will reserve this term for task-focussed, fixed-term groups with oversight of more complex activities e.g. those with multiple workstreams (such as CT and CAF). Steering Groups will continue to be advisory to UEB for the areas of activity within the scope of their Terms of Reference, which will be reviewed annually.
- **Working Groups** are fixed term in nature and are set up to have detailed oversight of key institutional initiatives. Delegated authority for Working Groups will be considered at the point they are established by UEB.
- Capital project groups oversee major capital spend via Project Control Groups; these are responsible to UEB.

The slide also captures other groups which sit outside this structure e.g. IAAPS and SetSquared.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Standing Group
Working Group
Steering Group
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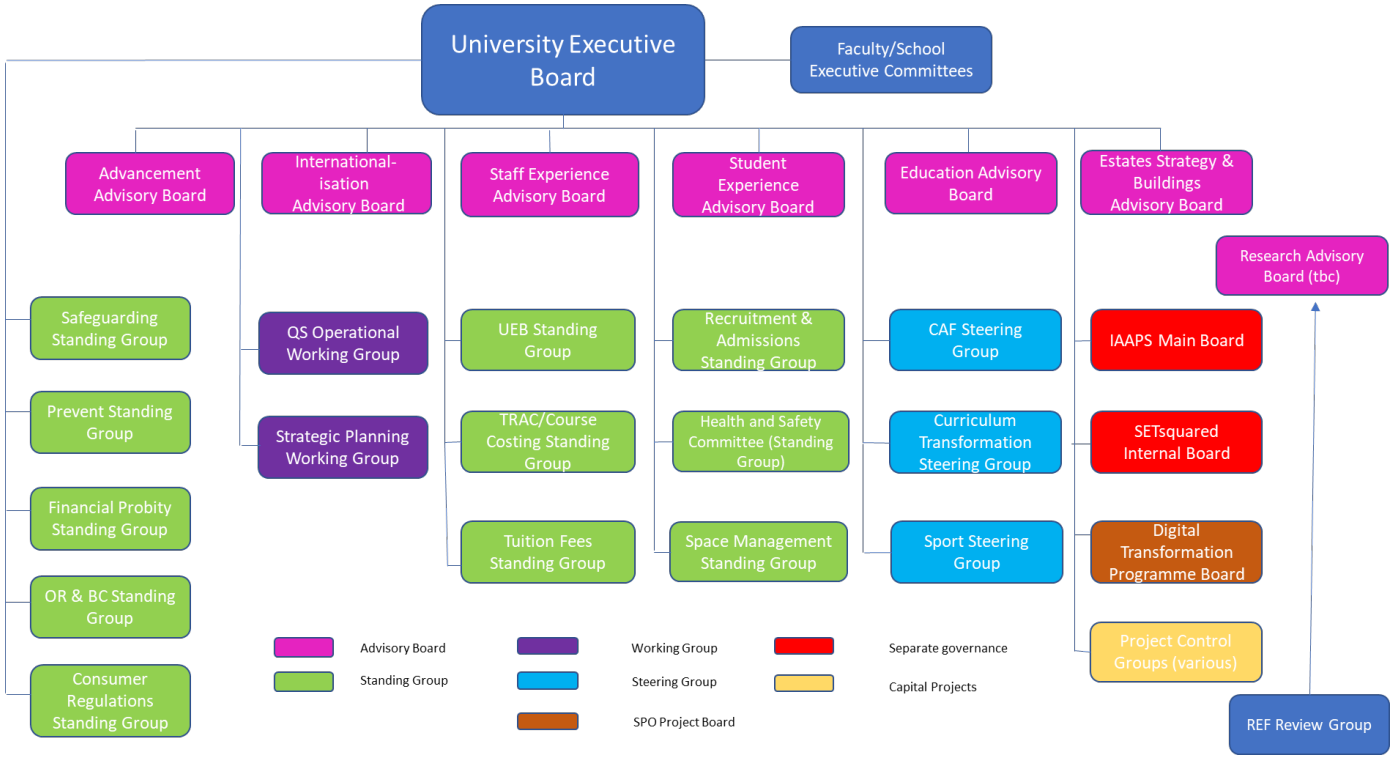
Future approach

We will continue to learn and review, ensuring that we understand what is working well and what we must improve in response to both the changing external landscape and the needs of our internal community.



THANK YOU

Background and Context

- All current TEF awards (due to expire in 2021) have been extended pending a new, revamped TEF exercise
- Bath currently holds a Gold award and it is important that this is retained
- Consultation on future of TEF now closed - final decisions expected to be published later this year
- Submission deadline expected to be mid January 2023
- Outcomes expected to be published in time to inform prospective students for 2024/25 recruitment cycle

Scope

- It will be a provider-level exercise (*but with subject level data*)
  - Mandatory for OfS registered providers in England
- Institutional awards, rather than ratings for individual subjects
  - Indicators will still be split by subject, course, and student characteristics etc.
- Four-year cycle
  - For both the duration of the awards, and the data assessed.
- In scope: all undergraduate courses and students
  - first degree, other UG, and UG with PG components
  - Includes students that are either registered or taught at a provider

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) timescales

Autumn 2022 - The provider and student submission window opens:

- OfS publishes guidance on submissions (due to launch w/c 3 Oct)
- OfS releases the TEF indicators (received)

September 2022 - OfS appoints the TEF panel (not yet appointed)

Mid-January 2023 (tbc) - Submission deadline

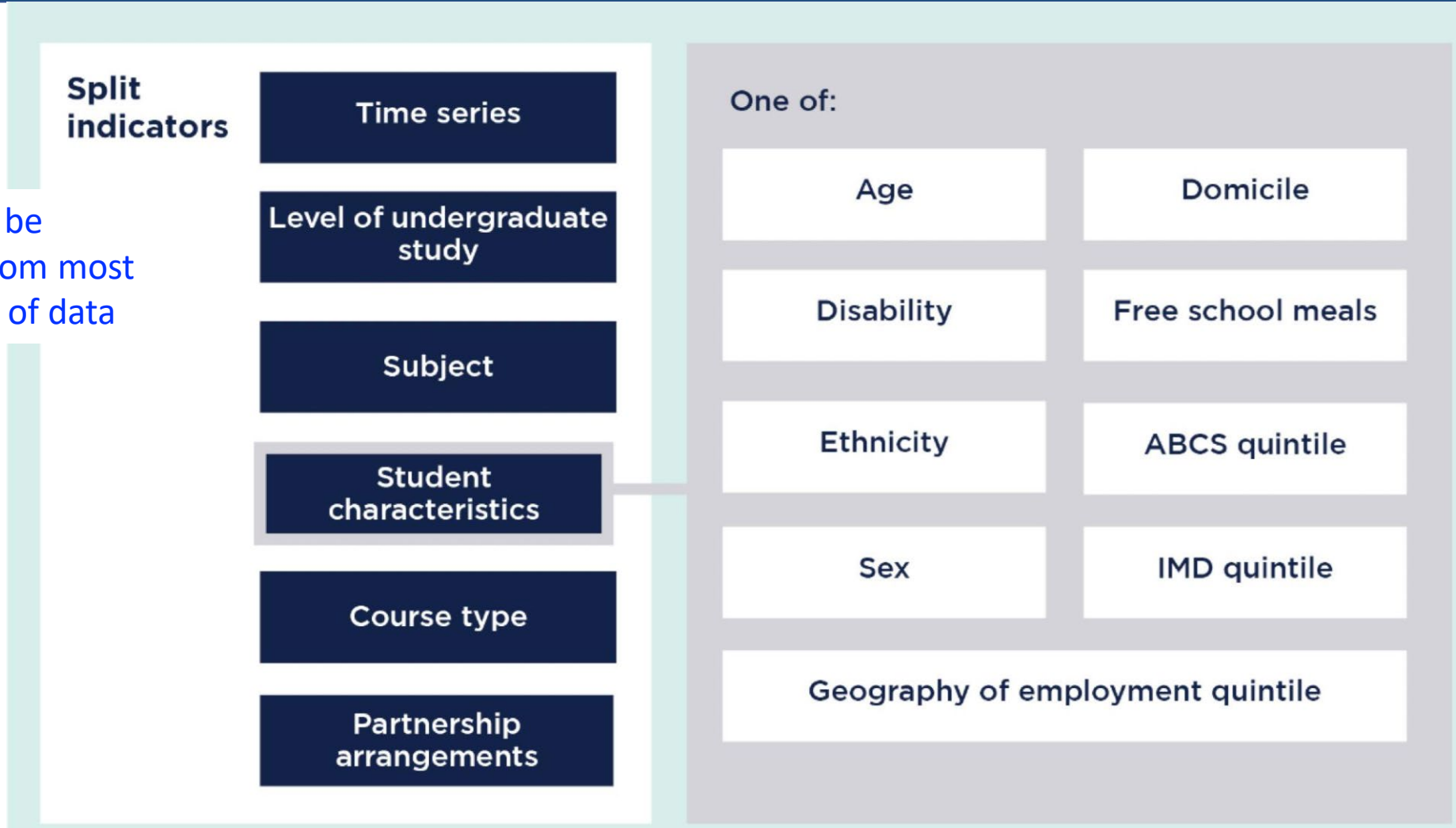
Late January to June 2023 - The TEF panel carries out assessments

July to August 2023 - Providers notified of the panel's provisional decisions about their ratings, opportunity for providers to make representations

September 2023 - Outcomes published for providers that do not make representations

Aspects of Assessment

TEF aspect	Student experience		Student outcomes	
What the aspect covers	Academic experience and assessment	Resources, support and student engagement	Positive outcomes	Educational gains
Evidence sources	Provider submission Student submission OfS indicators based on NSS		Provider submission Student submission OfS outcomes indicators	

Indicators

Indicators will be constructed from most recent 4 years of data