

**Minutes of the tenth meeting of the Board of Governors
held on 13 October 2004**

Present: Sir John Carter

Peter Anwyl	Helen Peters
Judith Baines	Celia Phillips
Graham Castle	Abdul Rahim
Stephan John	Brian Roper
Jeremy Mayhew	Cherril Scheer
Dame Barbara Mills	Finlay Scott
Bob Morgan	Orhan Tsolak

Clerk to the Board: John McParland

In attendance: Bob Aylett Rachel Thomas
Pam Nelson Chris Topley
Lyn Link

Apologies: Bill Clark, John Haworth, Linden Ife, James
Kempton, Frank McLoughlin, Raj Patel, Fred
Smith, Michael Snyder and Sarah Tyacke

109. Higher Education Act 2004 - Tuition Fees
(Agenda item BG 10/1)

The Board received the report from the Director of Finance setting out the requirements of the legislation, the implications for the University and the range of financial outcomes modelled in respect of fee levels.

The Board also noted the views of the Academic Board which had considered the matter on 29 September 2004. The questions for discussion set out in page 6 of the report were considered.

Fees

The Board agreed that the maximum level of £3,000 for all courses should be charged. It was thought that differentiation between institutions was more likely to be based on bursary policy and practice rather than fee levels.

The University was confident that it would be able to prepare the Access Plan that would need to satisfy the Office for Fair Access.

On part-time and sub-degree courses the Board endorsed the views of the Academic Board that fees should increase in line with inflation only at this stage. The Board also agreed that all existing discretionary fees be subsumed within the £3000.

Bursaries

The Board considered that discussion of bursaries could not be divorced from discussion of the wider issue of the use and allocation of any increased resources arising from fees. The introduction of fees would further emphasize the contractual nature of the University's relationship with students and the service expected to be received in return for fees. The expenditure on facilities and services to enhance the student experience and to support students was as important as the direct financial support through provision of bursaries. It was also important that increased income from higher fees provided additional funds for investment in the mission of the University.

It was agreed that proposals on such expenditure in terms of amount and allocation would form part of the revised University Business Plan to be presented to the Board in 2005 and, that subject to approval of the Plan, would be incorporated within the Budget for 2005/06 and future years. The cash flow implications of any future changes to HEFCE funding would need to be allowed for in future business plans.

With respect to bursaries the Board considered that these should be targetted to enhance retention and reward achievement. Bursaries might be paid in accordance with identified milestones of academic progress.

It was agreed that the Finance and Human Resources Committee in

November should consider a framework for approval by the Board in December.

The Board noted the difficulty in obtaining reliable research into the views of prospective students about debt and fees. It was acknowledged that a range of research of both existing and potential students should be considered.