

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD ON 4 JULY 2023

Present

N Goulden, Pro-Chancellor (Chair)	J Nelson
S Denton	A O'Hara
N Ebbs	Professor E W Peck
I Ellis	Baroness D Warwick
Dr A Emuwa	C Wayman
S Gregory	D Williams
L Holder	Dr D Wilson
M Marsden	O Woodley
S V Murcott	

In Attendance

Professor S Huttly, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Performance)
R C Jenkyn, Clerk to the Board of Governors
J A Clews, Governance Services Manager (Minute Secretary)
J A Lacey, Director of Finance, for minute references 23.27 to 23.29

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from D Dayal, G Love and S Walker-Smith.

23.19 Welcomes and Farewells

The Deputy Pro-Chancellor noted that this would be the Pro-Chancellor's final meeting as Chair of the Board, although he would remain a member of the Board until the end of September. On behalf of the Board, the Deputy Pro-Chancellor thanked Neil for his considerable contribution and commitment to the Board and the University. Governors recorded their appreciation to Neil for his outstanding work during his tenure as Pro-Chancellor and Chair of the Board.

The Pro-Chancellor welcomed Anna O'Hara (Student Member) to her first meeting of the Board of Governors.

23.20 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest Relating to Items on the Agenda

Members present were asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest they held in the agenda items to be considered. No conflicts of interests were declared.

23.21 Minutes

(a) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 21 March 2023 (Document A) were approved as a true record.

(b) Matters Arising

Members received a report (Document B) in relation to matters arising from the previous meeting. All action points had been progressed.

Minute Reference 23.16 - Application of the Corporation Seal: A short summary in relation to the University's subsidiary company structure had been provided within Document B. The Chief Operating Officer and Registrar agreed that an overview of the University's eight active subsidiary companies, including details regarding the purposes and the directors of each, would be targeted for presentation at the November 2023 meeting of the Board.

23.22 Report from the Pro-Chancellor

The Pro-Chancellor presented a report (Document C) updating the Board on matters not included elsewhere on the agenda, including recommendations from the meeting of the Membership and Nominations Committee held on 16 May 2023. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

- The Board congratulated David Williams who had received an MBE in the King's Birthday Honours List;

Membership Matters

- The Board considered the recommendations of the Membership and Nominations Committee and approved the following appointments:
 - that Geoff Love be appointed as Deputy Pro-Chancellor and Deputy Chair of the Board for a term of three years with effect from 1 August 2023. Geoff would also be appointed as Deputy Chair of the Remuneration Committee;
 - that Jennie Nelson be appointed as the Senior Independent Governor for a term of three years with effect from 1 August 2023;
 - that Doug Wilson be appointed as Chair of the Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee and as a Trustee of the John van Geest Cancer Research Fund, both with effect from 1 August 2023. Doug would also transfer from the Co-opted Governor category of membership to become an Independent Governor with effect from 1 October 2023;
 - that David Williams be appointed as the Governor Lead for Safeguarding with immediate effect; and
 - that Anna O'Hara, the Student Member of the Board of Governors, be appointed to the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee with immediate effect;
- The Pro-Chancellor reported that interviews with three prospective candidates for appointment to the Board were scheduled for 5 July 2023. The Clerk to the Board would update Governors on the outcomes of these discussions in due course;
- In accordance with its delegated authority, the Membership and Nominations Committee had approved the appointment of the Nottingham Trent Students' Union Vice-President Education as a Co-opted Member of the Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee with effect from 1 July 2023;

- Sarah Walker-Smith would step down from the Board of Governors after the September meeting due to work commitments; and

Student Voice

- At the March meeting of the Independent Governors, it was requested that consideration be given to enhancing opportunities for the Board to hear the 'student voice'. It was proposed that a presentation be targeted for the evening session of the Board in November 2023 to explain the mechanisms in place to hear feedback from students and how this together with other sources of data were used to respond to the needs of current and future students. In addition to demonstrating how such information was currently collected and analysed, this would also provide an opportunity to seek views from Governors on what additional insights they may find helpful to support their discussions.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and endorsed;
- (ii) that the recommendations in relation to membership matters as set out above (and in Document C) be approved and endorsed; and
- (iii) that a presentation be targeted for the evening session of the Board of Governors in November 2023 in relation to the voice of the current and future student.

23.23 Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference

The Board received a report (Composite Document D) from the Clerk to the Board in relation to proposed revisions to the University's Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and noted; and
- (ii) that the revised Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference (as set out in Composite Document D) be approved and endorsed.

23.24 Board of Governors' Away Day: 25 September 2023

The Board of Governors received a report (Document E) from the Vice-Chancellor in relation to the proposed design for the Board of Governors' away day scheduled for 25 September 2023.

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and noted; and
- (ii) that a revised agenda for the Board of Governors' away day on 25 September 2023 be prepared and circulated to the Board in due course.

23.25 Vice-Chancellor's Update

The Vice-Chancellor provided a report (Document F) updating the Board on matters of importance not covered elsewhere on the agenda. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

[Some of the detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

- The Board commended the City's response to the tragic incidents that took place in Nottingham on 13 June. The vigils arranged by the University of Nottingham and the City Council had provided opportunities for local communities to unite. These had been well organised and respectful. Governors noted that the University had offered support to those colleagues who had witnessed the incidents and that the Chaplaincy team was providing support to students at the University of Nottingham. The NTSU President advised the Board that there had been no significant concerns raised by NTU students;
- The Chief Operating Officer and Registrar confirmed that the overall student recruitment position for 2023/24 entry remained in line with the planning assumptions reported previously to the Board;
- The Vice-Chancellor reported the challenges being experienced in the sector in relation to national pay bargaining. The Board was advised that the University's decision to adopt local pay negotiations had resulted in NTU being the only English university where trade unions had not taken industrial action this year;
- The Board was advised that recent sector policy developments were expected to have a limited impact at NTU;
- The results of the Graduate Outcomes Survey for the 2020/21 cohort had indicated an improvement in the number of NTU graduates in highly skilled employment, albeit the percentage of students who perceived they were using their graduate skills had decreased. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Performance) assured the Board that significant support was provided to students in order that they were able to articulate and recognise the transferable skills they had learnt during their studies;
- The University had opposed the proposal by the Office for Students to add a new condition of registration relating to sexual harassment. The University was fully compliant with relevant sector guidance and it was considered that such matters were already addressed through existing policies, practices and employment contracts;
- The results of the National Student Survey 2023 were expected to be released on 10 August 2023;
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Performance) reported that the provisional ratings for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) exercise would be released to institutions confidentially during August. There would be 28 days to make any representations regarding the awarded rating. TEF outcomes for the sector would be published by the end of September;
- The Chief Operating Officer and Registrar confirmed that the University had in hand all four aspects of focus for the Higher Education Mental Health Implementation Taskforce: NTU had been one of the early signatories of the Student Mental Health Charter; the University used data analytics extensively

and was seeking to embed wellbeing aspects within this work; compassionate communications was an area under review, with priority being given to academic regulations and the student communications arising therefrom; and the University had adopted the Universities UK (UUK) guidance in relation to handling student deaths;

- The University was holding 65 graduation ceremonies between 12 and 28 July for the 2023 graduating cohorts; and
- The development at Confetti London was progressing on schedule to open in September 2023. Student recruitment was on track to achieve the target for 2023 entry.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the update be received and endorsed.

23.26 Nottingham Trent Students' Union

(a) NTSU President's Update

The Board received a report (Document G) from the President of Nottingham Trent Students' Union (NTSU) in relation to NTSU activities. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

- The new Executive Team was now in post following a two-week induction period. The key areas of focus for the team included student safety, cost of living, student engagement and student culture;
- Regulatory changes in relation to Freedom of Speech and the Protect Duty were being monitored closely to ensure that the NTSU was compliant with the new legislation;
- The Nottingham Students' Partnership with the University of Nottingham Students' Union had launched recently. The Student Living Strategy was a key focus given the affordability challenges students were experiencing in relation to residential accommodation;
- It was recognised that more students were undertaking paid work alongside their studies due to cost of living pressures. Governors queried whether the University's provision was sufficiently flexible to support students' attendance. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University was exploring options to develop block timetables which made it easier for part-time students to attend in person, an approach which had worked well at Mansfield. The option to study virtually was often dependent on the nature of the course, but colleagues were cognisant of the challenges faced by students and the academy was working hard to support student engagement;
- The University had increased the Hardship Fund and made application criteria more flexible. Any students reporting financial challenges were encouraged to seek support. The University also offered advice to students in relation to budgeting and financial management, including a range of workshop sessions; and
- Governors suggested that there may be opportunities to support students to identify options to use their marketable skills in part-time

work which fitted around their studies. This matter would be raised with the Employability team.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

(b) NTSU Budget 2023/24

The Board received the 2023/24 budget for Nottingham Trent Students' Union (Document H). The budget had been approved by the NTSU Board of Trustees, and had been reviewed by the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on 20 June 2023.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the budget for Nottingham Trent Students' Union for 2023/24 be received and noted.

23.27 Budget 2023/24

The Board received a report (Document I) from the Director of Finance which presented the budget for the University for the 2023/24 academic year and forward projections to 2027/28. Governors were advised that the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee had reviewed the budget and forward projections in detail and recommended these to the Board for approval. The Audit and Risk Management Committee had reviewed the financial and risk assumptions included in the budget and had considered these to be robust.

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and endorsed; and
- (ii) that the Budget for 2023/24 and the financial projections to 2027/28 be approved for submission to the Office for Students.

23.28 Redacted Item

23.29 Redacted Item

23.30 University, reimagined

(a) Deep Dive: Connecting Globally

The Board received a report (Document K) from the Vice-Chancellor in relation to an update on progress with strategic initiatives for the Connecting Globally theme of the Strategic Plan (also issued to the Board of Governors for detailed discussion at its evening session on 3 July 2023).

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

(b) Community Engagement

The Board received a report (Document L) from the Vice-Chancellor in relation to community engagement (also issued to the Board of Governors for detailed discussion at its evening session on 3 July 2023).

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

(c) Key Performance Indicators

The Board received a report (Document M) from the Chief Operating Officer and Registrar in relation to the KPI balanced scorecard for *University, reimagined*.

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and endorsed; and
- (ii) that a revised approach be adopted in relation to presentation of the balanced scorecard for consideration by the Board.

23.31 Academic Board

The Board received the unconfirmed minutes from the meeting of the Academic Board held on 14 June 2023 (Document N).

Academic Board had discussed in detail a range of matters relating to students, teaching and research, including the deep dive on Connecting Globally and research development priorities for 2023/24. Academic Board had endorsed a revised approach to seeking feedback from students which aimed to limit the number of surveys issued, and the University would work with NTSU in this regard to avoid duplication.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

23.32 Business from Standing Committees(a) Employment Policy Committee

The Board noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Employment Policy Committee held on 13 June 2023 (Document O).

The Chair of the Committee noted discussions held in relation to the University's approach to creating a distinct package for reward and recognition, and the review planned in relation to management grades. The Committee had agreed to retain the Pension Opt-Out Policy until the Government abolished the Lifetime Allowance in April 2024.

(b) Investment Committee and Board of Trustees

The Board received a verbal update on the meeting of the Investment Committee and the Board of Trustees of the Student Success Fund held on 15 June 2023.

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

(c) Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Board noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee held on 20 June 2023 (Document P).

The Chair of the Committee noted that a range of matters had been considered, including a deep dive on the Graduate Outcomes Survey, risk management, and Confetti oversight and assurance. The Committee considered that the interim arrangements in relation to the Internal Audit Service were working well.

(d) Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee

The Board noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 20 June 2023 (Document Q).

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

(e) Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee

The Board noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee held on 22 June 2023 (Document R).

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

The Committee had reviewed the Degree Outcomes Statement for 2023, following its endorsement by Academic Board, and recommended its approval by the Board of Governors.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the Degree Outcomes Statement for 2023 be approved for publication on the University's website.

23.33 Application of the Corporation Seal

Members received and noted a report (Document S) summarising the documentation to which the University's Corporation Seal had been applied since the previous meeting of the Board.

23.34 Dates of Meetings(a) Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Governors was scheduled for Monday 25 September 2023.

(b) Dates of Future Meetings

It was noted that future meetings of the Board had been scheduled as follows:

- 28 November 2023;
- 19 March 2024; and
- 2 July 2024.