

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD ON 19 MARCH 2024**

Present

C Wayman, Pro-Chancellor (Chair)	G Love
R Bennett	S V Murcott
D Dayal	J Nelson
S Denton	A O'Hara
N Ebbs	Professor E W Peck
Dr A Emuwa	G Walker
P Kenyon	Dr D Wilson
C Leviton	D Williams

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 24.08 and 24.09

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from S Gregory, L Holder and M Marsden.

24.01 Welcomes and Farewells

The Pro-Chancellor noted that Sara Murcott and Anna O'Hara were attending their last meeting of the Board of Governors, although they will have further committee meetings prior to standing down on 30 June 2024. Governors recorded thanks to Sara and Anna for their contributions to the work of the Board.

24.02 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 interest were declared.

24.03 Minutes

(a) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 28 November 2023 (Document A) were approved as a true record.

(b) Matters Arising

The Board received and noted the report (Document B) in relation to matters arising from the previous meeting. All action points had been progressed.

24.04 Report from the Pro-Chancellor

The Pro-Chancellor presented a report (Document C) updating the Board on matters not included 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[Some of the detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]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 recruitment process for the Professional Services Member on the Board of Governors had been completed. Two candidates had been shortlisted for interview by the Pro-Chancellor, the Senior Independent Governor and the Clerk to the Board. Elizabeth Karch, Departmental Manager in NTU Psychology, had been selected as the preferred candidate. Accordingly, the Membership and Nominations Committee recommended her appointment as the Professional Services Member for a term of three years with effect from 1 July 2024. Elizabeth would be invited to serve also as a member of the Employment Policy Committee and the Remuneration Committee;
- A range of events had been identified of potential interest to Governors wishing to increase their interactions with students. It was suggested that of these the Showcase Events and NTSU Awards would be the most relevant to Governors, and the Clerk to the Board would circulate further information regarding these events; and
- The schedule of meetings for the Board and its supporting Committees in the 2024/25 academic year had been finalised and calendar meeting requests had been issued to Governors.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and endorsed; and
- (ii) that the appointment of Elizabeth Karch as the Professional Services Member on the Board of Governors, for a term of three years effective from 1 July 2024, be approved and endorsed.

24.05 Scheme of Delegation

The Clerk to the Board of Governors presented a report (Document D) and recommendations in relation to proposed revisions to the University's Scheme of Delegation.

A review of the Scheme of Delegation had been undertaken and amendments proposed to reflect changes in the University's organisational structure. Revised thresholds for capital expenditure for estates related projects were also recommended to reflect the significant increase in costs associated with construction and building works, and to better align with the approach adopted at comparable institutions.

The Board was assured that the proposed delegated approval levels would be within always the parameters agreed annually by the Board within the budget and capital plan, and this would be clarified in the Scheme of Delegation. In relation to capital and property transactions valued above £10m, the Clerk would update the delegated authority to confirm that the 'exceptional circumstances' by which urgent decisions could be taken by a sub-group of the Board would remain under the specific authority of the Board.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and endorsed;
- (ii) that, subject to the requested amendments, the revised Scheme of Delegation be approved and endorsed; and
- (iii) that the Clerk to the Board be authorised to make minor amendments to the Scheme of Delegation as may be required in the future to reflect changing organisational structures within the University.

24.06 Vice-Chancellor's Update

The Vice-Chancellor provided a report (Document E) 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 University had commenced local collective pay bargaining with the recognised trades unions with a view to agreeing a two-year deal. In addition to an uplift across all pay points on the National Framework Agreement, negotiations would incorporate a range of additional reward elements. A survey would be undertaken with colleagues to seek their views on the proposed offer. It was noted that no details had been released regarding the national pay bargaining process, but the University had not guaranteed to match the pay uplift offered by UCEA this year;
- The formal consultation on the restructure of the School of Arts and Humanities had now concluded and agreements reached with all those colleagues affected without recourse to consultation on compulsory redundancies. This was a very positive outcome;
- The Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS) had been well received by colleagues and it was anticipated that a further MARS would be launched in May;
- Initial feedback received following the accreditation visit by Student Minds in relation to the University's Mental Health Charter submission had been positive. The result was awaited;
- Feedback was awaited on the University's submission to the national review being undertaken by the National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health;
- The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) had invited NTU to be a sample organisation for the UUK review of international foundation colleges;
- The Migration Advisory Committee's review of post-study work visas had been accelerated and was now due to conclude by 19 May. It was anticipated that subsequently the Government could seek to withdraw some visa routes or introduce stricter criteria in order to reduce further the number of international students;
- The independent review of the efficacy, governance arrangements, accountability, and efficiency of the OfS was expected to conclude by the end of May 2024. Recent announcements from the OfS included the launch of a

consultation on its approach to public grant funding and notification of delays to some annual data releases due to the issues experienced with the Data Futures Programme;

- A hustings event for the five declared mayoral candidates in respect of the East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority election had been arranged for 19 April 2024 at Confetti X. It was noted that three of the candidates were NTU alumni; and
- The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities had appointed Commissioners at Nottingham City Council. It was anticipated that the Lead Commissioner would contact key partners of the City Council in due course. It was recognised that the reduction in Council-operated services and in grant funding to voluntary, community and cultural activities could impact adversely students and colleagues living in the City.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the update be received and endorsed.

24.07 Nottingham Trent Students' Union President's Update

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

- The NTSU had welcomed the University's response to the increase in the number of international students seeking support in relation to fees and attendance issues;
- There had been significant interest in participation in the student focus groups for the Mental Health Charter assessment visit;
- The election process for Executive Officers for the 2024/25 academic year had concluded. Jess Walker, the current VP Education, had been elected as the incoming NTSU President. The VP Opportunities and VP Community and Welfare had also been re-elected to serve a second term; and
- NTSU's financial position was strong, with higher revenues being generated and robust cost controls in place. EBITDA was currently 50% higher year on year.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

24.08 Student Recruitment

The Board received a report (Document G) from the Chief Operating Officer and Registrar in relation to the student recruitment position for 2023/24 and the latest position on applications for 2024/25 entry.

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

24.09 Medium-Term Financial Planning

The Board received a report (Document H) from the Director of Finance in relation to the current year forecast and the University's medium-term financial plan.

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

24.10 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion University-Wide Plan

The Board received a report (Document I) from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Performance) in relation to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion University-wide Plan. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

- The University-wide EDI plan had been developed in partnership with colleagues, students, and staff networks. The plan covered a two-year period (2024 to 2026) to align with the remainder of the *University, reimagined* strategy. Delivery of the plan focused on three EDI goals, with six inter-related workstreams, and oversight was provided by the EDI Strategy Board;
- A key objective of the plan was to be able to demonstrate progress through the development of a portfolio of evidence;
- The main focus of activity was on driving cultural change and harnessing existing goodwill in order to achieve the University's shared values. The development of a 'plan on a page' aimed to communicate easily to colleagues, students and the wider community the University's vision, priorities, actions and the direction of travel towards embedding EDI; and
- The Board welcomed the report and commended the consultative approach taken. Members queried whether they could provide any support to drive implementation of the EDI plan. Noting the positive feedback received following the NBS Business Leaders' Lecture delivered recently by Lorna Holder, it was agreed that consideration would be given to further opportunities to draw on Governors' personal and lived experiences.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

24.11 Academic Board

The Board received the unconfirmed minutes from the meeting of the Academic Board held on 28 February 2024 (Document J).

Academic Board had discussed in detail a range of matters relating to students, teaching and research. Academic Board had considered the outcome of the Teaching Excellence Framework and opportunities to enhance understanding of the TEF to inform planning and support for TEF 2027.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

24.12 Business from Standing Committees

(a) Employment Policy Committee

The Board noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Employment Policy Committee held on 27 February 2024 (Document K).

The Board was advised that a range of matters had been discussed, including pay and grading structures, reward and recognition, the introduction of the University's Defined Contribution pension scheme and the annual pay gap reports.

(b) 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 27 February 2024 (Document L).

The Chair of the Committee noted that an annual report had been received in relation to the University's knowledge exchange income. The successful delivery of the new Postgraduate Centre on the City campus on time and on budget was commended by the Board. Completion of the Design and Digital Arts (DaDA) building was on schedule to open for the start of the 2024/25 academic year.

(c) Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee

The Board noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee held on 7 March 2024 (Document M).

The Chair of the Committee noted that a range of matters had been discussed, including the Teaching Excellence Framework, the new Access and Participation Plan for 2025/26 to 2028/29, apprenticeships, assurance relating to collaborations and partnerships activity, postgraduate outcomes and actions taken to improve the doctoral student experience.

(d) Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee provided an oral report in relation to the meeting of the Committee held on 18 March 2024.

The Committee had received a deep dive on health and safety matters relating to the University's estate from the Director of Estates which provided assurance that the arrangements, processes, and reporting structures in place were working effectively.

The periodic review of the Committee's effectiveness had also been undertaken. Members had requested clarification regarding the responsibilities for each of the supporting committees of the Board and this matter would be actioned accordingly.

24.13 Application of the Corporation Seal

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

24.14 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Governors was scheduled for 2 July 2024.