

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2023

Present

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

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)

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from C Leviton and S Walker-Smith.

23.35 Welcomes and Farewells

The Pro-Chancellor welcomed Rosie Bennett, Paul Kenyon and Grace Walker to their first meeting of the Board of Governors. Craig Leviton had also been appointed to the Board on 1 September 2023 but had been unable to attend this meeting.

The Pro-Chancellor noted that Neil Goulden, Ian Ellis, Diana Warwick and Owen Woodley were retiring from the Board on 30 September 2023 having served the maximum permitted terms of office, nine years. On behalf of the Board, the Pro-Chancellor thanked them for their considerable contributions and commitment to NTU during their tenures.

Governors noted also that Sarah Walker-Smith was stepping down from the Board on 30 September due to work commitments. The Board recorded thanks to Sarah for her contributions to the University and the Board during her tenure (six years).

23.36 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.

23.37 Minutes(a) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 4 July 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 23.25 - Vice-Chancellor's Update: The Vice-Chancellor advised the Board that no significant issues had been raised by those colleagues who had witnessed the incidents in Nottingham on 13 June 2023, with colleagues demonstrating strong personal resilience.

Minute Reference 23.25 - Vice-Chancellor's Update: The Vice-Chancellor updated the Board on the final outturn of the 2023/24 pay offer. Given the positive outcome, and the ongoing challenges in the sector regarding national collective pay bargaining, it was considered sensible for NTU to adopt local pay negotiations again in the coming year to cover 2024/25.

Minute Reference 23.30(c) - Key Performance Indicators: The Chief Operating Officer and Registrar reminded Governors of his earlier request for them to share examples of balanced scorecards in use within other sectors. These would be helpful in developing the University's approach.

23.38 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 Board welcomed the appointment of Neil Goulden as Patron of the NTU Success Fund.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

23.39 Vice-Chancellor's Update

The Vice-Chancellor provided a report (Document D) 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 Chief Operating Officer and Registrar reported that Confetti London had opened as planned for the start of the academic year. The student recruitment position was in line with planning assumptions. Whilst it was a challenging market, it was considered that Confetti's distinctive offer and the London base were attractive to students and that the first year targets were achievable; and
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Performance) advised the Board that the Office for Students (OfS) would be publishing shortly the

first set of outcomes of the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) assessment exercise for those institutions for which the assessment was complete. Some institutions, including NTU, had made representations about their provisional ratings. NTU's published outcome would therefore be classed as 'pending'. The OfS anticipated considering outcomes for pending TEF awards over the next two to three months.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the update be received and endorsed.

23.40 Nottingham Trent Students' Union President's Update

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

- Welcome Week events had been well attended and positive feedback had been received in relation to the support provided by the Freshers' team;
- Positive feedback had been received in relation to the graduation ceremonies held in July, particularly the personalised relaxed graduation ceremony which had been held for the first time to support neurodiverse graduates who felt unable to attend a traditional ceremony. Governors welcomed this initiative and commended the University on its success. It was noted that graduates had also welcomed the continued provision of gowns funded by the University;
- NTSU was taking action in collaboration with the University to support students with the cost-of-living pressures and was raising awareness of the University's hardship fund; and
- The NTSU would monitor the impact of the new joint venture with Spar at the Clifton campus with a view to rolling this out to the City if successful.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

23.41 Government Policy and Higher Education

The Board received a report (Document F) from the Vice-Chancellor in relation to recent policy developments for the higher education sector, as discussed with the Board of Governors at its earlier away day session.

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

23.42 Future Development of the Academic Portfolio

The Board received a confidential report (Document G) from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Performance) in relation to future development of the University's academic portfolio, as discussed with the Board of Governors at its earlier away day session.

It was confirmed that no decisions had yet been taken in relation to the proposals outlined in the report, which would be considered by the University Executive Team in due course. Governors were assured that a detailed communications plan would

be in place to ensure that colleagues and students were kept informed of relevant developments.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

23.43 Delivering the NTU Budget

The Board received a report (Document H) from the Chief Operating Officer and Registrar in relation to the University's approach to delivering the NTU budget, as discussed with the Board of Governors at its earlier away day session.

The University's strong financial position enabled a measured, targeted, and strategic approach to increasing efficiency through a reduction in the University's cost base without impacting adversely upon the student experience. The Board was supportive of the approach adopted by the University.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

23.44 The International Student Experience at NTU

The Board received a report (Document I) from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Performance) in relation to the international student experience at NTU, as discussed with the Board of Governors at its earlier away day session.

Recognising the benefits to both home and international students, the University would explore in collaboration with the NTSU further opportunities to drive greater integration of international students within the wider University community.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

23.45 Links to Historical Slavery

The Board received a report (Document J) from the Vice-Chancellor in relation to the work undertaken to ascertain NTU's historical links to slavery.

Research undertaken by a PhD student had been commissioned in partnership with the University of Nottingham. In the event, this had focused primarily on its progenitor institutions. Academic colleagues at NTU had subsequently been asked to review specifically the Nottingham Government School of Design (NGSD) which became the Founding College of NTU. This review had concluded that direct connections to slavery were minimal, with donations received from local benefactors involved in lace manufacture being relatively small and used primarily to support the operation of NGSD. The review would be published on the University's website in due course.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

23.46 Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

The Board received a report (Document K) from the Clerk to the Board in relation to the provisions of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act and proposed revisions to the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech to reflect the same. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

- The Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 had now received Royal Assent. Whilst the Act was not expected to be implemented fully until 2025, a review of the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech had been undertaken and actions identified to ensure compliance with the Act and current OfS guidance; and
- A communications plan was in place to advise colleagues and students of the new legislation, and training sessions were scheduled for colleagues in key departments. The Board was assured that the take-up of training would be monitored.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and endorsed; and
- (ii) that the revised Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech be approved.

23.47 Business from Standing Committees

(a) Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Board received a verbal update on the meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee held on 19 September 2023. The Chair noted that the meeting had focused on internal audit matters.

(b) Investment Committee and Board of Trustees

The Board noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee held on 20 June 2023 (Document P), a verbal report having been given at the previous meeting of the Board.

The Chair of the Committee noted that Neil Goulden and Owen Woodley would continue to serve as Trustees on the NTU Student Success Fund.

(c) Redacted Item

[This minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

23.48 Application of the Corporation Seal

Members 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.

23.49 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Governors was scheduled for 28 November 2023.