
**Minutes of the 89th meeting of the Board of Governors
held on Thursday 29 June 2017 (5.00pm – 7.00pm)**

Governors present:

Mr Mark Anderson (Chair)
 Ms Rolande Anderson
 Ms Fionnuala Duggan
 Ms Renarta Guy
 Dr Rob Hull, Vice-Chair
 Ms Harini Iyengar
 Mr Adrian Kamellard
 Mr Michael Murphy
 Ms Florence Onwumere
 Mr Alex Tarry
 Ms Cécile Tschirhart
 Prof. John Raftery, Vice-Chancellor
 Prof. Dianne Willcocks

In attendance:

Ms Lynn Burke, OC I OC Programme Director
 Dr Elizabeth Charman, Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic
 Outcomes
 [REDACTED] s.40(2) FOIA - personal information
 Mr John Duffy, Chief Operating Officer
 Mr Peter Garrod, University Secretary and Registrar
 Mr Michael Goleniak, Governance Support Intern
 [REDACTED] s.43(2) FOIA - commercially sensitive
 Mr Richard Lee, Finance consultant
 Ms Pam Nelson, Chief Financial Officer
 Professor Dominic Palmer Brown, Pro Vice-Chancellor
 Employment Outcomes
 [REDACTED] s.40(2) FOIA - personal information
 Mr Andrew Stone, Head of the Sir John Cass School of Art, Architecture and Design (for welcomes)

Welcome, Apologies and Announcements

Oral

1. The Chair welcomed [REDACTED] ss.40(2) & 43(2) FOIA, attending for the report on investment in online learning and apprenticeships (BG 89/5.1); and Ms Renarta Guy (who had been delayed), who was attending her first meeting following her appointment as an Independent Governor. Apologies had been received from Governors Tony Millns and Ann Minogue; incoming Governors Cathy McCabe and Shefaly Yogendra; and the incoming Student Governor, Tunde Toki. To enable Governors to focus on the strategic items within the time available, it was proposed that section 7 (risk management) and section 8 (committee reports) would be treated as read and approved, unless there were matters which Governors wished to discuss.
2. Mr Andy Stone, Head of the Sir John Cass School of Art, Architecture and Design, presented the Cass's 2017 Year Book and invited Governors to attend the Cass Summer Show at Central House.
3. The Chair noted that this would be Rob Hull's last meeting before his retirement from the Board. The Chair paid tribute to Dr Hull's contribution to the Board and to the University since joining the Board in February 2010, including service as Vice-Chair; as a member of the Audit, Finance and Resources and Academic Strategy Committees (including as acting chair of the Audit Committee in 2014/15); as a trustee of the Students' Union; and as a member of the One Campus I One Community Governor Oversight Group. In response, Dr Hull noted the significant progress and improvement in the University and the Students' Union since he had joined the Board, and the strong leadership, sense of direction and commitment to the University's mission which was evident.

Declarations of Interest

Oral

4. The Chair noted that Ms Fionnuala Duggan was an employee of Informa, which provided services to the University for some on-line learning courses. It had been agreed with Ms Duggan that she could participate in the discussion relating to the proposed investment in on-line learning (part of BG 89/5.1), but would abstain from the Board's decision on the proposed investment.
5. There were no other declarations of interest.

Minutes and Matters Arising

BG 89/1.1

6. The minutes of the Board's Strategy Day held on 11 May 2017 were approved as a correct record.
7. There were no matters arising.

8. **The Board of Governors approved the minutes of the Board's Strategy Day held on 11 May 2017 as a correct record.**

Vice Chancellor's General Report

BG 89/2.1

9. The Board received the Vice-Chancellor's General Report and noted the following points:
10. Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Survey (DLHE): the results of the DLHE survey of 2015/16 graduates would be published in July. The data which the University had received from HESA indicated that London Met had achieved its best ever results in the survey and had exceeded its benchmarks on all four of HESA's Employment Performance Indicators. This was an outstanding result, and was a tribute to the contribution made by staff to achieving it. There would be an intense focus in the coming year on extending the University's success in the DLHE to meeting and exceeding benchmarks in other measures of academic outcomes (attainment, satisfaction and retention), to ensure that London Met progressed towards the goal of achieving 'Gold' in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). London Met's 'Pathway to Gold' had been the subject of a recent Vice-Chancellor's Conversation with staff, which had been well-attended and had seen constructive engagement over improving the University's performance. This would be vital with the advent of the Office for Students, which was likely to take a metrics-driven approach. The University's progress in its Pathway to TEF Gold would continue to be reported regularly to the Board.
11. Degree attainment: Governors noted the review that would be led by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic Outcomes over summer 2017 of the University's degree algorithm, academic regulations, marking scheme, and how students were marked and assessed, to ensure that the University's processes and systems did not impede good outcomes. [REDACTED] s.43(2) FOIA - commercially sensitive
[REDACTED] The recommendations from the review would be considered at a special meeting of the Academic Board in September, so that changes would be implemented for the 2017/18 academic year and begin to have an effect on degree results in July 2017. Any changes would be in line with sectoral good practice and academic quality requirements, with the external examiners on the University Awards Board engaged to provide

external input. Improving degree attainment was also a focus of the workstreams under the Programme for Improved Student Outcomes (PISO).

12. The Board of Governors noted the Vice Chancellor's General Report.

Student Governor's General Report

BG 89/3.1

13. The Board received the Student Governor's General Report, which covered recent Students' Union (SU) activity. The report highlighted the results of the recent Students' Union elections and changes in officers; the SU's support for the University's course evaluation and PSD surveys; SU activities linked to 'Generation Vote', the NUS's voter registration campaign; the SU's staffing; the move of the Students' Union from 'J' Block to improved facilities in the Harglenis Building, which was planned to be completed in September 2017; and discussions with the University over the SU's budget and the need for a new relationship agreement with the University.
14. Rob Hull noted the growth and improvement in the Students' Union during his time as an SU trustee, which was reflected in the excellent Students' Union Awards (recognising outstanding staff and students) on 4 May. The Students' Union made an important contribution to student recruitment and retention, and it was timely to review and update the relationship agreement with London Met. The Student Governor paid tribute to Dr Hull's contribution to the Students' Union. Subject to the Board's approval (BG 89/8.3), Renarta Guy would replace him as the Board's appointee to the SU's trustee board.

15. The Board of Governors noted the Student Governor's general report.

Student numbers update

BG 89/4.1

16. The Board received an update on student numbers for 2016/17 and the University's student number projections for 2017/18 and thereafter, which had been used to set the budget and financial forecasts (BG 89/4.2).
17. While the University had performed better than its competitors and the sector in applications in the UCAS main cycle (with London Met's applications up slightly on 2016/17), this had not yet been reflected in conversion. [REDACTED] s.43(2) FOIA - commercially sensitive
[REDACTED] As returner numbers would not be verifiable until after re-enrolments in the autumn, no additional improvement in retention arising from PISO had been assumed beyond what had previously been forecast, although it was hoped that an improvement would be achieved from the concerted and ongoing focus under PISO on actions to improve retention. It was noted that the forecast assumptions were intended to be prudent and cautious, in line with the University's previous approach to forecasting, but did not represent targets; the intention was to do better than the forecasts.
18. In discussion, it was noted that London Met's competitors had been down overall in their UCAS main cycle applications, and that the recruitment position for London post-92 institutions was adverse, with some universities experiencing significant falls in applications. The importance of Clearing for London Met's intake meant that the student number position would not become clear until after enrolments in the autumn. It was noted by Parthenon-EY that other HE clients had also reported volatility and unusual behaviour in the current recruitment cycle.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the Senior Leadership Team was intensely focussed on ensuring the best possible outcome in recruitment, while also ensuring that admissions decisions supported the goal of improving retention.

19. The Board of Governors noted the student numbers update.

Budget 2017/18 and financial forecasts

BG 89/4.2

20. The Board considered the budget for 2017/18 and financial forecasts to 2021/22, which had been reviewed by the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) and were recommended by the FRC to the Board for approval (BG 89/8.2). An appendix to the report provided the forecasts to 2019/20 in the format required by HEFCE for the Annual Accountability Returns. This would be submitted to HEFCE with the paper to the Board and a checklist to ensure compliance with HEFCE's requirements, which would be circulated to Governors prior to the forecast submission deadline of 31 July. The budget and forecasts reflected the University's student number forecasts (BG 89/4.1) and projected expenditure on One Campus | One Community (OC | OC) initiatives, which would be subject to approval before commitments were made. Operating cash flow had been adjusted show non-recurring costs such as restructuring costs separately, allowing a better reflection of the University's underlying capacity to generate funds for investment.
21. The forecasts included projected loan finance that would be drawn down over the three years from 2019/20. It was noted that, if this was required, it would be subject to approval from the Board and permission from HEFCE to borrow. Similarly, future investment under the estates masterplan would be subject to OC | OC 'gateway' reviews and the assessment of proposed projects according to the process agreed by the FRC in March 2017. No commitments were requested from the Board at this stage beyond those for 2017/18 set out in the papers to the Board. Future commitments would depend on an assessment of the University's position at the time and the wider sectoral context.

22. The Board of Governors:

- a. **Approved the budget for 2017/18 and the financial forecasts to 2021/22; and**
- b. **Approved the financial forecasts to 2019/20 for submission to HEFCE.**

June 2017 'gateway' review

BG 89/4.3

23. The Board considered the report of the June 2017 'gateway' review by the Senior Leadership Team under the contingency planning process previously approved by the Board. [REDACTED]

s.43(2)
FOIA -
commercially
sensitive

[REDACTED] The next checkpoint review under the contingency planning process would be in August 2017.

24. The Board of Governors considered the report of the June 2017 'gateway' review.

25. The Board considered the final report of the strategic options appraisal from Parthenon-EY to investigate options for gaining market share in online learning and degree-level apprenticeships. The projects had been commissioned following the high-level review of strategic options at the Board's Strategy Day in January 2017, and interim findings had been discussed at the Board's Strategy Day in May 2017. The Senior Leadership Team recommended that the Board should approve the proposed investment in online learning, and should approve the proposed investment in degree-level apprenticeships according to the option recommended by Parthenon-EY, which would enable the University to pursue large tenders and smaller business-to-business opportunities simultaneously.
26. The following points were noted in discussion:
- The budget for 2017/18 included provision for the proposed investment, so no additional allocation was being requested from the Board;
 - The two proposals could be likened to creating 'start ups' within London Met, and would involve bringing in expertise to build on the limited experience which the University had in both areas. In the case of online learning, the recommended approach was to partner with a third-party online enabler;
 - Establishing a separate delivery vehicle for online learning, as recommended, would help to ensure the necessary leadership and commitment to make the venture a success;
 - Policing was proposed as the immediate priority for investment in apprenticeships, followed by management, digital/technology and social work. While the market in management and digital/technology was competitive, with other providers entering or preparing to enter the space, there were opportunities for London Met that could make a material difference;
 - Parthenon-EY considered their analysis of the market potential for online learning to be prudent and realistic in its assumptions about student numbers. The proposal was to focus investment on online postgraduate courses, building on the institution's existing strengths. Online learning had the potential to tap both an international market, and a UK market where students were likely to select an online provider that was nearby and accessible to them.
27. Governors were supportive of both initiatives, which were felt to show a proactive approach by the management team and to express confidence in the institution. The executive was encouraged to be ambitious, while also recognising the significant cultural changes that would be required. The Board should be kept regularly updated on progress.

28. **The Board of Governors:**

- Approved the recommended investment in online learning; and**
- Approved the recommended investment in apprenticeships, and the investment option recommended by Parthenon-EY.**

¹ Ms Fionnuala Duggan declared her interest as an employee of Informa, which provided services to the University in connection with some online learning courses. As previously indicated (para. 4), Ms Duggan was permitted to participate in the discussion but abstained from the Board's decision relating to online learning.

29. The Board considered recommendations on the next phase of the Estates masterplan. It was recommended that construction should commence in 2017/18 on the redevelopment of 'J' Block, at an estimated project cost of £28m phased over three years, and on the refurbishment of the Harglenis Building (estimated cost: £1m) to provide improved facilities for the Students' Union (currently located in 'J' Block). The redevelopment of 'J' Block would facilitate the relocation of activity from the Moorgate campus, releasing an estimated savings of £5m p.a. from the cost of operating the campus. A budget of £2.5m was also requested to progress planning and design work on the Energy Centre, the Holloway courtyard, options for the Tower buildings and other aspects of the masterplan, with decisions on whether to proceed to construction subject to further approval according to the phased approach to the masterplan previously agreed by the FRC.
30. The Board approved the proposals, noting that they were recommended by the FRC following review by the OC | OC Governor Oversight Group, and that the proposed investment was reflected in the budget and financial forecasts. The executive was congratulated on achieving a successful outcome to the University's planning application for the redevelopment of 'J' Block.
31. Governors discussed the University's fire safety measures (summarised in the Vice-Chancellor's General Report to the Board) in light of the recent tragedy at Grenfell Tower. It was noted that there was no external cladding on the Tower or Tech Tower, and the University did not provide student accommodation. Options for the Tower buildings would be examined as part of design and planning work in 2017/18, including what was required to enable removal of the scaffolding around the Tower. Fire safety measures would be included in the options appraisal for the Tower buildings, and any future design would meet or exceed legal requirements. The current favoured option in terms of potential cladding for the Tower was a brick facade. On this basis, the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University's fire safety measures (which included regular fire risk assessments of buildings, fire evacuation drills, fire alarm tests and fire wardens) were appropriate.

32. The Board of Governors approved the proposals for the next phase of the Estates masterplan.

IT projects and prioritisation

33. The Board received a report on the IT capital investment which was included in the budget and financial forecasts. The report outlined the three main IT programmes (Digital Transformation, Technology Transformation and Planned Preventative Maintenance); the criteria for prioritising IT projects, which were aligned with the criteria for prioritising estates projects; and the governance framework for approving and overseeing projects. All spending was subject to the approval of a business case under the IT governance framework.
34. Governors welcomed the planned review the IT strategy over the course of summer 2017, to ensure that IT supported the University's strategic priorities. The University's investment in IT was substantial; it was important that a clear proposition of the positive benefits was presented to stakeholders.

35. The Board of Governors considered the report on IT projects and prioritisation.

36. The Board received a general update on the One Campus | One Community (OC | OC) programme. It was noted that measures would be required to respond to the projected fall in new student numbers, which would be examined by the Senior Leadership Team over the summer.
37. The Staff Governor suggested that restructuring and rapid changes in some areas created potential risks. In response, it was acknowledged that the process of change could be difficult for staff; however, change was essential to move the University swiftly to a position where its staff costs in proportion to income were comparable to London Met's competitors, and with the University achieving comparable performance in academic outcomes. The sooner the programme of planned savings could be completed and a sustainable financial position achieved, the better the outcome for all staff and students. All restructurings were undertaken according to an established process involving consultation with staff and the campus trade unions.

38. The Board of Governors received the update on One Campus | One Community.

Programme for Improved Student Outcomes**BG 89/6.2**

39. The Board received an update on the Programme for Improved Student Outcomes (PISO) and the progress of the PISO workstreams.
40. It was noted that PISO included the development of pre-induction activities to prepare students for university study from the point when an offer was made, and identify what they needed to succeed. It was suggested that the University could seek feedback from first-year students on their experiences of the recruitment and pre-entry process, as a way of identifying improvements. The University already conducted a survey of students who had declined offers.
41. Governors noted the emphasis placed by PISO on student partnership, through the Student Partnership workstream which sought to engage students in PISO initiatives and in acting as 'digital champions' to support IT literacy. The importance of ensuring that feedback from students was sought using qualitative as well quantitative approaches was noted. In terms of outreach to staff, it was noted that the Schools were engaged with academic staff in rolling out PISO initiatives, and that training was available through the Centre for Professional and Educational Development. The improvement in the University's National Student Survey results since 2014 showed that staff were responding to the need for change; the high proportion of staff receiving annual appraisals was also evidence of culture change. It was suggested that further work should be done to ensure that information about PISO was cascaded to hourly paid lecturers.

42. The Board of Governors noted the report on PISO.

Employment Outcomes update**BG 89/6.3**

43. The Board considered an update on the Employment Outcomes programme.

44. Governors noted that employers were being surveyed about their experience of taking London Met students on the Work Related Learning (WRL) programme, and that the initial results were overwhelmingly positive. The PVC Employment Outcomes reported that the intention was to correlate the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education results with the WRL programme to identify which types of WRL were most effective. Students were also being surveyed about their experience of WRL.

45. **The Board of Governors noted the update on the Employment Outcomes programme.**

LPFA update

Oral

46. The Board received an oral report from the Chief Financial Officer. Discussions with the LPFA continued over future contribution rates; there were no developments to report.

47. **The Board of Governors noted the LPFA update.**

Risk Management Policy and Process

BG 89/7.1

48. The Board approved a revised Risk Management Policy and Process on the recommendation of the Audit Committee. The Policy and Process had been revised to reflect changes since the previous version had been approved in 2015, and to streamline and simplify it.

49. **The Board of Governors approved the Risk Management Policy and Process.**

Statement of Risk Appetite

BG 89/7.2

50. The Board approved a corporate Statement of Risk Appetite on the recommendation of the Audit Committee. The adoption of a statement of risk appetite was considered to be good practice in risk management. The Statement defined risk appetite levels for the strategic areas in the University's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.

51. **The Board of Governors approved the Statement of Risk Appetite.**

Risk management quarterly report

BG 89/7.3

52. The Board received the quarterly report on risk management, including the latest update of the Corporate Risk Register, which had been considered by the Senior Leadership Team and the Audit Committee.

53. **The Board of Governors approved the Statement of Risk Appetite.**

24 May 2017 Audit Committee meeting – Meeting Report

BG 89/8.1

54. The Board received a report summarising the issues considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 24 May 2017. The matters which were recommended by the Committee to the Board for approval had been covered by other items on the agenda.

55. **The Board of Governors noted the report of the meeting of the Audit Committee.**

15 June 2017 Finance and Resources Committee meeting – Meeting Report

BG 89/8.2

56. The Board received a report summarising the issues considered by the Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on 15 June 2017. The matters which were recommended by the Committee to the Board for approval had been covered by other items on the agenda.

57. **The Board of Governors noted the report of the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee.**

25 May 2017 Governance Committee meeting – Meeting Report

BG 89/8.3

58. The Board received a report summarising the issues considered by the Governance Committee at its meeting on 25 May 2017. The Board approved the appointments recommended in the report, including: the appointment of Renarta Guy to succeed Rob Hull as the Board's appointee to the trustee board of the Students' Union; the appointment of Shefaly Yogendra to the Governance Committee and Fionnuala Duggan to the Finance and Resources Committee; the appointment of Catherine McCabe as a co-opted member of the Audit Committee; and the extension of the term of office of Richard Indge as a co-opted member of the Audit Committee to 31 December 2017.

59. **The Board of Governors noted the report of the meeting of the Governance Committee and approved the recommended appointments.**

Board Regulations – amendments

BG 89/8.4

60. The Board approved amendments to the University's Board Regulations which were recommended by the Governance Committee (BG 89/8.2), following the annual review by the Governance Committee.

61. **The Board of Governors approved the recommended amendments to the Board Regulations.**

Statement of Primary Responsibilities – amendments

BG 89/8.5

62. The Board approved amendments to the Board's Statement of Primary Responsibilities which were recommended by the Governance Committee (BG 89/8.2), following the annual review by the Governance Committee. It was agreed that the 'Governance' section should be amended to include the Board's responsibility to appoint the Vice-Chancellor.

63. **The Board of Governors approved the recommended amendments to the Statement of Primary Responsibilities.**

64. The Board received a report summarising the issues considered by the Academic Board at its meeting on 13 June 2017.

65. **The Board of Governors noted the report of the meeting of the Academic Board.**

Any Other Business

Oral

66. There was no other business.

**Peter Garrod
July 2017**

Action table

Item	Para / Action	For action by who	To be actioned by when	Update on action (as at 29.09.17)
BG 89/5.1 Investment in online learning and apprenticeships	Para 27) Timetable regular updates on online learning and apprenticeships to the Board	University Secretary	October 2017 Board meeting.	Updates on the Board agenda at BG 90/5.7-5.8
BG 89/5.3 IT projects and prioritisation	Para 34) Review of the University's IT strategy to be reported to FRC and the Board	Chief Operating Officer	October 2017 Board meeting.	Review to be reported to the FRC and Audit Committee meetings in November with a management response