



Minutes of the 22 November meeting

Present: Iain Cornish (Chair)

Qari Asim*, Martin Barkley, Dr Oliver Bray, Cielo Cartwright, Meghna Chaudhary, Dhruv Dev, Alan Gay, Helen Green, Dr Oliver Harmar, Rachel Hewitt, Professor Jackie Labbe, Professor George Lodorfos, Stephen Magora, David Morgan, Jo Norry, Tori Pourzand, Professor Peter Slee, Dr Andrew West

In attendance: Michaela Boryslawskij, Professor Phil Cardew, Clare De Arostegui, Andrew Fern, Kate Harvey (Secretary), Tracey Lancaster, Professor Silke Machold*, Neil Mackenzie*, Professor Chris Prince, Heather Paver

Apologies: None received.

* Present as indicated in the proceedings

Minute is exempt from publication under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

Declaration of interest

- 001.2425 (a) The Chair, Cielo Cartwright, Alan Gay, and Andrew West (the committee chairs) declared an interest in agenda item 16.2, Annual Review & Remuneration of the Chair and the Committee Chairs.
- (b) Dhruv Dev and Meghna Chaudhary declared an interest in agenda item 16.3, Students' Union (SU) Articles of Association.

Minutes

- 002.2425 The Board agreed that the minutes of its meeting on 12 July 2024 were an accurate record.

Matters arising

- 003.2425 (a) The Board noted an overview of the informal briefing for governors had been held on 16 September on the development of the next Access & Participation Plan (APP). This had been submitted to the Office for Students (OfS) on 01 October. The APP set out the risks to equality of opportunity identified by the University and the intervention strategies proposed to address these risks.

- (b) New arrangements for access to committee papers were noted. These would be made available to all governors for reference following each meeting, except for papers of the Senior Staff Remuneration Committee.

Chair's Action

004.2425 (a) The Board was invited to ratify action taken on 14 October 2024 by the Chair to delegate authority to sign off the University's Prevent Annual Accountability and Data Return (ADR) to the Vice Chancellor as the accountable officer. The change had been proposed to contribute to efforts to streamline agendas and make best use of the Board's time and was permitted by the OfS guidance on the Prevent ADR.

005.2425 The Board **ratified** the action taken by the Chair to delegate authority to sign the Prevent ADR to the Vice Chancellor.

STRATEGIC MATTERS

Chair's Report

006.2425 (a) The Chair thanked governors and the University executive for attending the dinner the previous evening and for the useful discussion on governance and Board operation. The Chair would take the outcomes forward with the Vice Chancellor and colleagues.

(b) The Chair had recently attended a meeting of the Committee of University Chairs regarding the Code of Governance. [REDACTED]

Vice Chancellor's Report

007.2425 (a) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(d) Appendix B set out the recent letter to the sector from the Secretary of State for

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

Academic Assurance Report

008.2425 (a) [REDACTED]

Qari Asim and Professor Silke Machold left the meeting.

Research Strategy Update

009.2425 (a) The Vice Chancellor reported that key issues arising from the research culture survey included recognition and reward, time allocated for research and support, all of which featured in the Research Strategy.

(b) Preparations continued for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF), ensuring that colleagues knew the focus would be on quality of output and would need two excellent articles [REDACTED]

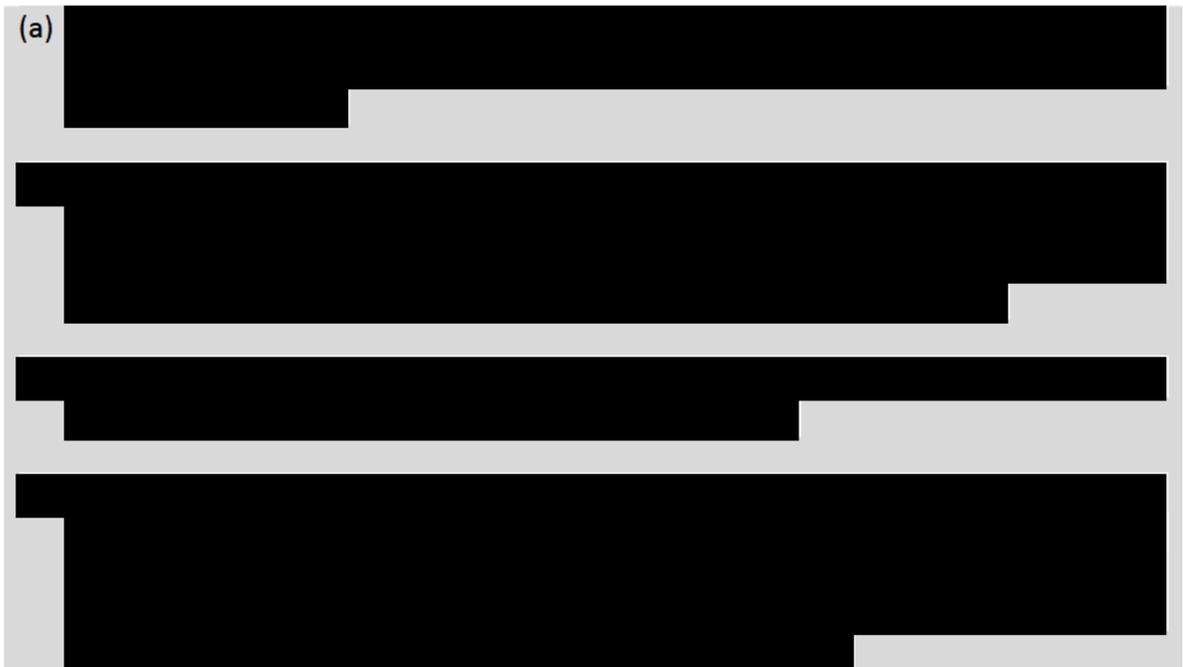
010.2425 The Board agreed the informal briefing in March 2025 would focus on research matters.

Students' Union (SU) Report

- 011.2425 (a) Dhruv Dev, SU President and student governor, reported that the SU was pleased with the success of new social events for communities and other societies so far, with a marked increase in bookings for the Hive. Communities had been established for academic subject areas, liberation and other groups with participation from across the student body.
- (b) The first student assembly under the new democratic model would be held on 10 December 2024. There were more opportunities for students to engage with the SU, for example through the newly created Executive Committee. The SU placed importance on having jobs available at the University for students.
- (c) External activity at regional and national level had included engaging with the West Yorkshire Mayor to improve transport options, particular bus routes for students. The SU had also worked with the NUS and Alex Sobel MP on the Renters' Reform Bill.

Student Recruitment Update

012.2425 (a)



ANNUAL FINANCIAL RETURN TO THE OfS

Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2024

- 013.2425 (a) The documents were presented by the Clare de Arostegui, Director of Finance, for the Board's approval. [Redacted]

(b) The chairs of the Audit and Finance, Staffing & Resources Committees confirmed that the Financial Statements and related reports under this section of the agenda had been scrutinised and endorsed by their committees, which recommended them for approval.

(c) The Financial Statements and financial forecast and commentary would form the basis of the Annual Financial Return (AFR) made to the Office for Students.

External Audit Completion Report and Letter of Representation, 31 July 2024

014.2425 The Board welcomed the clear and unqualified external audit report and noted the Letter of Representation.

015.2425 The Board **resolved** to approve the Letter of Representation to be signed by the Director of Finance.

Audit Committee Annual Report and Opinion

016.2425 The Board received and noted the report.

Financial Statements – Year Ended 31 July 2024

017.2425 The Board received the Financial Statements which had been endorsed by the sub-committees.

018.2425 The Board **resolved** to approve the Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2024 for publication and submission to the Office for Students as part of the AFR.

Financial Forecast to 2027/28

019.2425 (a) 

020.2425 The Board **resolved** to approve the Financial Forecast for submission to the Office for Students as part of the AFR.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR DECISION/DISCUSSION

Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech

- 021.2425 (a) Michaela Boryslawskij, Registrar & Secretary, presented the draft revised Code which had been endorsed by the University executive and Academic Board, and had been subject to consultation with the campus unions.
- (b) The enactment of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 had been paused but work had continued to clarify and strengthen the Code in light of regulatory and current legislative requirements. All events, not just those with an external speaker which linked to Prevent requirements, were covered.
- (c) Overall, the Code had been well received given the importance of academic freedom which the University firmly stood behind.

022.2425 The Board resolved to approve the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech.

Senior Staff Remuneration Committee – 18 October 2024

- 023.2425 (a) Cielo Cartwright, Deputy Chair and Chair of the Committee, presented the report

Governance and Nominations Committee – 04 October 2024

- 024.2425 Dr Andrew West, Chair of the Committee, presented the report. It was noted that members had received the annual report on student safeguarding, safety and wellbeing which allowed the Board some oversight of this area.

Board Effectiveness Review: Governance and Board Operation

- 025.2425 (a)

(d)

Annual Review & Remuneration of the Chair and the Committee Chairs

- 026.2425 (a) The Deputy Chair presented the recommendation for the remuneration of the Chair of the Board for his dedication and hard work during 2023/24 and invited the governors to approve this.
- (b) The Chair presented the recommendations for the remuneration of the committee chairs in 2023/24 and invited governors' approval.
- (c) The Governance and Nominations Committee had formally endorsed the recommendations at its meeting on 04 October 2024.

027.2425 The Board **resolved** to approve the proposed remuneration of the Chair and the committee chairs for their contributions to the Board and the University in 2023/24.

Neil Mackenzie, Chief Executive of the SU, joined the meeting.

Students' Union Articles of Association

- 028.2425 (a) The SU Chief Executive presented the proposed new Articles which the Board had oversight of, under the Education Act 1994. The changes had been part of the wider review of the SU's democratic structures over the past year, with input from the Governance & Nominations Committee and colleagues in Governance Services.
- (b) The outcomes of the review reflected an apparent need for innovation in the sector for student engagement at sector and individual university level and the SU executive and Trustees were proud of the new model. Governors were invited to attend the first student assembly in December.
- (c) The new Articles and byelaws had been reviewed by Wrigleys solicitors who had provided assurance that they met regulatory requirements and provided the SU with the scope needed to implement its strategy.
- (d) The review had also met the requirements of the quinquennial review by the Board required under the Act. Any future changes to the byelaws which related to the Act would not be approved without approval by the Board.

029.2425 The Board **resolved** to approve the new SU Articles of Association

Neil Mackenzie left the meeting.

Audit Committee – 08 November 2024

030.2425 The report was received.

Risk Appetite Statement

031.2425 The Registrar & Secretary reported that the Audit Committee had requested the risk ratings in the statement be reviewed again prior to approval and that more granular detail be included. The statement would come back through the next committee cycle for approval.

Finance, Staffing & Resources Committee – 25 October 2024

032.2425 (a)



Financial Forecast and Investment Update

033.2425 (a)



Report of the Academic Board – 06 November 2024

034.2425 The report from the Vice Chancellor was received.

ITEMS TO NOTE

Safety, Health & Wellbeing Update

035.2425 The report was received.

OfS Regulatory Update

036.2425 The report was received.

OTHER BUSINESS

Schedule of meetings and business 2024/25

037.2425 The report was received.

Date of next meeting

038.2425 The next informal briefing would focus on the recent McCann branding and marketing exercise and would take place via MS Teams at 10:00 13 December 2024.

The next meeting of the Board would be a strategy day on 24 January 2025 in the Boardroom, Old Broadcasting House, City Campus, timing to be confirmed.

Other business

039.2425 No other business was raised.

Confirmed by the Board as a correct record and signed by the Chair:

Signed: _____ Date: _____