

Minutes of the Joint Board of Directors and Board of Governance

Wednesday, 17th of April 2024, 14.00 – 16.00, Online Meeting (Microsoft Teams)

	Name	Position	Initials
Present:	Aaron Porter	Chair of the Board of Governance [Non-Executive]	AP
	Athiqul Islam	Director / Head of Administration/Finance/HR	AI
	Geoffrey Alderman	Principal	GA
	Nazim Uddin	Chair of the Board of Directors / Director / Head of Quality Assurance	NU
	Sarah Ryan	Non-Executive	SR
	Shorful Islam	Non-Executive	SLI
	Mohammed Ishfaq	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Consultant	MI
	Aleksandra Osiniagova	Head of Academic Services and Vice Principal (Observer)	AO
In Attendance	David Douglas	Head of Programme Delivery	DD
	Kate Stoneman	Academic Project Manager (DAP)	KS
	Aamir Mehmood	Head of Data Management & Compliance	AM
	Ola Ariyo	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager	OA
	Dawn Turpin	Independent Governance Reviewer (Observer)	DT
	Helen Pickering	Non-Executive	HP
	Carl Stychin	Non-Executive	CS
	Coral Hill	Non-Executive Director	CH
Apologies:	Ana Jagelo	Student Association President	AJ
	Shiraj Islam	Director / Head of Marketing and Work-Based Learning	SI
	Bruce McLauchlan	Head of Progression & Student Engagement	BM

Note Taker: Ola Ariyo (17.04.2024)

Reviewed by: Nazim Uddin & Dr Mohammed Ishfaq (24.04.2024)

Approved by: Aaron Porter (01.05.2024)

Agenda:

Part A – Board of Governance

Unreserved Items:

1.	Welcome and Introductions (<i>AP - oral</i>)			
2.	Apologies			
3.	Minutes of last meeting dated 24th Nov 2023 and review of action plan		[attached]	To approve
	3a	(24.11.2024) including action points		To note
4.	Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda			
5.	Report from Principal		[attached]	
6.	Academic and Prevent Risks			
	6a	Academic Risk Register	[TBC]	To review
	6b	Prevent Risk Register	[attached]	To review
	6d	Corporate Risk Register	[attached]	To note
7.	Taught Degree Awarding Powers			
	7a	Progress Report on the New DAPs Application	[attached]	To note
	7b.	Minutes of NDAP Steering Group Meeting (18.01.2024)	[attached]	To note
	7c.	Minutes of NDAP Steering Group Meeting (08.02.2024)	[attached]	To note
	7d.	Minutes of NDAP Steering Group Meeting (21.03.2024)	[TBC]	To note
8.	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy		[attached]	To note
9.	CRER 2022-23		[attached]	To receive
10.	Academic Board Meeting Minutes			
	10a	i. Annual Report of the Academic Board to the	[attached]	To approve
	10b	ii. CRER 2022-23 ver. 1.0	[attached]	To receive

	10c	iii. Academic Board Meeting Minutes (27.03.2024)	[attached]	To receive
11.	Any Other Business		[attached]	To note
12.	Date of next meeting - 5th June 2024			

Part B – Matters Reserved for the Board of Directors

13.	Financial Performance (Covered in the Joint BoD and BoG meeting)		
13a	NCL Audited Financial Statements	[attached]	To approve
13b	OfS Financial Returns	[attached]	To approve
14.	Audit, Risk Management and Remuneration Committee (ARMRC)		
14a	ARMRC Minutes	[attached]	To note
18b	Annual Report to the Board of Directors from ARMRC	[Oral update for now]	To note
15.	Scheme of Delegation/Pay Structure		
15a.	Principal's succession- 2024.01.31_BoG email announcing GA retirement	[attached]	To note
16.	Academic and corporate governance, risks, and value for money		
16a	NCL Value for Money Report_2022-23_v0.2	[attached]	To receive
16b	Governance Review	[Oral update]	
16c	Governance Manual	[Oral update]	

Minutes of the Meeting:

1. Welcome and Introductions (AP - oral)

The Chair of the Board of Governance welcomed all the members to the meeting, including Helen Pickering and Dawn Turpin who were attending as observers.

The members were provided with an update as part of the introduction, outlined as follows

- i. This meeting marks Geoffrey's final term as Principal, and this will be addressed later in the meeting.
- ii. Certain matters, including the recruitment process for the next Principal, will be reserved for discussion outside this meeting.
- iii. The delay in circulating the meeting papers was addressed, with emphasis placed on appointing a designated staff member to ensure timely distribution of documents. It was also highlighted that administrative issues need to be reviewed prior to sharing documents to maintain a seamless process.
- iv. The Chair confirmed that it was reasonable to assume Juliette's resignation due to personal reasons, and stressed the importance of her replacement having specific experience with students and ideally leadership-level experience within higher education.
- v. Coral, a current board member, will be stepping down, and a replacement with a similar skill set will be sought.

2. Apologies

Apologies were acknowledged from Anna, Carl, and Coral.

3. Minutes of the last meeting dated 24th of November 2024 and review of the action plan

3a. 24.11.2024) including action points)

The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously approved as an accurate record.

The Chair updated all the members on the action points.

AP2: Closed

AP4: Closed

AP5: Closed

AP6: Closed

AP1: Open:

The Head of Quality Assurance presented the metrics and delivered an oral update on the college's performance against established benchmarks. It was noted that the strategy plan underwent several iterations. The Chair emphasised the importance of aligning the college's performance with as many indicators as possible, in line with regulatory conditions that the college is subject to. Additionally, there was a discussion on defining the strategic direction for the period beyond 2025.

AP3: Open:

The Chair emphasised that AP3 mirrored AP1 in terms of performance regarding student outcomes. Furthermore, there was a reiterated emphasis on the necessity to define the forthcoming strategic direction, as highlighted in AP1.

AP7: Open:

The Head of Quality Assurance delivered an oral update on recent meetings, confirming the positive performance of the Audit, Remuneration, and Risk Management Committee, also echoed by HP. The Chair, in turn, praised the committee's efforts, recognising their valuable contributions.

4. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

The members received the following updates:

- i. The Vice Principal reminded everyone about the upcoming Away Day scheduled for June 5th, 2024, and noted that invitations should have been received by members required to attend. The Chair requested the Vice Principal to compile the agenda for the Away Day by early May for review and sign-off prior to the meeting. This action is noted as a new task (AP1).
- ii. The Head of Programme Delivery provided a concise update on the successful new collaborative partnership with the University of West London (UWL), including approval to deliver the master's programmes- MA International Business, BA Hospitality, and the FDA Hospitality Management, with very minor conditions.
- iii. The Vice Principal discussed matters regarding external examiner visits for the HND Business programme, and limited certification, and raised concerns about assessors and IV comments in the programme, as well as the impact of the delay in recruiting an Academic Registrar on forthcoming external examiner visits scheduled for May/June. The Head of Quality Assurance clarified that the position had been approved and the JD agreed, but the recruitment process was delayed due to the inadequate number and quality of candidates.

- iv. In response to a query about the protocol used after receiving the EE report, the Vice Principal confirmed that a response report is produced for each EE report and this is the standard protocol carried out by the relevant Academic Manager.

5. Report from the Principal

The report was duly noted. The Principal raised the issue of the Board of Directors contemplating leaving the Guild HE Membership. A query regarding the benefits of this membership was posed by a Non-Executive member, prompting others to share their perspectives on the advantages of maintaining the membership. The Vice Principal stressed the importance of reaching a decision among the Board of Governance. The Director/Head of Administration/Finance/HR highlighted the need to objectively weigh the pros and cons and value for money suggesting that this matter should be addressed separately from the Board of Governors meeting.

6. Academic and Prevent Risks

6a. Academic Risk Register

The following updates were presented:

- i. In response to the invitation from the Chair, the Head of Quality Assurance delivered a verbal update during the meeting, emphasising that the New DAPs Steering Group meetings have thoroughly reviewed the academic risks registers and highlighted the necessity for a contingency plan for all risks classed as severe or major.
- ii. The Vice Principal provided additional updates on several major risks and outlined the sharing protocol for these risks.
- iii. The Academic Project Manager (DAP) informed members that certain recommended changes will undergo review by the academic board, the ARMRC, and ultimately the board for approval. Additionally, stressing the importance of the college adopting a more consistent approach and a proportional attitude towards both red risks and other risks in general. This remains an ongoing effort.

6b. Prevent Risk Register

The prevent risk Register was duly noted as part of item 6a.

6c. Corporate Risk Register

- i. The Register was noted. The Head of Data Management and Compliance provided an update on the introduction of the digital version of corporate risk register, and ensuring accessibility for all ARMRC members. The next step is to transition the academic risk register and the NCL prevent risk register into a digital format. It was highlighted to the

members and noted that "complaints received" should not be included in the entry under Corporate risk.

- ii. The Vice Principal sought clarity on when the registered dashboard would be operational and ready for use by the CM management.
- iii. The Head of Data Management and Compliance informed the meeting about the upcoming session with Sypro to finalise the risk management framework, which will serve as the guiding principle. It is anticipated that this will be completed by the end of April or early May.

7. Taught Degree Awarding Powers

7a. Progress Report on the New DAPs Application

The reports for 7a-7d were noted.

The meeting was briefed by the Academic Project Manager (DAP) with the following updates:

- i. Meetings have been irregular due to colleagues' heavy workloads, but ongoing efforts continued in the background to enhance DAP readiness, with plans underway for monthly working group meetings.
- ii. A new Minute Secretary has been recruited and is currently undergoing training.
- iii. Review of student numbers trajectory for the Level 6 requires HR to be prepared for adequate resourcing for the expected increase in numbers. This entails having the appropriate qualified staff to fulfil the requirements of the positions and adequately support the students.
- iv. Gratitude was extended to the Principal for supporting DAP initiatives, this was acknowledged by the Principal.
- v. The Vice Principal sought clarity on the Academic Project Manager's readiness to submit the application in September. Concerns were raised about the significant loss of experienced full-time staff, including lecturers and assistant programme leaders, blocked certification and the impact of these factor on the application.
- vii. The Academic Project Manager (DAP) clarified that the decision to apply rested with the academic board, with validation by the Board of Governance. The members were informed that the absence of a Registrar, could be viewed unfavourably by the OfS. Adherence to set deadlines by all parties involved was emphasised as crucial for the college's preparedness at the time of application.

Detailed discussions took place, covering the following issues and comments:

- i. The Head of Quality Assurance referenced the initiation of the DAP process since January 2021, highlighting the need to establish a completion point for the application due to resource utilisation. Quoting Professor Mary Bishop from the steering group, the Head of Programme Delivery stated, 'you're ready when you're ready.' It was unanimously agreed that there is a necessity to identify the strengths that can propel the application forward, mirroring past successful endeavours such as the approved Fee Cap categories.
- ii. The Chair concluded that there is a need to refine the colleges approach, by relying heavily on the expertise available within the college such as board members and committee's members who have encountered similar experiences in past roles. The chair acknowledged the efforts and contributions of the Academic Project Manager (DAP) thus far.

7b. Minutes of NDAP Steering Group Meeting (18.01.2024)

The minutes were duly noted as part of item 7a.

7c. Minutes of NDAP Steering Group Meeting (08.02.2024)

The minutes were duly noted as part of item 7a.

7d. Minutes of NDAP Steering Group Meeting (21.03.2024)

The minutes were duly noted as part of item 7a.

8. Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy

The Head of Quality Assurance provided a verbal update:

- i. Informed members on the content of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy Report, which is produced annually, focusing on four categories within the report. Specific focus areas for improvement were highlighted, including submission and pass rates, as well as training assessors to offer more constructive feedback.
- ii. Review of performance across the programmes, with positive commendations noted.
- iii. Explanation of the purpose of the Reactive Enhancement Report, prepared by the Assistant Programme Leader for HND Business.
- iv. Notable changes such as the thorough review of the Knowledge Exchange Centre (KEC), leading to the establishment of two new departments, as previously mentioned by the Principal.
- v. Expansion of the college's employer forum and networks, with the LTEEC conference scheduled for 8th of May 2024.

- vi. Detailed insights from the Quinquennial Review of the London Met programmes, resulting in the formulation of an action plan by the Head of Programme Delivery, consequently bringing about several positive changes in the overall Quinquennial Review process.

9. CRER 2022-23

- i. The Chair reiterated his previous concern regarding the length of the report and its suitability for the board meeting, suggesting it might be too extensive for this meeting.
- ii. The Head of Quality Assurance offered a concise overview as the Vice Principal temporarily stepped away to attend to an urgent call. Notably, the Head of Quality Assurance informed the members of the college's adjustment of performance indicators for academic programmes to align with the requirements of OfS conditions B1, B2 and B3. These conditions pertain to student continuation, completion, and progression, capturing the college's overall progress, albeit within a lengthy document.

10. Academic Board Meeting Minutes

This was noted and no additions made to the minutes of the meeting.

10a. Annual Report of the Academic Board to the BoG -12.03.2024

Duly noted as part of item 10

10b. CRER 2022-23 ver 1.0

Duly noted as part of item 10

10c. Academic Board Meeting Minutes (27.03.2024)

Duly noted as part of item 10

11. Any other business

11a- 2024-02-Demerger of KEC into two departments

It was noted that there had been a re-organisation of the Knowledge Exchange Centre.

Recognition of the Principal's service at NCL.

- i. The Chair celebrated Geoffrey's pivotal role as Principal, acknowledging his profound impact on the college. NCL has undergone a remarkable transformation under Geoffrey's leadership over the past eight years. The Chair extended heartfelt wishes for a well-deserved retirement on behalf of all.

- ii. The Head of Quality Assurance expressed gratitude to Geoffrey, recognising him as a mentor whose support during challenging times was invaluable. Geoffrey's efforts have not only expanded the college's network but have also positioned him as a brand advocate and ambassador for the institution within the UK higher education community.
- iii. The Head of Programme Delivery echoed sentiments of appreciation for Geoffrey's support, guidance, and assistance since joining in 2016, both professionally and personally.

Geoffrey expressed gratitude for the kind words and shared his pride in acquiring the title of Emeritus Principal. In conclusion, he extended an invitation to all present to join him at the farewell celebration scheduled at Gants Hill on Thursday 18th of April 2024.

12. Date of next meeting: 5th June 2024.

New Action Plan

Action Point	To Do	Person Responsible	Deadline	Status	Comments
AP1	Compile agenda for the "Away Day" by early May for review and sign-off prior to the meeting.	Aleksandra Osiniagova	08.05.2024	Completed	
AP2	Publish VFM report	Aleksandra Osiniagova	15.05.2024	Completed	
AP3	Produce Governance Manual in consultation with relevant colleagues	Nazim Uddin	30/05/2024	Draft is Complete which was sent to DT (Dawn Turpin) via email	Final draft was produced reflecting on the feedback received from AO, KS, & DT.

Previous Outstanding table

Action Point	To Do	Person Responsible	Deadline	Status	Comments
AP1	Strategic Priority 4 – Progression of the Strategic Plan (2020-25) needs clarity in regard to what it meant to be 10% improvement and an enhancement plan to address the underperformance in the progression indicator.	KEC	17.04.2023	Closed	This was clarified during the meeting
AP3	Figure out the best way to track performance on Student Outcomes and consider how it should be reported to the Board of Governance.	BM	17.04.2023	Closed	CRER report no has a section that contains information on KPIs used by the OfS.
AP7	ARMRC report to be shared with the Joint BoD-BoG.	HA	17.04.2023	Closed	This was provided.