Minutes

# Joint Board of Directors and Board of Governance	Date: 15/04/2026 Time: 14:00 – 16:00 Location: Online (MS Teams)

Attendees:			
Present:	**Name**	**Position**	**Initials**
	Aaron Porter	Chair of the Board of Governance	AP
	Nazim Uddin	Chair of the Board of Directors/ Director/ Head of Quality Assurance	NU
	Shiraj Islam	Director/ Head of Marketing and Work-Based Learning	SI
	Roger Bradburn	Principal / Chair of Academic Board	RB
	Grzegorz Matuszewski	Student Member	GC
	Dr Tommie Anderson-Jaquest	Non-Executive Director	TAJ
	Helen Pickering	Non-Executive member/ Chair of Audit, Risk Management and Remuneration Committee (ARMRC)	HP
	Elizabeth Williams	Non-Executive member	EW
	Carl Stychin	Non-Executive member	CS
	Sarah Ryan	Non-Executive member	SR
	Dr Shorful Islam	Non-Executive member	SHI
	Linda Felton	Non-Executive member	LF
In Attendance:	David Douglas	Head of Programme Delivery (Observer)	DD
	Aamir Mehmood	Head of Data Management and Compliance (Observer)	AM
	Kate Stoneman	Academic Project Manager (DAPs)	KS
	Dawn Turpin	Governance Advisor (External)	DT
	Sumaiyah Mehnaz	Quality and Governance Administrator (Note Taker)	SM
Apologies:	Athiqul Islam	Director/ Head of HR and Finance	AI
	Sarah-Jo Loveday	Non-Executive Director	SJL
	Daniyal Mughal	Student Member	DM
	Denis Stelica	Student Member	DS
	Ola Ariyo	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager (Observer)	OA

Note Taker: Sumaiyah Mehnaz

Reviewed by: Nazim Uddin, Dawn Turpin, Aaron Porter

Minutes

Part A Board of Governance (BoG)

Introductory Items

0. Welcome and Introductions
The Chair of the BoG welcomed all members of the Board. The meeting was recorded for the purpose of the minutes.

1. Apologies for Absence
Apologies for Athiqul Islam, Sarah-Jo Loveday, Daniyal Mughal, Denis Stelica, and Ola Ariyo (Observer) were noted.

2. Declaration of Interests
None noted. The Chair proposed an action that the Register of Interests document is to be circulated once a year to ensure it is up to date. (AP1)

3. Minutes of the previous meeting
The minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

a. Review all actions points (AP) from the last meeting

AP4: Work in Progress (additional time was required to holistically review all the risk registers and therefore, it is expected to be included at the July 2026 meeting)
AP6: Not yet due

All other action points were completed.

4. Matter arising not elsewhere on the agenda
Members noted an update in relation to governance advisory capacity beyond March 2026. It was confirmed that the current external Governance Advisor will continue engagement with the College for a further year to support implementation of governance review recommendations.

Strategic Items

5. Report from the Principal

The Principal provided an overview of key developments across the College. Members noted improvements in student engagement, including increased participation in student elections. The introduction and development of blended learning was noted, with a combination of on-campus and live online delivery intended to support engagement and improve competitiveness.

The Board noted that the relationship with the University of West London (UWL) remained positive, with previous concerns addressed. Members also noted the forthcoming transition to Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs), expected to replace HND Programmes within two years, and progress with New Degree Awarding Powers (NDAPs), including internal dissemination of the Self-Assessment Document (SAD). Ongoing work to enhance teaching and learning and plans to explore new programme development were also noted.

During discussion, members sought clarification on HTQs and blended learning, including timelines and delivery model. It was noted that blended learning may support accessibility, particularly for students travelling long distances, which was attributed primarily to strong word-of-mouth reputation and established student networks. The Head of Programme Delivery highlighted that the College has existing experience of blended learning through its Master's provision and is well placed to deliver this effectively. Members also discussed the competitive landscape and the importance of flexible delivery models in supporting recruitment.

The Principal's Report was noted.

6. College Review and Enhancement Report (CRER) 2024-2025

The Principal provided an overview of the report, noting that it covered all key areas of College activity, including academic provision, quality, and wider institutional functions.

During discussion, members welcomed the revised format and found the report clear and useful. Members sought assurance on how the impact of student engagement activities was measured. The Principal noted that these were recorded and monitored, with increasing integration into teaching practice expected, particularly in light of HTQ requirements.

Members discussed student retention and dropout rates, noting that this remained an area of focus. It was reported that a range of measures were in place, including strengthened academic leadership, earlier identification of at-risk students, improved engagement through teaching staff, and additional financial support mechanisms. It was noted that recent interventions had led to improvements, including the resolution of previously identified submission issues.

The Board also discussed graduate outcomes, noting the time lag in available data and the need for continued focus in this area. It was agreed that this remained a priority and would benefit from further detailed review at a future meeting.

Members discussed partnerships across campuses, including links with employers, schools, and external organisations. It was noted that partnerships operate at multiple levels across the College, with different areas responsible depending on the nature of the partnership, and that these contribute to employability and student experience.

The Board noted that overall performance in relation to continuation meets regulatory expectations, although variability exists at programme level, which will require further analysis.

The Board of Governance noted the College Review and Enhancement Report.

7. New Degree Awarding Powers (NDAPs)

a. Progress Report for Joint BoG-BoD on the New DAPs

The Board received an update on progress with the New Degree Awarding Powers (NDAPs).

The Academic Project Manager reported that the College remained within the Office for Students (OfS) assessment process following initial engagement, with further contact expected shortly. It was noted that while some elements were still being finalised, overall progress was being made.

Managers had been tasked with reviewing the DAPs criteria and the Self-Assessment Document (SAD) to ensure alignment between documented processes and practice, in preparation for the initial assessment stage.

b. Self-Assessment Document (SAD) (Draft) and Delegate Authority to the Principal for Final Approval

The Board considered the draft Self-Assessment Document (SAD).

The Academic Project Manager reported that the SAD was largely complete, with substantive drafting finalised and only final proofing and minor amendments outstanding. Managers had been engaged to review the document, confirm accuracy, and validate supporting evidence. Work was also underway to develop the probationary action plan based on identified commitments.

Members welcomed the document as a comprehensive and coherent submission.

In discussion, members provided detailed feedback. It was noted that all claims within the document should be clearly evidenced, with precise referencing to supporting documentation and a clear audit trail. Members highlighted the importance of ensuring that governance arrangements were accurately reflected, including consistency between statements and committee minutes. Specific feedback was provided regarding references to the Audit, Risk Management and Remuneration Committee (ARMRC), noting that some descriptions in respect of its membership composition in the SAD was not updated with what was evidenced in practice, and that membership details required correction.

Members also highlighted the need to strengthen content relating to staff capability, including scholarship, pedagogical effectiveness, noting that this area would benefit from further development to fully reflect expectations within the DAPs framework, alongside staff development. Further comments noted that the document should clearly articulate and justify the College's governance structures where these differ from typical sector models, ensuring that these are presented confidently rather than defensively.

Members were invited to provide any additional detailed feedback outside the meeting.

The Board of Governance approved the delegation of authority to the Principal for final approval of the SAD, subject to incorporation of the feedback received. (AP2)

8. Risk Management Items

Members noted that the ARMRC had recently reviewed the risk registers on 23rd March 2026 and recommended further updates, particularly to the Corporate Risk Register, which was noted to be outdated in parts. It was also suggested that clearer deadlines be included for mitigation actions.

The Board noted that a risk reassessment proposal had been reviewed by ARMRC and was supported, with the expectation that this would lead to further changes to the structure and content of the risk registers. It was anticipated that revised versions would be presented to the Board of Governance at a future meeting.

Members noted that the approach to risk management had improved, with greater scrutiny, increased use of technology, and enhanced oversight through both ARMRC and Academic Board.

In discussion, a member raised a query regarding IT infrastructure and cyber security risks, particularly in light of emerging external threats. The Head of Data Management and Compliance provided assurance that significant investment had been made to strengthen cyber security, including implementation of enhanced firewall systems, 24/7 monitoring, fail-safe infrastructure, and collaboration with external specialist providers.

a. Corporate Risk Register

The Chair of the ARMRC noted that the Corporate Risk Register required updating to reflect current risks and mitigation actions. It was agreed that revisions would be made as well as the proposed changes from the risk reassessment plan, following approval. The revised corporate risk register would be presented at the next meeting.

b. Academic Risk Register

Members noted that the Academic Risk Register continued to be reviewed through existing governance processes, including Academic Board, and would be updated in line with the wider risk reassessment plan.

c. Prevent Risk Register

Members noted the Prevent Risk Register; no further comments were made.

d. Prevent Steering Group Minutes (26.02.2026)
Noted.

e. Risk Reassessment Plan

Members noted that the reassessment had been undertaken to align the Risk Register with the Strategic Plan 2025-2030, resulting in a more focused and streamlined set of risks. The revised approach prioritised risks with the greatest potential impact on strategic objectives, with lower-impact risks removed or reduced and new risks introduced in key areas. It was noted that the updated Risk Register had been endorsed by the ARMRC on 23rd March 2026.

A member queried the removal of certain corporate risks, including value for money and contractual matters, given their potentially high impact. It was explained that risk items with low inherent scores (below an agreed threshold) had not been removed entirely but would not be presented within the main Risk Register, in order to maintain a focused and manageable set of risks. These risks would continue to be monitored on a regular (quarterly) basis and reintroduced where necessary.

In discussion, the Chair noted that the reassessment plan would be approved in principle, with the understanding that further updates to the Risk Registers would follow. It was confirmed that revised risk registers, incorporating the changes, would be presented to the Board of Governance at a future meeting for further review. (AP3)

The Risk Reassessment Plan was approved by the Board of Governance.

Academic and Student Items

9. Report or feedback from NCL Student Association / Student Experience

The Board received an update on student experience from a Student Member studying at Broadstairs campus.

It was reported that regular meetings with student representatives were being held on a fortnightly basis, providing a structured approach for gathering and addressing student feedback. The Student Member also noted that the overall student experience at the Broadstairs campus was very positive and responsive citing a recent example, with no significant issues reported.

The Board of Governance welcomed the positive feedback and noted the importance of maintaining strong communication channels between students and the College.

10. The OfS/APP/NCL Graduate Outcome Strategy

a. Student Protection Plan

The Head of Data Management and Compliance presented the Student Protection Plan and noted that the document had been reviewed and updated from the previous version submitted at registration, to reflect current regulatory expectations and anticipated future requirements. Assurance was provided that the revised version is compliant with current standards.

The Board of Governance recommended the Student Protection Plan to the Board of Directors for approval.

It was agreed that, subject to approval, the updated Student Protection Plan should be uploaded to the College website to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. (AP4)

The Head of Data Management and Compliance also raised that existing refund arrangements within the terms and conditions need to be checked whether or not they were sufficient on their own, and that a standalone Refund and Compensation Policy might be required. It was agreed that this policy should be developed and presented to the next Board meeting. (AP5)

b. National Student Survey (NSS) Results/Graduate Survey Report

The Board considered the NSS Results and Graduate Outcomes Survey Report, which provided an overview of the College's performance in relation to student satisfaction and graduate outcomes, with a particular focus on response rates and engagement effectiveness.

Members noted that the report highlighted strong NSS results, reflecting positive student satisfaction. The Board also noted that graduate outcomes and progression remain an area for continued focus.

The Board of Governance noted the NSS Results/Graduate Survey Report.

11. Academic Board Meeting Minutes (26.03.2026)
The Board of Governance received the Academic Board meeting minutes.

The Principal reported that work was ongoing to streamline the Academic Board and improve its effectiveness, with a greater focus on key priorities, as well as incorporating external advice and internal review.

12. Utilisation of AI/Digital Tools – update

The Principal reported that this year's Learning Teaching Employability and Engagement (LTEE) Conference will have Artificial Intelligence (AI) theme and the conference was scheduled to take place in the coming weeks, involving external speakers and student participation, which is expected to support further development in this area. The Chair suggested that any key outcomes from the conference could be shared at the next meeting. (AP6)

Governance and Compliance Items

13. NCL approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in relation to the College's governance practices

Members noted that this item arose from a recommendation within the external governance review. It was agreed that further clarification and development of this item was required. Therefore, this was agreed to be taken forward offline between the Principal and Governance Advisor for further discussion. (AP7)

14. Terms of Reference - Board of Governance

Members noted that the revisions to the Board of Governance Terms of Reference reflected current practice and aligned with updates arising from the governance review. No concerns were raised.

The Board of Governance agreed to recommend the updated Terms of Reference to the Board of Directors for approval.

15. Board of Governance Skills Matrix (template)

Members noted that the skills matrix was intended to support assessment of whether the Board collectively holds the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to govern effectively.

Members noted that the skills matrix had been refined to improve clarity, including updated categories and clearer descriptions. It was proposed that, subject to approval, the skills matrix would be circulated to members for completion as a self-assessment exercise. Members suggested that this be distributed via an online form to improve accessibility and ease of completion. (AP8)

The Board of Governance approved the Skills Matrix template.

16. Revised Fit and Proper Person Form

The Board of Governance considered the Fit and Proper Person Form.

The Director/Head of Quality Assurance queried whether the current form fully reflected the latest Office for Students (OfS) requirements, as set out in Regulatory Advice 3 (updated August 2025), particularly in relation to governance, due diligence and the assessment of individuals in senior roles.

It was suggested that the form required updating to align with these revised expectations, including ensuring appropriate version control and reference to external regulatory guidance.

It was agreed that the form would be revised to ensure compliance and once updated, recirculated to all Board members for completion. (AP9)

Closing Items

17. Any Other Business

a. **Away Day 2026 Agenda**
The Board noted the proposed Away Day scheduled for 9 June 2026, including the draft agenda. Members noted that the agenda includes key strategic topics such as blended learning, NDAPs and future growth opportunities. It was agreed that any further suggestions for agenda items should be shared with the Principal and Chair of the Board of Governance outside the meeting.

18. Date and time of the next meeting(s):

- **22.07.2026**
- **25.11.2026**

NELSON COLLEGE LONDON

New Actions

Date created	Action no.	Action	Action owner	Due date	Update	Date closed
15.04.26	**1**	To circulate the Register of Interests document annually.	**SM**	**08.07.26**	**Complete**	**22.07.26**
15.04.26	**2**	To incorporate feedback on the SAD provided by the Board Members.	**RB**	**08.07.26**	**Complete** – Specific points from HP have been addressed. Work to strengthen chapter 4 is in progress (via academic team sub-group) and the evidence base by all sub-groups. See also agenda item 6a (NDAPs report).	**22.07.26**
15.04.26	**3**	To revise the Risk Registers to incorporate the ARMRC's feedback and proposals from the Risk Reassessment Plan, and present at the next meeting.	**AM / Risk Owners**	**08.07.26**	**Complete**	**22.07.26**
15.04.26	**4**	To upload the approved Student Protection Plan to the College website.	**SM**	**08.07.26**	**Complete**	**22.07.26**
15.04.26	**5**	To develop a standalone Refund and Compensation Policy and present it to the next Board meeting for approval.	**AM/NU**	**08.07.26**	**Complete**	**22.07.26**
15.04.26	**6**	To share any key outcomes/materials from the AI learning and teaching conference.	**RB**	**08.07.26**	**Complete** – on agenda for next meeting	**22.07.26**

Date created	Action no.	Action	Action owner	Due date	Update	Date closed
15.04.26	**7**	To discuss the College's approach to EDI for BoG meetings between the Principal and Governance Advisor. To develop a formal College-level approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to support the Board of Governance in fulfilling its responsibilities as set out in the Terms of Reference.	**DT/RB**	**08.07.26**	**Complete –** revisions to EDI policy underway and EDI committee meeting being scheduled	**22.07.26**
15.04.26	**8**	To circulate the approved Board Skills Matrix to members for completion as a self-assessment exercise, using an online form to support accessibility and ease of completion.	**SM/OA**	**08.07.26**	**Complete**	**22.07.26**
15.04.26	**9**	To review and update the Fit and Proper Person Form to ensure alignment with OfS Regulatory Advice 3 (August 2025), including version control and appropriate external referencing, and to recirculate the updated form to all Board members for completion.	**NU/OA**	**08.07.26**	**Complete**	**22.07.26**
15.04.26	**10 (Part B)**	To update the Governance Framework in line with the revised Terms of References.	**DT/OA**	**08.07.26**	**Complete**	**22.07.26**
15.04.26	**11 (Part B)**	To upload the BoG/ARMRC/BoD approved Terms of References onto the College website.	**SM**	**08.07.26**	**Complete**	**22.07.26**

Date created	Action no.	Action	Action owner	Due date	Update	Date closed
15.04.26	12 (Part B)	To share the Schedule of Delegation with the ARMRC and Academic Board	SM	08.07.26	**Complete**	22.07.26
15.04.26	13 (Part B)	To review the College's senior leadership structure and succession planning arrangements, including the NCL Succession Plan.	BoD Members	08.07.26	**WIP –** The Senior Management Team (SMT) will discuss the NCL succession plan documents at their next meeting.	
15.04.26	14 (Part B)	To upload NCL Value for Money Report onto the College website.	SM	08.07.26	**Complete**	22.07.26
15.04.26	15 (Part B)	To review the Student Protection Plan to ensure it is in line with current OfS expectations.	AM	08.07.26	**Complete**	22.07.26

Ongoing Actions

Date created	Action no.	Action	Action owner	Due date	Update	Date closed
26.11.25	4	To reassess NDAPs-related risks and reintroduce them into the Risk Register.	AM	23.03.26	**Complete**	22.07.26
26.11.25	6	To prepare and present a standalone Academic Governance Assurance Annual	RB	25.11.26	**Not yet due**	

		Report for the Board meeting in November 2026 (for 2024/25 and 2025/26).				

Closed Actions

Date created	Action no.	Action	Action owner	Due date	Update	Date closed
23.07.25	**4**	To review the agenda of the Academic Board and make it more streamlined.	**RB**	**15.07.25**	**Complete –** Feedback was provided; agenda was reviewed. Ongoing further changes.	**15.04.26**
23.07.25	**3**	To invite EW to join the next meeting of the Student Access and Success Steering Group.	**SP**	**17.11.25**	**Complete**	**15.04.26**
23.07.25	**9**	To produce and share the NSS results and the Graduate Outcomes Survey in a 1-page report.	**AS**	**17.11.25**	**Complete**	**15.04.26**
26.11.25	**1**	Principal, in consultation with the Directors (and Chair of the BoG), to develop proposals for governance advisory capacity beyond March 2026, ensuring appropriate expertise to support and guide the College's governance arrangements.	**RB/NU/AI/ SI/AP**	**25.02.26**	**Complete**	**15.04.26**
26.11.25	**2**	To revise the risk reassessment plan and risk registers, reflecting ARMRC feedback,	**OA**	**30.03.26**	**Complete**	**15.04.26**

Date created	Action no.	Action	Action owner	Due date	Update	Date closed
		and present the updated versions to the next Board meeting.				
26.11.25	**3**	Senior Management Team to consider how AI and digital tools can be more effectively and consistently utilised across the College, including identifying staff training and development needs, and to provide an update to the Board at a future meeting.	**RB**	**30.03.26**	**Complete –** RB to provide oral update	**15.04.26**
26.11.25	**7**	To issue a skills and development questionnaire to Board and Executive members to inform a Board training and development plan, including future appraisal arrangements.	**DT**	**30.03.26**	**Complete –** BoG Skills Matrix added onto agenda.	**15.04.26**
26.11.25	**8**	To amend the review cycle of the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom from biennial to annual.	**SM**	**30.03.26**	**Complete**	**15.04.26**
26.11.25	**9**	To add item 15 'NCL approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in relation to the College's governance practices' on the agenda for the next meeting.	**SM**	**30.03.26**	**Complete**	**15.04.26**
26.11.25	**10**	To circulate CV of Dr Ron Cambridge to BoG/BoD members for formal approval as a member of the Academic Board.	**SM**	**30.03.26**	**Complete**	**15.04.26**

Minutes

Date created	Action no.	Action	Action owner	Due date	Update	Date closed
26.11.25	**11**	To confirm availability of members for the scheduling of the Away Day meeting.	**SM**	**30.03.26**	**Complete –** Calendar invite was sent out	**15.04.26**
26.11.25	**12**	To circulate the final version of the Annual Accounts to the ARMRC, and then to the BoG/BoD for approval via email correspondence.	**SM**	**30.03.26**	**Complete –** On agenda	**15.04.26**
26.11.25	**13**	To circulate the Career Development Opportunities and Pay Structure Policy to all managers.	**SM/OA**	**30.03.26**	**Complete**	**15.04.26**
26.11.25	**14**	To review and update the NCL Succession Plan and present the revised version to the Board at a future meeting.	**NU**	**30.03.26**	**Complete**	**15.04.26**