



**UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Wednesday, 11 October 2023, at 4.00 pm
in the Court Room, Senate House
and via Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES	
PRESENT	Richard Dearlove (Chair) Pawan Dhir <i>via Microsoft Teams</i> Patrick Dunne Andrew Halper Craig Hassall David Latchman Kieran Murphy Andrew Ratcliffe Kavita Reddi Christopher Rossbach Ilsa Tariq Wendy Thomson Rosalyn Wilton (Deputy Chair)
IN ATTENDANCE	Rita Akushie (Pro Vice-Chancellor (Finance and Operations)) Simon Cain (Director of Human Resources) Damaris Currie (Central Secretariat) Marie Ennis (Director of Strategic Communications, Marketing and Recruitment) Jo Fox (Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Engagement)) Samantha Horne (Director of Finance) Alistair Jarvis (Pro Vice-Chancellor (Partnerships and Governance)) Richard Michel (Chief Information and Digital Officer) Huw Morgan Jones (Senior Manager: Surveys and Student Voice) (for BTMM 6322-28) Craig O'Callaghan, Managing Director, University of London Worldwide Emma Rees (Executive Director of Estates and Property) Mary Stiasny (Pro Vice-Chancellor (International, Learning and Teaching))
APOLOGIES	Jane Andrewartha Colin Bailey Josette Bushell-Mingo Frances Corner Michael Spence

Welcome

6306 The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting, in particular Pawan (Pav) Dhir and Ilsa Tariq who were attending their first meeting of the Board, and David Latchman, who was attending his first meeting since becoming Deputy Vice-Chancellor in August 2023. Two recently appointed members of staff who were present for their first meeting of the Board were also welcomed: Marie Ennis, Director of Strategic Communications, Marketing and Recruitment; and Richard Michel, Chief Information and Digital Officer.

Declarations of Interest

6307 There were no declarations of interest.

Role and Responsibilities of the Board

6308 The Board received a report, setting out the functions and membership of the Board, (BT1819, Confidential) noting that a standard report along these lines was presented to the first meeting of each academic year. On this occasion, the report also provided additional information on the legal and regulatory responsibilities of the Board, further to a request made by the Board at its meeting in May 2023. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Partnerships and Governance) commented that assurance in relation to these responsibilities was provided through reports presented to the Board during the year and through the work undertaken by the Committees of the Board.

6309 The Board noted its functions, constitution and membership, and the information provided on its legal and regulatory responsibilities.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

6310 The Board of Trustees confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2023.

Matters Arising, Matters Considered by Correspondence, and Action List

6311 The Board received a report providing updates on matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda, and a list of running actions (BT1820, Confidential). The Board noted the information and updates set out in the report. The following matters were highlighted.

BTM 6312 is considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

BTMM 6271-73: Reappointment of External Audit Service Providers

6313 At its meeting on 6 July 2023, the Board had considered the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) on the reappointment of the external audit service providers. It had reappointed KPMG as the University's External Auditors and approved the proposed external audit fee. Further to the discussion at the ARAC's meeting on 6 June 2023, KPMG had

provided a reconciliation of the fee for the 2022-23 audit against that for the previous year. The Chair of the ARAC had been content with the reconciliation provided by KPMG, more information on which had been provided in the Matters Arising report for the Board's information.

Matter Considered by Correspondence – Award of an Honorary Fellowship

- 6314 The Board had approved, by correspondence, a recommendation from the Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee that an Honorary Fellowship be awarded to Professor Paul Layzell CBE (detailed in Document BT1818, made available to the Board on 20 September 2023). The Board was pleased to note that the award would be made at the Foundation Day ceremony on 22 November 2023.

Vice-Chancellor's Report

- 6315 The Board received and noted the Vice-Chancellor's Report (BT1821, Confidential), including a list of the Vice-Chancellor's main activities and meetings since 6 July 2023 (Appendix BT1821A). The following matters were highlighted.

The Festival of Higher Education

- 6316 The forthcoming Festival of Higher Education on 7 and 8 November 2023, was being produced and developed by the University in partnership with Wonke. Approximately 500 people were due to attend the event. There would be four stages, with set-piece debates, expert panel sessions, conversations with sector leaders, interactive masterclasses and the opportunity to hear insights from journalists, commentators, and policymakers. Two Board members would be attending the event, with members of the University's senior management team playing roles as speakers and chairs of sessions.

University of London in Paris (ULIP) Review

- 6317 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Engagement) highlighted the recent review of ULIP and the vision for the Institute. There was significant opportunity to create a highly influential sphere of activity involving ULIP, the University of London and the Federation Members. The Board noted that ULIP had moved to the portfolio of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Engagement), who was well placed to deliver this vision, with its emphasis on research, engagement, policy and face-to-face education. Members expressed support for this activity, commenting that ULIP was a unique asset with great potential. More information would be provided to the Board in due course.

Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS)

- 6318 The Board's attention was drawn to the update on the USS, further to USS's consultation with Universities UK on the proposed assumptions for the Scheme's Technical Provisions following the 2023 valuation. In line with an

email of 15 September 2023 which had been circulated to the Board for comment, the University had expressed its support for improving benefits to pre-April 2022 levels. It was noted that the potential changes in contributions would have a favourable impact on the University's budget position, the University having budgeted for the current level of contributions for the full 2023-24 academic year.

Strategic Projects Update

- 6319 The Board received an update on the University's strategic projects and on progress against delivering the Strategic Objectives (BT1822 and Appendix BT1822A). The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Finance and Operations) highlighted the intention to revise the format of future updates to link projects more clearly to transformation programmes and key performance indicators (KPIs).
- 6320 Further to a query about progress in relation to Objective 1 'Furthering our position as the UK's leading provider of distance learning worldwide', the Board was informed that, while the development of new programmes was not as far advanced as originally envisaged, progress was being made and there was good momentum in terms of the structural changes to support and facilitate this area of activity.
- 6321 In terms of staffing to support delivery of the University's strategic objectives, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Finance and Operations) reported that, following some recruitment challenges during 2022, there were now normal levels of vacancies and staff turnover. Recent appointments to the area of IT and Digital Services were highlighted, including the appointment of the new Chief Information and Digital Officer.

Student Satisfaction: Post-survey Action Planning

- 6322 The Senior Manager: Surveys and Student Voice joined the meeting for the item, to provide a presentation on how the University was responding to student feedback from satisfaction surveys conducted during the 2022-23 academic year. The presentation complemented a report received by the Board (BT1823, Confidential) which provided information on this activity and on associated action plans.

BTMM 6323-24 are considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

- 6325 The Board considered the outcomes of the surveys and the associated action plans. Points raised and discussed included:
- (i) Challenges associated with delivering improved timescales for the turnaround of assessments, including in relation to increasing the size of the examiner pool and the need for senior support from the Federation Members, where it was recognised that academics had their own commitments in addition to those for the UoLW programmes. The Vice-Chancellor had been raising this matter in conversations with senior staff at the Federation Members.

- (ii) Confirmation that the recent industrial action had not impacted the assessments for students on UoLW programmes.
- (iii) Insight provided by the student member of the Board into the experience of students at the Recognised Teaching Centres (RTCs); the Board discussed the potential for plans for enhanced engagement between the University and the RTCs to assist in raising the profile of the SES and thereby the number of survey responses received.
- (iv) A suggestion that the target times for enquiry responses should be reduced further. The Senior Manager: Surveys and Student Voice reported that he would take this feedback to the relevant teams.
- (v) Discussion on the resources required to deliver the actions outlined in the action plans. Support was expressed for the investment in this area of activity, with members noting the importance of ensuring systems and processes in place were able to deliver a good student experience and enhanced student satisfaction, both for present and future cohorts. It was noted that the introduction of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement could provide opportunities for the University to offer new educational programmes.
- (vi) The need to increase the response rate to the surveys to ensure that a representative range of responses was received, and an accurate picture of student satisfaction provided.

6326 The Board was informed that, while the report focused on a number of key actions arising from the survey results, other actions were also being progressed, for example with respect to the library and student voice. It was confirmed that careful analysis was being undertaken to ensure that the appropriate priority actions were identified in response to the survey outcomes, with input also gained from the Student Voice Group.

6327 The Managing Director, University of London Worldwide, reported that analysis of the results suggested that the range of enquiry management enhancement activities already underway had the potential to improve the overall student satisfaction score significantly. The importance of the ongoing work to improve the student experience in relation to enquiry management was vital.

6328 The Board thanked the Senior Manager: Surveys and Student Voice for the presentation and information provided on the surveys, welcoming the activity in this area. The Senior Manager: Surveys and Student Voice left the meeting following the item.

Report and Minutes from the Academic Board 13 July 2023

6329 The Board received and noted the Unconfirmed Minutes of the Academic Board meeting held on 13 July 2023 and the key items of business which had been summarised, including the actions agreed by the Academic Board (BT1824 and Appendix BT1824A, Confidential).

6330 It was highlighted that the Academic Board had approved the introduction of practice-based awards which would offer students the opportunity to produce a body of creative work (weighted at 70%) and a written critical component of

30,000 words (weighted at 30%) in fulfilment of the requirements of a PhD. It was the intention that the School of Advanced Study would run an associated pilot within the specialist centre in Digital Humanities. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Engagement) highlighted the potential for this to be a pioneering initiative, strengthening the intake to PhD courses and opening different avenues of work to researchers.

Finance Committee

Information at BTM 6331 is considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

6331 The Chair of the Finance Committee, Rosalyn Wilton, reported that the Committee had met earlier on 11 October 2023. A key item of business had been the draft financial results for 2022-23 (see also BTMM 6333-37 below).
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BTM 6332 is considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Draft Financial Results for 2022-23

6333 The Board received the draft financial results for 2022-23 (BT1825 and Appendix BT1825A, both Confidential).

BTMM 6334-37 are considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

[The final version of the Financial Statements will be published on the University website]

Report from the Investments Committee

BTM 6338(iii) is considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

6338 The Board received and considered a summary of the key issues discussed by the Investments Committee at its meetings on 13 July 2023 and on 28 September 2023 (BT1826, Confidential). The Chair of the Investments Committee, Christopher Rossbach, highlighted some key points of discussion at the meetings, including:

- (i) Work with the University Finance Department and the investments consultant Redington, on alignment and performance of the Unified Trust Fund (UTF) and distribution policy.
- (ii) The UTF performance over both shorter and longer periods, with the Committee having asked Redington to consider the performance of the UTF in absolute terms and in comparison to its peers. The Committee had been content with the update on UTF Overall Investment Performance which had been presented and discussed in detail at its meeting on 30 June 2023.
- (iii) [...]

Annual Health and Safety Report 2022-23

- 6339 The Board received and considered the Annual Health and Safety Report 2022-23 (BT1827, Confidential). The Health and Safety Committee had considered the Annual Report at its meeting on 2 October 2023, and agreed the report's onward transmission to the ARAC and the Board of Trustees. The ARAC would receive the report at its November meeting.
- 6340 The Chair of the Health and Safety Committee, Craig Hassall, drew members' attention to the executive summary which provided information on:
- (i) RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete);
 - (ii) The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill (a more detailed update on which was provided at Appendix BT1827E); and
 - (iii) The Building Safety Act.
- 6341 The Board noted the following appendices to the report:
- (i) the Graphs and KPIs (Appendix BT1827A). The document covered a range of matters including: incidents, fire alarm activations, health and safety actions, audits, and KPIs.
 - (ii) the Fire Safety Update (Appendix BT1827B) which provided updates on key projects and activity relating to fire safety.
 - (iii) The University's Register of Significant Health and Safety Risks (Appendix BT1827C).
 - (iv) The updated Health and Safety Policy (Appendix BT1827D) which had been presented for approval. Revisions included:
 - (a) specific mention of responsibilities under the Building Safety Act);
 - (b) reflecting the change of line management of the Head of Health and Safety to the Director of Human Resources; and
 - (c) formatting changes to align with other University policies and procedures.
 - (v) An update on the University's preparations in relation to the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill 'Martyn's Law' (Appendix BT1827E).
- 6342 The Board noted the report and the updates therein on key health and safety matters and areas of activity during 2022-23.

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)

- 6343 The Board was informed that there had been no incidents that were required to be reported under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) in 2022-23. The Chair highlighted that, while there had been an increase in incident reporting in 2022-23, this was primarily due to the introduction of the Mirashare system and the promotion of it within key teams.

BTM 6344 is considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Building Safety Act

6345 The Board noted the update on work required in conjunction with the Building Safety Act. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, the University was required to register residential buildings that were eight floors and higher (including the ground floor); College Hall and Bonham Carter and Warwickshire House had been registered accordingly and the University would be required to complete Building Safety cases for each. It was further noted that UPP was responsible for the registration of Eleanor Rosa House and Garden Halls and for preparing the associated Building Safety cases. In response to a query, the Director of HR confirmed that the University would have sight of the Building Safety cases prepared by UPP for these residential buildings.

6346 **AGREED**

The Board approved the revised Health and Safety Policy (Appendix BT1827D).

Committees of the Board of Trustees and Governance Update

6347 The Board received and considered a report setting out: the memberships and terms of reference of the Committees of the Board of Trustees for 2023-24; and an update on recent governance matters. (BT1828, Confidential). The Board noted:

- (i) an update on progress with implementing recommendations from the University's governance review;
- (ii) the Committee memberships for 2023-24; and
- (iii) the terms of reference of the Committees of the Board.

6348 **AGREED**

The Board approved:

- (i) the co-option of Ilsa Tariq to the Equality and Inclusion Committee, in line with Ordinance 7, paragraph 15;
- (ii) the extension of the Constitution of the Health and Safety Committee to include a senior member of staff from Estates and Facilities Management.

Minutes of the Collegiate Council meeting on 7 July 2023

6349 The Board received and noted the confirmed Minutes of the Collegiate Council meeting held on 7 July 2023 (BT1829, Confidential).

Dates of Future Meetings

6350 The Board noted the dates of future meetings as follows (all meetings to commence at 4.00pm except where indicated otherwise):

2023-24

Wednesday, 22 November 2023 at 3.00pm (to be followed by the Foundation Day ceremony that evening).

Wednesday, 24 January 2024

Wednesday, 20 March 2024

Wednesday, 15 May 2024

Thursday, 11 July 2024

- 6351 It was noted that Trustees had also been invited to a dinner discussion with Clare Marchant, former Chief Executive of UCAS (2017-2023), on 1 November 2023 - attendees were to arrive at Senate House at 6.00pm for a 6.30pm start.

Any Other Business

Craig O'Callaghan

- 6352 The Board noted that this would be the last meeting attended by Craig O'Callaghan, Managing Director, University of London Worldwide, who would retire from the University at the end of October 2023.
- 6353 The Chair paid tribute to Craig for nearly 38 years of service to the University, noting that he had joined the University in February 1986 in a role in the then Examinations division. Since then, his roles had included Head of Exams Distribution, Director of Student Services and Director of Business Transformation. Craig had become Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Operations in 2013, and in September 2021 had been appointed to his current role. The Chair thanked Craig, on behalf of the Board, for his commitment and extensive service to the University and wished him well for the future.
- 6354 Craig thanked the Chair for the tribute. He highlighted the change that had occurred during his time at the University, expressing the view that the University was well positioned for the future both in the UK and globally and wishing it every success in its endeavours. He also expressed his gratitude to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International, Learning and Teaching) and to the Vice-Chancellor and her predecessors for the support that he had received during his time at the University.