

**CONFIRMED**

**UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON HIGHER EDUCATION CORPORATION**

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**Minutes of the Board of Governors held on Friday 25 March 2022 in Room US.2.38, University Square Stratford**

**Present:** Anulika Ajufo (Chair), Steven Armstrong, Amanda Broderick (Vice-Chancellor & President), Trevor Critchlow, Adam Doyle, Les Ebdon, John Garwood, Regina Everitt, Bindi Karia, Mottie Kessler, Jackie Craissati, Irfana Kottikulam-Aboobacker, Tommy MacDonnell, Lavanya Rajendran and Janette Withey

**In attendance:** Hassan Abdalla (Provost), Bugewa Apampa (Dean of the Office for Institutional Equity), Jim Benson (University Secretary), Verity Brown (PVC Impact and Innovation), Dean Curtis (DVC & Chief Finance Officer), Dalia Dasgupta (HR Director), Paul Marshall (PVC Careers and Enterprise), Ian Pickup (Chief Operating Officer) Vanessa Varvas (Chief Marketing Officer) and Scott Williams (Deputy Chief Marketing Officer)

**Officer:** Jane Thomas (Governance Manager)

**Apologies:** Ismail Amla and Janette Withey

**21/48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**48/01 NOTED:** there were no declarations of interest.

**21/49 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**49/01 RECEIVED:** a report from the University Secretary on the proposal for the appointment of the Chair.

**49/02 NOTED that:** the process for the appointment of the Chair was explained and it was noted that the two most suitable candidates had given a presentation at the Board Strategy Day. The attributes of the two candidates were discussed and it was agreed that while they demonstrated many qualities, one more so than the other, neither was deemed suitable for appointment.

**49/03 AGREED:** that the Board should not rush to make an appointment and agreed to have a period of time to reflect on possible options.

**49/04 NOTED that:** the Deputy Chair of the Board might be appointed as Chair on an interim basis for a period of up to a year while further options were considered. The Secretary stated that a proposal on possible options should first be considered by Governance and Search Committee a recommendation was presented to next meeting of the Board. He added that this may include a proposal to appoint the Deputy Chair as interim Chair. He added that feedback received from several Search Consultants indicated that if a diverse range of candidates were to be attracted to the position of Chair, then payment may need to be considered.

**49/05 AGREED:**

- a) that a proposal on the future arrangements for Chairing the Board would be considered by Governance and Search Committee and presented to the next meeting of the Board for approval.
- b) that consideration would also be given by Governance and Search Committee to the issue of remunerating the Chair.
- c) to appoint Jazz Bhogal as an independent member from 1 September 2022.

**21/50 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**50/01 RECEIVED and CONFIRMED:**

- a) the minutes of the meetings of the Board held on 23 November 2021 and 24 January 2022.

**21/51 MATTERS ARISING**

**51/01 NOTED that:**

- a) the appointment of the Chancellor had been covered when the Bye Laws and Standing Orders were approved in May 2021 but would be discussed at a future meeting of the Governance and Search Committee.
- b) it had been determined that the spin-out company was an unviable way to protect the IP. There had been a hiatus due to illness as the Professor involved had been on sick leave and was on a phased return to work. It was anticipated that a Knowledge Exchange partnership route would be investigated.
- c) a presentation on compliance training including Prevent had been provided at the Board Strategy Session.
- d) it had been confirmed that the weighting in relation to the KPIs for graduate progression were equally weighted. Strategic Planning had looked at various shifts of the weightings for both measures but there was

no noticeable difference in the results, so there was no argument to shift away from the equal weighting.

## **21/52 CHAIR'S ACTION**

**52/01 RECEIVED and NOTED:** a report from the University Secretary in relation to Chair's action which had been taken between meetings.

**52/02 NOTED:** that Chair's action had been taken to:

- a) appoint Steven Armstrong to the Board of Governors.
- b) appoint Mike Holt to the Board of Governors. However, it was noted that he had since declined to take up the appointment.
- c) to report an event to the OfS in relation to the UCFB opening a new campus
- d) to report an event to the OfS in relation to Metropolitan College, an institutional partner, opening up a campus in Patras, Greece.

## **21/53 REPORT OF BUSINESS DISCUSSED AT STANDING COMMITTEES**

**53/01 RECEIVED and NOTED:** a report from the Governance Manager on the business discussed at standing committees.

## **21/54 REPORT OF BUSINESS DISCUSSED AT THE TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS COMMITTEE**

**54/01 RECEIVED and NOTED:** a report from the Governance Manager on the business discussed at the Transformation Projects Committee.

**54/02 RECEIVED and NOTED:** a report from the Director of Projects and Estates Development on the Stratford Redevelopment.

**54/03 AGREED:** to support progress to full partner procurement stage with a view to approving the preferred partner at the July meeting of the Board and approving the confirmation of executing financial close in December 2022.

**54/04 RECEIVED and NOTED:** a report from the Head of Employer Partnerships Office and Director of Talent Gateway setting out a business case for the Royal Docks Centre for Sustainability.

**54/05 AGREED:** to approve the £4.4m investment for the Royal Docks Centre for Sustainability, subject to securing external funding support of £1.6m.

**21/55 OFS CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED NUMERICAL THRESHOLDS FOR MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES – UNIVERSITY RESPONSE**

**55/01 RECEIVED:** a report from the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, the Director of Strategic Planning and Head of Planning

**55/02 NOTED that:**

- a) the Provost spoke to the paper which summarised the changes proposed by the Office for Students (OfS) in consultations on a revised approach to regulating Student Outcomes (OfS Condition of Registration B3), the New Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and the Student Outcome and Experiences Data Indicators. The consultations closed on 17 March 2022 and the proposals were likely to be implemented with little amendment later in 2022. The proposals would allow the OfS to scrutinise all HEIs ability to meet the B3 Condition of Registration. Failure to do so could prompt investigations, have implications for participating in the TEF, bring degree awarding powers into question and not allow the higher Home undergraduate fees to be charged on particular courses and even be prevent eligibility for Student Loan funding.
- b) at a high-level, based on the dataset provided by the OfS so far, the University was exceeding the proposed thresholds in respect of the Student Outcomes for continuation, completion and progression for all six levels of study for full-time students except in two instances which were outlined in the paper. The University was also likely to meet the requirements for eligibility for participation in the TEF, noting that, in addition to the current ratings, a new 'requires improvement' category had been introduced.
- c) the PVC (Education & Experience) advised that the proposed new TEF would be based on a 4-year cycle and be at provider-level only, although it was unclear whether there will be an alternative mechanism to spotlight subject-level contribution. He added that future TEF awards would be based on Student Experience, focusing on the provider's teaching, learning, assessment and the educational environment, and Student Outcomes, focusing on the extent to which students succeed beyond their studies. It was noted that the indicators produced by the OfS for the Student Experience criterion would use the NSS results and require the University to adopt a targeted and tactical approach to ensure it was presented in the most advantageous position. The VCP stated that this should not be seen as a sign that all concerns relating to the Student Experience would not be addressed, but added the University could not be put at a disadvantage by not being selective with the use of metrics when it had the opportunity to do so.

**21/56 SCHOOL OF ARTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES**

**56/01 RECEIVED:** a presentation from the Dean of the School of Arts and Creative Industries.

**21/57 FINANCIAL POSITION**

**57/01 RECEIVED and NOTED:** a report on the Q2 financial position.

**21/58 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS**

**58/01 RECEIVED:** a report from the University Secretary on the appointment of external auditors and the approval of fees for 2020/21

**58/02 NOTED:** that the Board were asked to confirm the appointment of Buzzacott LLP as external auditors for the year ending July 2022. It was noted that it would be a three year contract, with a possible extension of two years, subject to them keeping within the provisions of the tender.

**58/03 AGREED:** to appoint Buzzacott LLP as external auditors.

**21/59 RISK MANAGEMENT**

**59/01 RECEIVED:** a report from the Head of Risk in relation to the top Institutional Risks with a deep dive as requested into four separate areas.

**59/02 NOTED:** that the report had been produced in accordance with the Risk Management Policy which had been approved in October 2021. A decision would need to be made as to how far along the risk maturity model the university wanted to progress. It was recognised that the risk register was a living document which would be adjusted as events happened. It was noted that the risk register had been reviewed by UEB and then the Audit and Risk Committee. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee welcomed any comments. The University Secretary advised that events in Ukraine would not doubt prompt some changes to the top risks, particularly in respect of cyber-security.

**59/03 RECEIVED:** a report from the Head of Risk on the full University Risk Register.

**59/04 NOTED:** that the University Risk Register for noting was required to be submitted annually to the Board. This was a 'live' document and therefore subject to change at regularly. In December 2021, UEL's Risk Review Group (RRG) was consulted on and agreed a revised risk management process and risk register template. The University Risk Register is currently in the process of being updated in line with these changes. The update is occurring per risk.

Reviewers will therefore note some risks and mitigations are more detailed than others

**59/05 AGREED:** that the Head of Risk should be congratulated on transforming the quality of reporting and understanding of risk at the University.

**59/06 AGREED:** that members of the Board should be invited to attend meetings of the RRG to have input on the assessment of risk.

#### **21/60 ANNUAL REPORT ON STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

**60/01 RECEIVED and NOTED:** a report and presentation from the Head of Complaints and Appeals and Investigations on the complaints and appeals received in 2020/21.

#### **21/61 INSTRUMENTS AND ARTICLES OF GOVERNMENT**

**61/01 RECEIVED:** a report from the University Secretary on the review of Instrument and Articles of Government.

**61/02 AGREED:** that any comments on the proposed revisions of the Instrument and Articles of Government to be provided to the University Secretary by the end of April 2022.

#### **21/62 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR FORTHCOMING ACADEMIC YEAR**

**62/01 RECEIVED and NOTED:** the proposed schedule of meetings for 2022/23.

#### **21/63 CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

**63/01 NOTED:** there was no Chair's business.

#### **21/64 REPORT OF BUSINESS DISCUSSED AT ACADEMIC BOARD**

**64/01 RECEIVED and NOTED:** a report from the Quality Assurance Officer on the business discussed at Academic Board held on 2 March 2022.

#### **21/65 ANNUAL CYCLE OF BUSINESS**

**65/01 RECEIVED and NOTED:** the annual cycle of business.

**21/66 USE OF THE CORPORATION'S SEAL**

**66/01 NOTED:** that the Corporation's Seal had not been used since the last meeting of the Board held on 23 November 2021.

**21/67 DATES OF MEETINGS**

**67/01 NOTED:** that the dates of meetings for 2021/22 were as follows:

24 May 2022

7 July 2022