

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the unreserved meeting of the Board of Governors on Wednesday 24 March 2021 from 4 - 7pm via remote video conference

<p>Present</p> <p>Andrew Summers (Chair) Andy Cook (Vice-Chancellor) Kion Ahadi (Independent Member) Zaid Al-Zaidy (Independent Member) Shoku Amirani (Independent Member) Kate Gregory (Independent Member) Helen Higson (Independent Member) Jon Kingsbury (Deputy Chair) Katharina Koall (Staff Representative Member) Lisa Mooney (Independent Member) Alex Phillips (Independent Member) Marta Phillips (Independent Member) Noeline Sanders (Independent Member) Samantha Silver (Staff Representative Member) Jo Stimpson (Independent Member) Jon Walmsley (Independent Member) Lee Wilkinson (Independent Member) Stephen Woodford (Independent Member)</p>
<p>In Attendance</p> <p>Christopher Costigan – University Secretary and Chief Compliance Officer Phil MacDonald – Director of Finance Gary Pritchard- Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic) Drew Robinson - Director Projects & Operations Emma Shailer- Director of Student Recruitment & Success</p> <p>Maureen Skinner – Clerk to the Board of Governors (minutes)</p> <p>Lance Bautisto – Vice President RSU</p> <p>Paul Sternberg – Director of Postgraduate Studies (<i>item 7 only</i>)</p>
<p>Apologies</p> <p>Fernando Modino (Student Union President)</p>

Actions : REDACTED

21/28	<p>The Chair welcomed members. He welcomed Lance Bautista, RSU Vice President, attending in place of the President Fernando Modino. REDACTED. Paul Sternberg would be attending for item 7 on the Institute for Creativity and Technology. He congratulated Kat Koall on her appointment as Interim Dean of Students and he thanked Maureen Skinner for staying on to continue to write the minutes of meetings.</p> <p>REDACTED.</p>
	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</p>
21/29	<p>Members were reminded to declare any interests, personal or financial, that might relate to the business shown on the agenda for the meeting. No such declarations were made.</p>
	<p>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</p>
21/30	<p>Members were asked to note the shaded elements of the minutes which would be redacted prior to publication on the website. The action list shows updated actions, which were all covered off or partially completed.</p>
	<p>CHAIR'S UPDATE</p>
21/31	<p>The Chair confirmed with the Board their approval to appoint Helen Higson as Deputy Chair for two years upon the retirement of the current Vice-Chair, and noted this was particularly timely as Helen has just stepped down as Deputy Vice Chancellor at Aston University. The Chair also announced that Noeline Sanders will take over Chair of the Audit Committee upon the retirement from the Board of Marta Phillips. It was noted that Lisa Mooney had tendered her resignation from the Board due to work pressures and the Board would be seeking to replace Lisa with someone with a research background.</p>
21/32	<p>The Chair reported that the government was urging universities back to campus. The main issue facing the sector currently was the USS pension scheme. UKRI was under pressure financially, although most of the sector was remarkably stable financially. Postgraduate recruitment nationally was good. Several universities were considering changes to their physical estate in the wake of the pandemic. There is a need for Ravensbourne to continue to manage its financial sustainability. And the postgraduate portfolio is in need of further attention.</p>
	<p>VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT</p>
21/33	<p>The Vice-Chancellor introduced his report to the Board. On site lateral flow testing had begun on 8 March 21 when many students on creative courses with a practical element had returned to campus for face to face teaching. The university had achieved success with its partners as it had been shortlisted, in the final 10, for the XPRIZE. REDACTED the Institute for Creativity and Technology will be open for occupation in the summer. REDACTED</p>
21/34	<p>REDACTED</p>

<p>21/35</p> <p>21/36</p> <p>21/37</p>	<p>Members asked about the position in relation to the NSS. The survey responses had now exceeded the 50% threshold. It was clear that students feel their university experience had been disrupted. REDACTED the feedback on Architecture had improved. Much work had been done on staff management. It was noted that the NSS was a sector-wide problem this year and also that the NSS itself being reviewed. The impact of the pandemic on student mental health was a continuing concern.</p> <p>The return to the building was discussed. All returning staff were required to take a lateral flow test before entering the building. Members asked about the rights of staff in relation to testing and it was noted that the university had taken legal advice.</p> <p>REDACTED</p> <p>Other issues raised in discussion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The COVID support funding from OfS for students • The funding amounted to £180k and had to be distributed by 31 March 2021 • Recruitment relating to the traditional portfolio • REDACTED • Perception gap for students relating to NSS and the need to demonstrate what had been done to address issues • The possibility of a buddying scheme for BAME students • The safety of women on returning to campus • The great news about the XPRIZE • Data on lateral flow test results was not retained by the university <p>The VC reported that regular meetings were held to ensure that the student voice was heard. There was also a student parliament.</p>
	<p>RSU UPDATE</p>
<p>21/38</p>	<p>The RSU Vice President reported that the annual elections had taken place and both the new President and Vice President were women (Zhara Shahsavari and Michele Desfontaine respectively) . Several events and activities had taken place. The SU had acquired 30 Zoom licences from the University. Training had taken place for the RSU Angels and their profiles published online. Several fora had taken place relating to equality and diversity. Collaboration continues with Native events and these have been well received. Welfare and representation remain as core themes for the SU. A women’s working group had been established. RSU were in discussions with other student unions, in particular SOAS and Plymouth. A recent ‘Make it in industry event’ had featured professional photographer Isha Shah.</p>
	<p>INSTITUTE FOR CREATIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY</p>
<p>21/39</p>	<p>The Chair welcomed Paul Sternberg to the meeting. The PVC Academic introduced the presentations. He reported that it was hoped that the July Board would be able to take place in the new building. He thanked Vice Chair of the Board, Jon Kingsbury, for his early and continuing support for the project. He also thanked PVC Lawrence Zeegen for leading on the project until recently. The main problem for postgraduate recruitment had been the impact of COVID which had affected the January starts. Several postgraduate programmes had been renamed to help with marketing. There was a pivot to business management and computer science with the new portfolio. Branding had moved to postgraduate students rather than a graduate school. There was an aim to respond to global issues by means of professorial lectures and other one-off events</p>

21/40	<p><i>Revised business case</i></p> <p>The Director of Finance introduced the business case. The university was half way through the fit out of the building. The original business case had been approved in July 2019 and the current business case reflected the change of building, from D4 to A1 on the site. This had produced an extra 27% of space. Fit out amounted to £1,892k. REDACTED Payback was forecast as three years and 11 months with a minimum of 137 postgraduate students to break even.</p>
21/41	<p><i>Postgraduate portfolio</i></p> <p>The Director of Recruitment and Student Success presented the portfolio. REDACTED</p>
21/42	<p>Paul Sternberg introduced the planned postgraduate programmes. He spoke of the ‘golden thread’ and the Danish design ladder: nothing, aesthetics, process, strategy, systemic change and culture. Design has societal impact. A postgraduate forum is planned for 8 April, to which the governors are invited. Institute opening is scheduled for 8 May. A shared curriculum is planned with a number of elements: learning through projects, working in teams, external partners and clients, problem solving and hybrid learning.</p>
21/43	<p><i>Research vision and REF</i></p> <p>The PVC Academic reported that the REF submission is imminent. It would be the first time Ravensbourne has entered as its research culture was developed. It was now an important aspect of the university’s strategy. The REF results will be published at the end of 2021. Some staff had been appointed on research-only contracts. Both pedagogic research and inclusivity were key elements. He thanked Lisa Mooney for her support, who noted that innovation comes through excellence in research. The university had a good postgraduate basis and the Institute would be a key driver. Lisa Mooney offered to continue to help with advice and would send more detailed comments to the PVC Academic.</p>
21/44	<p><i>Building fit out update</i></p> <p>The presentation would be circulated after the meeting due to time pressures at the meeting.</p> <p>Action: presentation to be circulated after the meeting</p>
21/45	<p>In discussion the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increase in costs of the Institute (due to larger building being leased) will need to be kept under review • List of courses looked very good • The possibility of short courses REDACTED • Which other institutions were planning in these spaces • Competitors tended not to be in the creative sector of HE
	<p>DRAFT STRATEGY KPIs</p>
21/46	<p>The Vice-Chancellor presented the draft KPIs. There are nine super-KPIs with five year goals. Underpinning the super-KPIs will be separate strategies. Members queried why student recruitment was not a super-KPI and it was noted that this was integrated into the financial KPIs and student numbers would underpin those super-KPIs. Members welcomed the KPIs. It was noted that further commentary would be added subsequently. Benchmarking and annual trajectory to 2023 would also be added.</p>

	Action: further detail on KPIs including commentary and benchmarking
	OFS CONSUMER PROTECTION REVIEW
21/47	<p>The University Secretary and Chief Compliance Officer introduced the OfS Consumer Protection Review. The review demonstrated the university is compliant with OfS Condition of Registration C1 and the risk profile is low. It was noted that the possibility to return to face-to-face teaching from 8 March 21 for students on creative courses had a positive impact on the ability to provide assurance.</p> <p>Helen Higson suggested more detail on assessment to more explicitly draw that out.</p> <p>Action: more explicit detail on the assessment section of the OfS condition C1</p>
	COMMITTEE REPORTS
21/48	<p><i>Audit Committee</i></p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee asked members to note that two internal audit reports had been considered at its meeting. Internal audit planning is on track for completion in 2020-21.</p>
21/49	<p><i>Finance Committee</i></p> <p>The finance update had been uploaded to the governors' portal. The Chair invited members to note the recruitment report. Since the meeting the university had learned that its SALIX bid for funding had been successful, which was very good news.</p>
21/50	<p><i>OD and Remuneration Committee</i></p> <p>The Chair noted that appraisals were now substantially in hand. More was being done with a smaller budget, which was a concern. The emerging organisational development agenda revealed work to be done on organisational culture. It was important to know what success would look like in this area.</p>
21/51	<p><i>Academic Board</i></p> <p>On external regulatory matter, the Degree Outcome Statement was approved, with some minor changes. This will go on the website and will be submitted for noting at the next Board. Overall it was positive, but did note the high number of firsts which Ravensbourne awards. It was noted that the NSS response rate has now passed the 50% mark. On internal regulation, a set of Emergency Regulations were introduced to enable the university to make temporary changes in a more flexible way to respond to the pandemic or other threats (e.g. terror). General Regulations will be reviewed and codified into a single Regulatory Handbook for September 21. The idea of a common academic framework was introduced by the PVC Academic, for full review at the Academic Board, which was well received. It was noted that this will be used as a vehicle to assist with the high number of firsts currently awarded.</p>
	BOARD CALENDAR
21/52	<p>The number of meetings for 2021-22 had been reduced. It was planned that the September 21 meeting would be an Away Day starting at 12 noon with dinner afterwards.</p>

	For the rest of this year, the meeting on 5 May 21 will be an update, mostly via presentations, focussing on the student experience. No minutes or papers will be presented. The meeting on 14 July 21 is planned to take place at the Institute of Creativity and Technology, followed by drinks.
	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
21/53	The Chair asked the Board to thank the retiring members. He thanked Lisa Mooney for her help on research and innovation and hoped she would stay in touch. He thanked Marta Phillips for seven years as a governor, including being Chair of the Audit Committee. She had helped steer the university through some challenging times. Finally, he thanked the Vice Chair, Jon Kingsbury, for his knowledge and commercial experience. His presence had been pivotal during some difficult years. Jon Kingsbury noted that he was pleased to see the university in such good hands including the Chair, the governors, the Vice Chancellor and the executive.
	DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING
21/54	The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 5 May from 4.30-6pm.