

Board of Governors

TIME /DATE / VENUE	1130, 3 July 2024, Room 4.18, St Andrew's Court Board Room
PRESIDENT	<p>David Willan (Chair)</p> <p>Professor Graham Galbraith</p> <p>Claudia Iton</p> <p>Liz Jolly</p> <p>Christopher Williams (from Minute 87)</p> <p>David Madoc-Jones</p> <p>Madeline Denmead</p> <p>Dr Adrian Hull</p> <p>Dr Michelle Hale</p> <p>Bahram Bekhradnia (by videoconference)</p> <p>Marija Solic (by videoconference)</p> <p>Professor Sandy Pepper</p> <p>Stacey Parrinder-Johnson</p> <p>Sukkanya Siva</p> <p>Mark Readman</p> <p>Becky Miles</p> <p>Roger Burke-Hamilton</p> <p>Vineet Khurana (by videoconference) (Minutes 86 to 93, 95 to 96 and 98 to 120)</p> <p>Alan Lees (to Minute 97)</p>
IN ATTENDANCE	<p>Professor Sherria Hoskins, Provost</p> <p>Fiona Hnatow, Chief People Officer (to Minute 96)</p> <p>Chris Chang, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Student Life)</p> <p>Professor Jeremy Howells, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Innovation and External Relations)</p> <p>Professor Anne Murphy, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)</p> <p>Mary White, Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>Jonathan Sandling, UoP London Campus Principal (Minute 86 only)</p> <p>Wayne Bowen, Deputy Chief People Officer (Minute 87 only)</p> <p>James Morris, Head of Reward and Recognition (Minute 87 only)</p> <p>Fiona Loughran, Director of Planning (Minutes 88 and 90 only)</p>
SECRETARIAT	<p>Peter Aldred, Interim Executive Director of Corporate Governance</p> <p>Annette Mills, Head of Corporate Governance</p> <p>Jacqui Bryden, Senior Governance Officer</p>

Some agenda items were taken out of order to facilitate timing and the availability of members and guests.

86. Introductions, Apologies, Quoracy and Conflicts of Interest

- i. The Chair welcomed the following to their first Board meeting:
 - Peter Aldred as Interim Executive Director of Corporate Governance (Clerk to the Board of Governors);
 - Marija Solic, the new UPSU Elected Officer (attending remotely);
 - Sukanya Siva, External Governor
- ii. Apologies were received from Penny Emerit and David Wilding, External Governors and Morgan Lowman, Student Governor.
- iii. The Executive Director of Corporate Governance confirmed that the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.
- iv. The following declarations of interest were noted:
 - David Willan had been a Director of Portsmouth Football Club until August 2017 and was now a President of its Heritage and Advisory Board.
 - Alan Lees is the Chief Executive of KCG Audit Limited that provided internal audit services to HEIs.

87. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - confidential

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record.

88. Matters Actioned and Matters Arising

Action was reported on nine matters; six were for note, two had been circulated electronically for approval and one to be received at a future meeting. There were no other matters arising.

89. Report from the Chair

The Board received an oral report from the Chair. The following key points were noted:

- i. The meeting had a strong financial focus and future meetings would include Research, an update on our people and culture in the context of Reset, the Board Effectiveness review and the continuing relevance of the University Strategy. The Board Effectiveness review had received a response of nearly 100% from governors.
- ii. The Chair expressed thanks to those Board members who had written to their MPs about the recent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) Review of the graduate visa route to support the system in place. The Chair thanked governors for their support of the Vice-Chancellor during Reset and to the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Governance for acting into the role for a temporary period.
- iii. Two external governors would be leaving the Board shortly and there would be thirteen external governors. Four were due to leave in 2025 and it would be important to commence external governor recruitment.
- iv. The University sponsored the front shirts of the Portsmouth Football Club men's and women's teams and as both teams had been very successful, increased television coverage would increase the profile of the University. The sponsorship of Portsmouth

Football Club provided a broad range of other collaborative opportunities across the University.

90. Report from the Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor and senior postholders provided an update on issues affecting the sector and the University. The following key points were noted:

- i. The letters that Board members from across the University and other HEIs had written to MPs had made a difference to the outcome of the MAC Review. Global governments appeared to be more aware of the value of international students in research and growth.
- ii. Higher education had not been a key part of the general election campaign for any of the parties although engagement with the shadow cabinet had indicated that there might be early action. Concerns had been expressed in discussion with them about the HE sector, in particular, the possibility of a University closure and the financial issues.
- iii. The University had recently acquired the LSI Building which would provide necessary space for UPSU during the building works.
- iv. The direction of travel for the University was good and the University had maintained its position in the Complete University Guide in 2024 in the top 50 and was 104th in the World Young University Ranking for 2024, however the challenges of the past year would continue to affect the University.
- v. It was noted that consideration was being given to expanding current areas of the curriculum.
- vi. Due to the Reset Programme, the University had ended the year in a better position than anticipated. The forecast deficit had reduced from £30m to below £3m. It was important to thank the hard work and co-operation of colleagues to move into the new academic year with confidence. Focus would be on improving continuation rates, maintenance of staff morale, and increasing applications and success rates.
- vii. There had been some student protests across the sector regarding the war in Gaza. A student camp to support the Palestinians had been quickly disestablished by working with students to discuss their concerns and acknowledge the right to protest. The University had agreed with student representatives to review investment policies and to listen to other suggestions and make operational changes where possible.
- viii. The litigation with Innovate had been concluded and the University would continue to recover costs from the litigant and to work with the University insurers to settle the claim following the dismissal of the appeal.
- ix. The University had recently achieved the silver award from Athena Swan following encouragement from the People, Culture and Engagement Committee. The project team had been led by three co-chairs who had collaborated across the University to achieve the award.
- x. The national pay award had not yet been agreed because UCEA was continuing discussion and meetings with the Trades Unions. The negotiation outcomes were expected to be announced shortly and were expected to be within budget.
- xi. The Graduate Outcomes Survey results were expected shortly and would be analysed so that Course Leaders would know their positions and to be able to take appropriate action before the start of the 2024/2025 academic year.

- xii. There had been 75 applications for promotion to Associate Professor this year of which 28 were successful: 16 women and 12 men. There had been 33 applications for promotion to Professor of which six women and seven men had been successful.
- xiii. In discussion, governors noted that it would be helpful to arrange training sessions for Board members during the next year regarding the differing facets of the University's peers and competitors as well as training on research activities and updates on the external context.

91. University Budget 2024/2025 – confidential

92. University Management Accounts Update – confidential

93. Reset Savings Programme Update - confidential

94. London Campus Update – confidential

95. Pension Model Proposals – confidential

96. Student Recruitment Update

Fiona Loughran, Director of Planning provided an update on the potential student recruitment position for 2024/2025. The key points noted were:

- i. The student recruitment market remained uncertain and subject to frequent change. The targets were realistic in the challenging circumstances for 2024/25 onwards by faculty, mode and level.
- ii. Growth has been included to develop the home degree apprenticeships in 2024/2025 and the OfS has provided £800k of funding.
- iii. Potential recruitment has been modelled across all categories in detail to include a number of variables. Current recruitment was fairly close to target for home students. International student recruitment was positive although not all offers were confirmed. The offer of student accommodation in the first year was a significant benefit.
- iv. Actions to maximise recruitment would include careful management of Clearing, targeted marketing campaigns, and addressing student indecision and government rhetoric to manage expectations. Predictions remained difficult to make.
- v. There were a high number of insurance applications at this time.
- vi. In discussion it was noted that:
 - a) The targets were realistic and it was difficult to predict the recruitment behaviour of Russell Group universities which had been predatory in recent years. The reduced tariff would increase recruitment.
 - b) The A-level results had returned to pre-Covid 19 levels. There was a growth in applications from 18-year olds and a decline in applications from 25-years old +.

- c) The number of female student recruits was 47% compared to 56% in the sector. The male to female balance of student recruits would be addressed in the Access and Participation Plan. The data would be provided at the next Board.

Action: Director of Planning

- d) A focus on targeted and robust marketing campaigns were important to increase student recruitment from within the region.

vii. Following discussion, the Board:

- a) Noted the estimates of potential student recruitment compared to target for different student categories.
- b) Noted that uncertainty remained in some categories of recruitment, in particular international student recruitment although a change in government following the general election might result in a less hostile environment for international student recruitment.
- c) Noted that considerable work was ongoing in faculties and relevant professional services to boost late applications, Clearing applications and the conversion of applications for 2024/25.

97. Graduate Outcomes Survey 2024 Summary

Professor Anne Murphy, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) presented the results of the Graduate Outcomes Survey 2024 which was published on 19 June 2024. The data is based on the students who graduated in 2021/2021.

- i. The Board noted that the Graduate Outcomes Survey was carried out on behalf of universities by HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) and reported on the early career destinations of university students fifteen months after they had graduated. The survey asked recent graduates if they were in employment, self-employment, further study or something else, and asked graduates to reflect on how their education had contributed to their career destination.
- ii. The Board noted the report.

98. Key Performance Indicators

Fiona Loughran, Director of Planning, presented a report on the University key performance indicators (KPIs) that reviewed the University's current performance using RAG ratings alongside indicators of the direction of travel. The key points noted were:

- i. Progress had been reported regularly to the Board and the update included information up to June 2024. Student recruitment remained of concern. The other three strategic imperatives indicated improvement in most areas since their introduction in 2021.
- ii. The University had improved its ranking in the Guardian league table to the 4th top

modern university and the classification for 2025 would be released in September 2024.

- iii. The Times Higher Education Young Universities ranking had improved from 132nd to 104th.
- iv. In discussion it was noted that:
 - a) The awarding gap had continued to widen and would be addressed through the implementation of the Access and Participation Plan. Each school would provide an action plan to address this metric. The metric had improved during the pandemic and it was important to address and improve the gap. The data provided for a simple comparator to identify the awarding gap and there would be a deeper analysis of the data to provide accuracy and the reasons for the gap that should be addressed. The awarding gap persisted across the sector regardless of entry level.
 - b) The definition of a modern university was considered to be post-92 universities. There would be new dashboards introduced to benchmark specifically against other post-92 universities.
 - c) The target to achieve a climate positive University by 2030 would be set when the next University Strategy was reviewed and updated.
- v. Following discussion, the Board:
 - a) Noted and welcomed the University's overall progress with the implementation of Strategy 2025.
 - b) Noted the areas of risk identified.

99. Portsmouth Technopole Limited Update - confidential

100. Appointment of the External Auditors

Mary White, Chief Financial Officer, presented a report on the recommendation from the Audit and Risk Committee to appoint KPMG LLP to report on the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2024, including the University's UK based subsidiary companies.

The Board approved the recommendation and noted that the contract would be re-tendered in 2025.

The Board received the following reports in correspondence by electronic circulation for approval on 26 June 2024.

A simple majority of twelve governors were required to respond positively to gain the necessary approval.

[Post-meeting note: Twelve governors confirmed approval of the reports by 16 July 2024].

101. Constitutional and Membership Matters – confidential

102. Academic Council Terms of Reference Update

The report invited the Board to approve the changes to the membership of the Academic Council as of 19 March 2024 and 18 June 2024.

103. Financial Regulations Update

The report asked the Board to approve the University's Financial Regulations.

104. Freedom of Speech - confidential

105. Access and Participation Plan

The report asked the Board to approve the Plan for submission to the OfS.

106. Annual Review of 2015 to 2025 Accommodation Strategy

The report asked the Board:

- i. To note the current challenges for accommodation planning and provision.
- ii. To note the approach for 2024/25.
- iii. To note the start of negotiations with Yugo for the 2027/28 onwards nomination agreement.
- iv. To note agreement with Unite for 2027/28 nomination levels required during 2024/25.
- v. To agree that Bateson remained open for the foreseeable future with a year-on-year review.
- vi. To note the options for St Georges Building.
- vii. To note the requirement for continued close engagement and collaborations across all UoP departments.
- viii. For Estates and Campus Services to carry out an accommodation review in June 2025.

107. Eldon Multi-Storey Car Park Project Update Report - confidential

108. Renewal of Leases – confidential

The Board received and noted the following reports in correspondence on 26 June 2024 by electronic circulation:

109. The University's Corporate Risk Register

The report had been received by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting on 22 May 2024. The Board noted:

- i. The updated corporate risk register.
- ii. The operational risks that exceeded the University's risk appetite and would be subject to review between UEB members and their subordinate risk holders.
- iii. The generic feedback to risk holders regarding operational risks.

110. Harassment and Sexual Misconduct: The Seven OfS Expectations Update

The Board noted the progress made by the University towards addressing the seven OfS expectations for preventing and responding to incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct.

111. Campus and Estates Update

The Board noted the report.

The Board received and noted the following reports in correspondence on 26 June 2024 by electronic circulation and accepted the work of the committees as reported.

112. Remuneration Committees Chair's Report

For the meeting held on 9 April 2024.

113. Audit and Risk Committee Chair's Report

For the meeting held on 22 May 2024.

114. Infrastructure and Finance Committee Chairs Report

For the meeting held on 19 June 2024.

115. People, Culture and Engagement Committee Chair's Report

For the meeting held on 16 May 2024.

116. Academic Council Chair's Report

For the meeting held on 19 March 2024.

117. Academic Council

The draft minutes of 19 March 2024 were circulated electronically on 23 April 2024.

118. UPSU Review of 2023/2024

The UPSU Elected Officers provided a review of achievements during their elected year for note.

119. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Governors would take place on

- Wednesday 9 October 2024 from 1130 to 1630

The confirmed meeting dates for 2024/2025:

- Wednesday 27 November 2024 from 1130 to 1630

- Wednesday 22 January 2025 from 1130 to 1630
- Tuesday 25 March 2025 from 1130 to 1630
- Wednesday 2 July 2025 from 1130 to 1630

The confirmed meeting dates for 2025/2026:

- Wednesday 8 October 2025 from 1130 to 1630
- Wednesday 26 November 2025 from 1130 to 1630
- Wednesday 28 January 2026 from 1130 to 1630
- Wednesday 25 March 2026 from 1130 to 1630
- Wednesday 1 July 2026 from 1130 to 1630

120. Vote of Thanks

Vineet Khurana

Having joined in August 2020, Vineet had decided not to proceed to a second term of office due to his work commitments beyond 31 July 2024. Vineet had been a member of the Infrastructure and Finance Committee since September 2020 and also a member of the Nominations Committee since July 2023. The Board noted his contribution to the Board and Committees, expressed its thanks and wished him all the best for his future endeavours.

David Wilding (in absentia)

David's second term of office would end on 31 July 2024, having joined the University on 1 August 2018. David had been a member of the People, Culture and Engagement Committee since December 2019 and the governor member on the Sports Centre project. As a local resident, David had been very helpful and had signed many deeds under seal at short notice. With his knowledge of social media, David had worked with the communications and media teams and provided insightful commentary about social media engagement. The Board noted his significant contribution to the Board and Committees, expressed its thanks and wished him all the best with his future endeavours.