



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the meeting held at 1.30pm on Wednesday 18 March 2026

Present:	James Boyes, Professor Sam Broadhead, Professor Patsy Cullen (Chair), John Gribbon, James Lord, Neil Parkinson, Professor John Pymm (Senior Independent Governor), Sneha Khilay, Kerry Richardson, Noelle Rumball, David Strachan and Professor Simone Wonnacott (Vice-Chancellor).
In attendance:	Sharon Bailey (Pro-Vice-Chancellor Registry and CFO), Jenni Hearnshaw (Secretary to the Vice-Chancellor), Professor Dave Russell (Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education).

		Action
B25/80	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received from Professor Mykaell Riley, Lisa Green, Richard Dawson and Joan Matthews.</p> <p>Board members welcomed Kerry Richardson, Student Governor.</p>	
B25/81	<p>Declarations of interest The standing declarations of interest as circulated were noted. The Chair declared an interest in the item on the Chair's Performance Review and left the meeting.</p>	
B25/82	<p>Chairs Performance Review Professor John Pymm provided an overview of the comments and feedback received in relation to the Chair's performance, noting that Board members had responded positively.</p> <p>Noelle Rumball joined the meeting.</p> <p>Feedback indicated that the pre-Board meetings were having a positive impact, meetings are regarded as inclusive forums, with the Chair facilitating effectively. Meetings flowed effectively. Board members commented that the open-ended nature of the questions supported narrative responses, but more specific questions may be helpful, as would including feedback from the Senior Management Team.</p> <p>The Board of Governors agreed that the questionnaire and who completed it would be reviewed.</p> <p>The Chair rejoined the meeting</p>	Clerk
	Minutes	
B25/83	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2026 The Board of Governors approved the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2026.</p>	
B25/84	Action plan update and matters arising	

	Board members received the action plan, noting that the two outstanding actions were not yet due.	
	CEO's report and strategic planning	
B25/85	<p>Chief Executive's report The Vice-Chancellor presented the CEO's update for March 2026, highlighting the key points.</p> <p>In response to questions from Board members, the circulation of the postgraduate survey results was confirmed. It was noted that a number of actions have been implemented in response to the outcomes. The response rate to the survey was low.</p> <p>Board members noted the successes included within the report.</p> <p>The Board of Governors received and noted the CEO's report.</p>	
	Academic matters	
B25/86	<p>Academic Board Report: December 2025 The Vice-Chancellor presented the minutes from the Academic Board meeting held on 10 December 2025 and highlighted the key points.</p> <p>Board members discussed degree classifications.</p> <p>The Board of Governors received and noted the Academic Board report for December 2025.</p>	
B25/87	<p>Assurance Report: Academic Governance The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Registry and CFO presented the Academic Governance report for 2024/25 and highlighted the key points.</p> <p>Board members attention was drawn to graduate outcomes, with it noted that the current environment remains challenging.</p> <p>Student complaints were noted to be low.</p> <p>In response to questions, it was noted that progression to highly skilled employment included those setting up their own businesses, and that the Office for National Statistics is updating the Standard Occupational Classification codes. The Board discussed how employability is addressed at many points across the student experience.</p> <p>The Board of Governors received and noted the Academic Governance report for 2024/25.</p>	
	Financial matters	
B25/88	<p>Management accounts for the period to 31 January 2026 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Registry and CFO presented the management accounts for the period ending 31 January 2026, noting an improved position since November 2025.</p> <p>The Board of Governors received and noted the management accounts for the period to 31 January 2026.</p>	
	Compliance	

B25/89	<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2024/25 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education presented the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report for 2024/25 highlighting the key points.</p> <p>Board members noted diversity across the themes highlighted as a positive feature.</p> <p>The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education noted that degree gaps by characteristics are monitored and reviewed through the monitoring of the Access and Participation Plan.</p> <p>The Board of Governors received and noted the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2024/25.</p>	
B25/90	<p>HR Annual Report 2024/25 The Vice-Chancellor presented the HR Annual Report for 2024/25.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor noted that any cases involving ACAS are reviewed at a senior level.</p> <p>The Board of Governors received and noted the HR Annual Report 2024/25.</p>	
B25/91	<p>The Students' Union Constitution and Code The Vice-Chancellor presented the Students' Union Constitution and Code, outlining the reasons for the proposed changes.</p> <p>The student governor offered observations regarding the clarity of the promotion of the student governor role. The Vice-Chancellor noted that promotion for next year's student positions have been revised to provide full role information, and certain roles will include an interview process prior to appointment to the Board.</p> <p>The Board of Governors approved the amendments to the Students' Union Constitution and Code.</p>	
Governance		
B25/92	<p>Governance and Nominations Committee 21 January 2026 The Chair presented the Governance and Nominations Committee minutes from the meeting on the 21 January 2026.</p>	
B25/93	<p>Student Governor Appointment The Vice-Chancellor presented the report on a student governor appointment.</p> <p>The Board of Governors approved the appointment of Gabe Kirkman as a Student Governor until 31 July 2026, subject to satisfactory fit and proper persons checks.</p>	
B25/94	<p>Annual Review of Confidential Minutes The Board of Governors reviewed the confidential minutes and approved the highlighted minutes to be released into the public domain.</p>	
B25/95	<p>Governance Report The Board of Governors received the governance report, reporting that no actions had taken place.</p>	

B25/96	<p>Schedule of Board of Governors and Committee meeting dates 2026/27 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Registry and CFO presented the Board of Governors and Committee meeting dates for 2026/27, it was noted that the exact timing of the April 2027 meeting may change.</p> <p>The Board of Governors approved the meeting dates for 2026/27.</p>	
	Documents/links from outside bodies2026.	
B25/97	<p>Report on Documents/links from outside bodies The Board of Governors received, for information, the report containing links to relevant documents from HE sector bodies and regulatory authorities. The document from the OfS requesting further financial information from all universities in the sector was highlighted.</p>	
	Final matters	
B25/98	<p>Any other business There was no other business.</p>	
B25/99	<p>Risk Management The risks surrounding the current situation in the Middle East and the risk around increased energy costs was discussed.</p> <p>It was confirmed that following the outbreak of meningitis in Kent, information has been circulated to students.</p>	
B25/100	Date of next meeting: Wednesday 29 April 2026 from 11am until 5pm (Governor lunch and development session)	
	The meeting closed at 3.02pm.	