

THE MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 APRIL 2024

Present: Simon Duffy (Chair)
Philippa Anderson
Sean Anstee
Saeed Atcha
Dr David Birch
Professor Darren Dancey
Andy Forbes
Kate Green
Professor Hannah Holmes
Professor Julie Scott Jones
Bridget Lea
Jill McCormack
Professor Malcolm Press
Sandesh Punhani
Nick Read
Ethan Romer
Miles Rothbury
Simon Rutter
Ian Smyth
Karen Varty

In attendance: Andrew Hewett (Chief Financial Officer)
Professor Karen Moore (Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to the Board)
Professor Steve Rothberg (Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor)
Pam Aspden (Interim Head of Governance and Secretariat)

Professor Jenny Watling, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International), for minute 2152
Professor Jenny Watling, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International and Naheed Nazir (Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) for minute 2153
Professor Nick Brook, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Sam Gray, Director of (Research and Innovation) for minute 2154

2149 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Saeed Atcha. was welcomed to his first meeting as a Co-opted Governor.

Apologies for absence were received from Carlo Frondaroli and Andrew Heyn.

2150 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Board members were invited to declare any possible conflicts of interest on any matters being discussed at the meeting. None were declared.

2151 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BRIEFING

The Vice-Chancellor presented a report on the latest University developments (BG/24/15). The key points of discussion included the following:

2151.1 Internationalisation

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the importance of international matters to the sector in light of the government's Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) and continued media coverage of migration issues. The outcomes from the MAC, which were expected in May, could potentially impact upon International students' perception of the UK as a welcoming country as well as on their opportunities to study and work here if the graduate study route visa requirements were changed. Universities UK (UUK) was working proactively to ensure that the government was fully aware of the value of international students to the economy and society. Governors undertook to support the University in highlighting to their networks the positive benefits that international students brought to higher education, the economy and society.

2151.2 Sector Update

The Vice-Chancellor updated the Board on sector developments, including the financial pressures currently experienced by a number of institutions. Manchester Met remained in a positive financial position and continued to balance its ambition against opportunities for further productivity and efficiency gains, in both Professional Services functions and teaching delivery. The Professoriate recruitment campaign was launching today and was an example of the University's focus and ambition in reputation and capacity-building.

2151.3 Bicentenary Celebrations

The Vice-Chancellor updated the Board on the University's Bicentenary celebrations, including the Vice-Chancellor's lunches with staff which were providing valuable opportunities for engagement.

2151.4 Other Items

The Vice-Chancellor also updated the Board on Office for Students (OfS) developments, Degree Apprenticeships, research grant capture, the Employee Voice survey, external visits and engagement and the recent remembrance celebration of former Vice-Chancellor, Dame Sandra Burslem.

Governors placed on record their thanks to Professor Press for the comprehensive update and congratulated him on his appointment as Vice President of UUK.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

2152 ANNUAL INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY UPDATE 2022/23

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor International presented the Annual Internationalisation Strategy Update (BG/24/16). The Strategy's four key priorities were:

- To increase the international student community, on and off campus.
- Continued expansion of the portfolio of high-quality international partnerships.
- A high-quality international education for all students.
- To increase actively engaged international alumni & leverage development opportunities.

It was noted that, overall, the University had made excellent progress against the ambitions of the Internationalisation Strategy and was demonstrating growth in student numbers and fee income, both on and off campus. Whilst continuing to build its reputation and on track to achieve recruitment targets, the University was mindful of the factors which might impact progress, including current government agendas, media coverage and economic volatility in some key markets.

Governors asked about the main challenges impacting the University's Internationalisation Strategy, including: the potential impact of the review of the graduate study visa route; entry qualifications and attainment gaps; and the increasing use of technology in teaching. There was also a discussion about size and shape and cohort diversity. Governors were reassured that the University was undertaking continuous evaluation, reviewing its strategy, and planning to ensure continued success in this key area.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

2153 ANNUAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) REPORT 2022/23

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor International, together with the Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, presented the Annual EDI Report (BG/24/17). The report set out the University's objectives, which centred on:

- Leadership, culture & governance.
- Inclusive employee lifecycle.
- Inclusive student experience.
- Celebrating diversity.

The main achievements to date were:

- The embedding of a new governance structure, with clear engagement across the institution.
- Focus on creating an intentionally inclusive culture.
- Review and development of the EDI training offer.
- Development of EDI dashboards to ensure identification of challenges, progress tracking and the effective focus of resources.

Governors asked about the work that was being done to address student attainment gaps and improve graduate outcomes for students from less advantaged backgrounds. Assurance was given that work was ongoing with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education on the entire student experience. In the meantime, tailored support was already in place in areas such as: study skills; peer mentoring; personal tutoring; extensive careers guidance (throughout students' studies); and internships.

Governors commended the team for the clear report and the strong progress that had been made in analysing the issues and addressing the challenges. It was requested that future reports should include progress over time to illustrate progress in all of the metrics. Analysis of socio-economic data relating to staff as well as students, together with intersectionality on career progression, was also suggested as a future area of focus.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

2154 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION: DEFINITIONS AND TARGETS

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research, together with the Director of Research and Innovation presented revised definitions and targets for research and innovation activities as part of the University's Road to 2030 Strategy (BG/24/18) for consideration.

It was noted that the previous targets caused confusion due to overlapping research and knowledge exchange definitions. The proposed new definitions provided clarity on what constituted research and innovation and how they could be applied. Alongside this, the targets had been reviewed based on performance against benchmark groups, creating greater transparency. Extensive consultation had been undertaken, the proposals had the full support of the research community and leadership, and made it easier for the University to analyse progress and develop action plans where needed.

RESOLVED

that the revised research and innovation key performance targets be approved.

2155 STUDENT VOICE

The Students' Union President and Students' Union Education Officer presented an update on Students' Union activities and priorities (BG/24/19), including:

- Representation.
- Campaigns.
- Cost of living.
- Resit opportunities for international students.
- Students' Union Democracy.
- Appointment of a new Students' Union Chief Executive Officer.

Governors' feedback was requested on the content and format of the report. The updated format was welcomed, and it was suggested that consideration could be given to including information on the Officers' main concerns and successes in future reports. It was also noted that the regular meetings between students and a sub group of Governors were beneficial and would continue to be scheduled.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

2156 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Chief Operating Officer presented an update on the process and timeline for the appointment of the Chair (BG/24/20). Subject to Board approval, the nomination process would commence on 29 April 2024. Following completion of the process, the Nominations and Governance Committee would make a recommendation to the Board of Governors.

RESOLVED

that the process and timeline for the appointment of the Chair be approved.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

2157 APPOINTMENT OF CHANCELLOR

The Vice-Chancellor presented a proposal for the appointment of the Chancellor (BG/24/21). The following attributes of a successful Chancellor were highlighted:

- Well-connected in business.
- National and international convening power.
- Connected to the University and place.
- Reflecting the University's values and mission.

A small group, including Vice-Chancellor, Chair of the Board and current Chancellor, had reflected on the appointment over the last two years and Antony Jenkins CBE was now recommended as successor to Lord Mandelson. The Nominations and Governance Committee had considered the nomination, reviewed the candidate's skills and background and unanimously recommended the appointment to the Board. The Board was pleased to approve the appointment and welcomed the proposal to hold an installation ceremony at the University in January 2025 soon after the commencement of Antony Jenkins' term of office.

RESOLVED

that the appointment of Antony Jenkins CBE as Chancellor, for a five year term of office, from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2029, be approved.

2158 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY 2024

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the Board meeting held on 9 February 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2159 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

A report (BG/24/22) was submitted setting out actions to be taken following the meeting of the Board held on 9 February 2024 and progress made against those actions.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

2160 BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to the Board presented an update on Board and Committee membership (BG/24/23).

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

2161 ACADEMIC BOARD REPORT, 4 MARCH 2024

A report (BG/24/24) was submitted providing an update on business conducted by the Academic Board at its meeting on 4 March 2024.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

2162 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board received an update on risk management (BG/24/25).

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

2163 ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR

A report (BG/24/26) was submitted outlining actions that the Chair had taken on behalf of the Board in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Articles of Government.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

2164 COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following reports were submitted for information:

- Audit and Risk Committee – 23 February 2024 (BG/24/27).
- People, Finance and Resources Committee – 13 March 2024 (BG/24/28).
- Nominations and Governance Committee – 21 March 2024 (BG/24/29).

RESOLVED

that the reports be received.

2165 SCHEDULE OF AGENDA ITEMS

The Schedule of Agenda Items for 2023/24 (BG/24/30) was submitted for information.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

Signature of Chair _____

Date _____