

## University of Plymouth Higher Education Corporation

### Board of Governors

#### Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Governors on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Present**

Colin Drummond OBE DL (Chair)  
Hamish Anderson  
Dr Arunangsu Chatterjee  
Chukwudi Ezenyi  
Michelle Hanson (via zoom)  
Kate Jackson  
Professor Kevin Jones

Verity Lemm (via zoom)  
Bruce Mann CB  
Dr Ursula Ney  
Dinah Nichols CB (via zoom)  
Simon Perry (via zoom)  
Professor Judith Petts CBE  
Isobel Rossiter

**In attendance:**

Professor Julian Chaudhuri (Deputy Vice-Chancellor - Education and Student Experience) **(DVC ESE)**  
**(via zoom)**

Professor Dafydd Moore (Deputy Vice-Chancellor - International and Planning) **(DVC I&P)**

Professor Jerry Roberts (Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Research and Enterprise) **(DVC R&E)**

Gordon Stewart (Registrar and Secretary) **(R&S)**

Alastair Matthews (Chief Financial Officer) **(CFO) (via zoom)**

Emma Hellingsworth (Clerk to the Board)

Item		Action
20/05/1	<p><b>Obituaries</b> <b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board was asked to remember Ethan Bonnar. Ethan was a Stage 1 BA(Hons) Illustration student who died during the summer. Sue Ackland who passed away on the 27th July 2020. Sue was an Assistant Administrator in the School of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics who has been with the University since 4 January 1999 and Helen Brotherton passed away on the 22 July 2020. Helen was a Marker and had been with the University 2014-2018.</li> </ul>	
20/05/2	<b>Membership</b>	
2.1	<p><b>Apologies for Absence:</b> <b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologies received from Professor Simon Gaskell, Tom Yoritaka.</li> </ul>	
2.2	<p><b>Notification of Any Other Business</b> <b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None received.</li> </ul>	
2.3	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b> <b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None received.</li> </ul>	
2.4	<p><b>Confidentiality Status of Agenda Items</b> <b>Noted:</b></p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All items on the agenda are treated as confidential on the grounds of commercial confidentiality</li> </ul>	
2.5	<p><b>Annual Terms of Reference Review (Enclosure A)</b></p> <p><b>Decision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approved.</li> </ul>	
<b>20/05/3</b>	<b><u>Minutes</u></b>	
3.1	<p><b>Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Governors held on 16 July 2020 (Enclosure B)</b></p> <p><b>Decision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.</li> </ul>	
3.2	<p><b>Necessary Redactions</b></p> <p><b>Decision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None required.</li> </ul>	
3.3	<p><b>Matters Arising of the Meeting of the Board of Governors held on 16 July 2020 (Enclosure C)</b></p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The report on matters arising was noted. All actions were completed or noted on the agenda.</li> </ul>	
<b>20/05/4</b>	<p><b>Chair's Remarks</b></p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chair thanked all those involved in the excellent strategy awayday that took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.</li> <li>The Chair thanked the Vice Chancellor and the Student Union, on behalf of the Independent Governors, for the ongoing work that the University has undertaken to support students during the continuing, challenging situation regarding covid-19.</li> </ul>	
<b>20/05/5</b>	<p><b>Covid-19 Actions Update</b></p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The University is open and teaching students. Students are engaged despite the reduced levels of activity on campus.</li> <li>Recent media coverage around Universities, particularly in areas of the country with high covid infection rates, is reducing.</li> <li>There are a number of positive covid cases amongst the University's student population, equating to 0.2% of the student population and the cases are spread across four Halls of Residence. Support for self-isolating students including the provision of food, laundry services and mental health services is being provided.</li> <li>International Students that were required to complete two weeks in quarantine, have now largely done this.</li> <li>The low covid infection rate for the University may be partially attributed to the high proportion of locally based students and commuter students.</li> <li>A local walk in covid test centre will be opening in the Guildhall later in the month.</li> <li>The University is not carrying out independent testing, and is relying on NHS Test and Trace.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The clear message from Government that students should be able to return home for Christmas, should they wish to do so.</li> <li>• The University has good relationships with relevant Unions who are supportive of the actions being taken in response to the pandemic.</li> <li>• Good levels of student engagement during Fresher’s Week.</li> <li>• An announcement on A-levels for this academic year is expected next week.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of the joint letter from the Vice Chancellor and the President of the Students’ Union that was issued to students.</li> <li>• Personal Tutoring has resumed, albeit sometimes in a different format and events and support for both undergraduate and postgraduate students continue. Members of the University Executive Group (UEG) have received positive feedback on the amount of contact students are receiving from academic staff and some reports of staff being overwhelmed by the amount of correspondence taking place on chat lines between themselves and their students.</li> <li>• Full details on the services provided to students who are required to self-isolate can be requested from Lucy Black, Head of Facilities and Student Accommodation and Alice Ludgate, Head of Student Services.</li> <li>• There is no evidence that students have arrived and then withdrawn from the University, due to the pandemic.</li> </ul>	
20/05/6	<p><b>Vice-Chancellor’s Report (Enclosure D)</b></p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gordon Stewart, Registrar and Secretary will be leaving his role after the Board meeting December to begin a new role as the Chief Operating Officer at the Institute of Cancer Research. The Board wished him well in his new role. An interim appointment will be made as soon as possible and the role will be reconsidered in the Spring, alongside the Chief Financial Officer role.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undergraduate home and postgraduate taught student numbers are slightly ahead of Plan. Both undergraduate and postgraduate international student numbers were lower than Plan. The combined position on student numbers is broadly on Plan, albeit the reduced international intake means income will be negatively impacted against Plan.</li> <li>• Current predications are that for the next recruitment cycle, the landscape will be stable for home students but there will still be challenge around the recruitment of international students.</li> <li>• Law, Criminology and Government was the only School that failed to meet its plan numbers. Recruitment to the Business School was adversely affected by low international recruitment. Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences was low on undergraduate numbers but higher on postgraduate student numbers.</li> <li>• Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing all exceeded plan.</li> <li>• The potential financial support that may be available from the Government. The University will bid for financial support, as appropriate.</li> <li>• The importance of the student experience, not only for current students but also for next years’ recruitment, which begins now.</li> <li>• The University’s location could be seen as a real positive for recruitment for next year.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Senior Appointments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Louise Parr-Morley will join the University on 4<sup>th</sup> November, for 12 months, as interim CFO.</li> <li>• Patricia Murchie was appointed permanent Director of External Relations and will join the University in December.</li> <li>• Professor Sheena Asthana was appointed as Director of the new Plymouth Institute for Health and Care Research.</li> </ul> <p><b>League Tables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University rose 17 places to 59<sup>th</sup> of 131 universities in the Times Good University Guide.</li> <li>• The Government announced a review of the National Student Survey.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University does not publish institutional level data around contact hours with respect to fees paid. The data would be misleading as contact hours vary between programmes and times of the year.</li> <li>• Blended learning can be more expensive to provide than all on-campus learning.</li> <li>• The challenge that some institutions face regarding the reputational impacts that covid is having.</li> </ul>	
20/05/7	<p><b>Students' Union (SU) Update (Enclosure E)</b></p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most of the SU staff continue to work from home.</li> <li>• An interim CEO has now been appointed</li> <li>• The kitchen project is now complete.</li> <li>• Low engagement during Freshers week, particularly in terms of sign up for sports clubs and societies, as a result of the pandemic and the subsequent reduction of on campus physical activities. Where physical activities did take place, engagement was good.</li> <li>• The challenge of finding suitable space, that adheres to social distancing guidelines, on campus to better support sports clubs and societies.</li> <li>• Reports of loneliness from students. The VP Education and VP Wellbeing are working with the Student Engagement Co-ordinators to speed up a buddy scheme to help students who are lonely.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further information around the projected shortfall in income over the next three years will be reviewed once available from the SU.</li> <li>• The plan to open the nightclub on the 1<sup>st</sup> November was postponed.</li> <li>• The challenges caused by the closure of the Plymouth Life Centre for both the SU and the University.</li> <li>• The Student Life Committee will consider the issue of space on campus to support SU activities which will in turn support issues around student wellbeing.</li> <li>• The possibility of identifying whether different types of accommodation have an impact on loneliness, for example whether halls of residence with good social spaces are reporting the same level of loneliness as those without.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The importance of communications and messaging remaining upbeat but also supportive.</li> </ul>	
<b>20/05/8</b>	<p><b>Health and Safety Report (Enclosure F)</b> <i>Kirstie Spencer, Head of Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity and Training</i></p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of incidents reported was lower as the service provision was different over the past few months, but this is now starting to increase as staff and students return to campus.</li> <li>Fire Marshals and First Aid cover has been reconsidered and there are now 563 trained Fire Marshals that include academic staff working with students. There is also adequate First Aid cover.</li> <li>The Health and Safety Team are working with academic staff on risk assessments for buildings.</li> <li>The Chair of the Health and Safety Assurance Committee met with the Head of Health and Safety and was impressed with the work that has been undertaken with regard to covid.</li> </ul>	
<b>20/05/09</b>	<p><b>Update on Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) (Enclosure G)</b></p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recent confirmation of a number of strategic policies from the Department for Education due to take place in the autumn of 2020. Whilst some delays are now considered likely, the comprehensive spending review is likely to proceed in some form.</li> <li>Student number controls are likely to feature in future government policies.</li> <li>UEG identified a number of responses to possible changes in policy direction which are noted in the paper.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The benefits of proactively considering possible changes in policy direction.</li> <li>The challenge of forecasting the Government's intentions for a comprehensive spending review</li> <li>The SIP will be received by the Board in January 2021 and, should the Further Education White Paper be delayed, will have sufficient flexibility and capable of accommodating any implications of the White Paper.</li> <li>The first set of Graduate Outcomes were promising.</li> <li>Investment is being made in the Careers Service.</li> <li>The software provider of the current student record system is withdrawing from Higher Education therefore the University will need to invest in a new system. This is a challenging and expensive undertaking which has led to some reprioritisation.</li> <li>The potential for the paper to contain another dimension reflecting on the medium and long term effects of covid and what the University can achieve in the post covid environment.</li> <li>The importance of agility and making changes, for example to the portfolio, with pace.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board supported the direction of travel of the SIP and looks forward to next iteration in January 2021.</li> </ul>	

<b>20/05/10</b>	<p><b>Finance</b> <b>Draft 2018-19 year end position (Enclosure H)</b> <b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The forecast in March carried a number of uncertainties. The main variances since then are set out in the cover paper and included a £3.9m reduction in non-pay costs. This is not all recurrent saving but allowed some necessary impairments on the Babbage building to be recognised in 2019/20 without adversely affecting the overall outturn.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The saving in HR spending on personal development was largely due to the pause in activities such as external training, during the pandemic. There are no changes to the HR “offer”.</li> <li>• The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) has had a significant impact on the balance sheet at 31 July due to the movement in financial markets, and will have a material impact on the current year’s forecast.</li> <li>• The base plan was set pre-covid, therefore the financial impact of covid should not lead to any year on year comparison challenges as the base plan came from sound processes pre covid impacts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Year end process</b> <b>Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No issues were reported by the new external auditors, Mazars, despite the challenges of remote working with a new company.</li> <li>• There are no expected changes to the management accounts to the final accounts other than known items such as tax now that computations are completed.</li> <li>• With regard to forward forecast for 20/21, the base plan was agreed with a £0.6m surplus. The impact of the reduction of tuition fees (largely because of the reduction in international students) is -£3.6m and additional costs will be incurred partly due to covid. However, £3.5m was built into budget to cover the student number forecast risk and this together with other reductions including likely pay rise settlement, is still anticipated to allow a break even position before the impact the financial markets have had on the non-cash pension charge for LGPS.</li> <li>• The non cash pensions charge has increased by £4.6m and will lead to a deficit this year. This is a technical accounting adjustment, with a non cash impact, that may well reduce again in due course as markets evolve.</li> </ul>	
<b>Items for Information</b>		
<b>20/05/11</b>	<b>Governance</b>	
<b>11.1</b>	<b>Annual Report on use on the University Seal (Enclosure I)</b> <b>Noted.</b>	
<b>11.2</b>	<b>Annual Whistleblowing Report (Enclosure J)</b> <b>Noted.</b>	
<b>20/05/12</b>	<b>Committee Minutes</b>	
<b>12.1*</b>	<b>Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee 9th July 2020</b> <i>Verbal report received 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020</i> <b>Noted.</b>	

<b>12.2</b>	<p><b>Verbal Update from the Audit Committee Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Audit Committee considered seven main items at the meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> September and one item, Roadmap of Student Recruitment, on the 6<sup>th</sup> September at a separate meeting set up to ensure appropriate attendance.</li> <li>• The internal audit of the review of data quality and statutory returns provided substantial assurance on the compliance of returns and highlighted some sector leading aspects in the work undertaken.</li> <li>• The internal audit of the post audit implementation of recommendations highlighted some delays due to covid but provided reasonable assurance to the Audit Committee.</li> <li>• Uniac’s advisory note on personal tutoring was received. The University’s Teaching, Learning and Quality Committee set up a working group to consider personal tutoring and its consistency across the University and will report back to the Audit Committee in the Spring.</li> <li>• Good progress on the development of a Risk Appetite Statement.</li> <li>• A gap analysis demonstrated that the Committee was broadly compliant with the CUC Code and agreed that Uniac would draft a paper highlighting potential benefits of adopting some aspects of the FRC Code for future compliance.</li> <li>• A helpful discussion on the Student Recruitment Roadmap. The Committee requested a better understanding of timescales and milestones which would be considered at the next meeting.</li> </ul>	
<b>12.3*</b>	<p><b>Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Nominations Committee 11th June 2020</b></p> <p><b>Verbal report received 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020</b></p> <p><b>Noted.</b></p>	
<b>12.4*</b>	<p><b>Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Reward and Remuneration Committee 18th June 2020</b></p> <p><b>Verbal report received 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020</b></p> <p><b>Noted.</b></p>	
<b>20/05/13</b>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p><b>7<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b></p>	

**Appendix 1: Declarations of Interest**

Colin Drummond OBE DL	Taunton & Somerset and Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trusts	Chairman (non Exec)	Financial
	Calvert Trust, Exmoor (Charity No. 1005776)	Honorary Vice-President	Non-financial
	1610 Society (alumni legacy fund raising for Wadham College, Oxford)	President	Non-financial
		Trustee	Non-financial

	Water Conservation Trust (provision of bursaries for post graduate study in the water and environmental sectors) (Charity No. 1007648)  Deputy Lieutenant of Somerset		Non-financial
Hamish Anderson	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP Nottingham Trent University Law School Advisory Group, Kingston University Le Page Architects Ltd (Company No. 07204847)  Peninsula Medical Foundation (Charity No.1060423/Company No.03300591)	Consultant Honorary Professor Member Wife is a director  Committee Member (Director)	Financial Non-financial Non-financial Indirect financial Non-financial
Dr Arunangsu Chatterjee	St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Plymouth  South Asian Society of Devon and Cornwall (Charity No. 1110925)	Vice Chair & Governor  Secretary & Trustee	Non-financial  Non-financial
Chukwudi Ezenyi	University of Plymouth Students' Union UPSU Trustee Board (Company No.10676070/Charity No.1172830)	President Trustee Chair	Financial Non-financial
Professor Simon Gaskell	Higher Education Statistics Agency, Data Landscape Steering Group  University of Manchester  Halpin Partnership Advisory Board  Board of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education  CVCP Properties PLC ( Company number <b>03029225</b> )  Simpson, Thacher and Bartlett LLP  Hawkins\Brown Architects	Chair  Honorary professor  Member  Chair  Chair of the Board of Directors  Daughter as partner  Son as partner	Non-financial  Non-financial  Financial (occasional fee)  Non-financial  Non-financial  Not to SJG  Not to SJG
Verity Lemm	University of Plymouth Students' Union UPSU Trustee Board (Company No.10676070/Charity No.1172830)	Vice President Activities Trustee	Financial Non-financial
Michelle Hanson	Sodexo Trustee Services Ltd (Company No. 02999749)  The Springfields Academy (part of Reach South Academy Trust)	Trustee and Chair  Governor	Non-Financial  Non-Financial

Kate Jackson	Trethawle Enterprises LLP Trethawle Renewables (Company No.08244980) Clean Earth Trethawle Turbine (Company No.08244545) Menheniot School Association (Charity No. 1061162)  Helm Ticketing	Partner Director  Director  Chair and Trustee  Non-Executive Director	Financial Financial  Financial  Non- Financial  Financial
Professor Kevin Jones	Engineering Council (Company No.RC000150) Mayflower Autonomous Ship (Company No.10003369) UTC Plymouth (Company No.07645326) Plymouth Stem Board PSP Ltd (Company No.03157625) UoPEL (Company No.03707827) Shugenkai	Trustee Director  Governor Chair Member of the board Member of the board President	
Bruce Mann CB	Lodestone 1452 Ltd. Clients are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Planning College/Serco, providing advice and training in emergency preparedness and response.</li> <li>• Cornwall Council and STP, on estate matters.</li> <li>• Southampton Council and public sector partners, on estate matters.</li> <li>• The Government of Saudi Arabia, in building better emergency preparedness and response capabilities</li> <li>• Q5 Ltd, Associate Partner, on public sector strategy and transformation.</li> <li>• JLL Ltd, on public sector estate matters.</li> </ul> (Company no.10671993)	Director	Financial
Dr Ursula Ney	Proteome Life Sciences plc  Scancell plc (Company No. 11285913)  University of Portsmouth Enterprises Limited (UPEL)	Non-Executive Director  Non-Executive Director  Board Member	Financial  Financial  Non- Financial
Dinah Nichols CB	The Land Trust (Charity No.1138337) South West Lakes Trust (Charity No.1079966)	Trustee Trustee	Non-financial Non-financial
Simon Perry	Advisory Board of Arowana International Limited (Company No.10837371)	Member	Non-financial

	<p>Richmond Holdings (Jersey) Limited (holding company for Parkdean Resorts) (Company No.BR012993)</p> <p>Richmond UK Top Holdco Ltd which is a UK subsidiary of Richmond Holdings (Jersey) Ltd. (Company No.1053978)</p> <p>Forest School, London</p> <p>Advisory Board of Anmut Limited (Company No.11285913)</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Member</p>	<p>Financial</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Non-financial</p>
Professor Judith Petts CBE	<p>Heart of the South West LEP Board (Company No.08880546)</p> <p>Marine Biological Association (Company No.RC000865/Charity No.1155893)</p> <p>UUK Audit and Risk Committee</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Trustee</p> <p>Member</p>	<p>Non-financial</p> <p>Non-financial</p> <p>Non financial</p>
Isobel Rossiter	None		
Tom Yoritaka	<p>Coinweb</p> <p>ConXHub</p> <p>Research Institute in Secure Hardware &amp; Embedded Systems, Centre for Secure Information Technologies</p> <p>Tech London Advocates</p> <p>UCL EDUCATE Ventures</p> <p>Nexus FrotierTech</p> <p>L Marks</p>	<p>Global Advisor</p> <p>NED &amp; Interim Chief Strategy Officer</p> <p>Member of the Advisory Board</p> <p>Member of the Advisory Board</p> <p>Founding General Partner</p> <p>Board Observer &amp; Global Advisor</p> <p>Corporate Mentor</p>	<p>Financial</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Non-financial</p> <p>Non-financial</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Non-financial</p>