

Confirmed Minutes

Meeting:	Board of Directors' Meeting
Date:	14 July 2021
Time:	3.00 pm – 5.00 pm
Venue:	Teams Meeting

Name	Designation
Carol Cook - Chair	Non-Executive Director
Trevor Bolton	Non-Executive Director
Johan Forsblad	Non-Executive Director
Tom Mortimer	Non-Executive Director
Abdul Pisavadi	Non-Executive Director
John Fairhurst	Managing Director and Academic Principal
Shabnam Karim	Finance Director
Nasser Kazinda	Student President
Georgiana Ursachescu	Student Representative
Charlayne Lewis-Thomas	Staff Representative (Student Wellbeing Advisor)
Joe Stevens	Staff Representative (LLB Course Leader)
Maria Jackson - Secretary	Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Company Secretary

No.	
1.0	Welcome and Apologies
	<p>C Cook welcomed everyone to the meeting and, in particular T Bolton and A Pisavadi who were appointed Non-Executive Directors with effect from 1 July 2021. In the circumstances C Cook invited everyone to introduce themselves.</p> <p>M Jackson reported that J Stevens had sent his apologies as he is on a training course and that C Lewis-Thomas would be joining the meeting a little late.</p> <p>C Cook noted that G Ursachescu would be graduating this year and that this would therefore be her last Board meeting. C Cook thanked G Ursachescu for the passion she has displayed over the year in her role as student representative as well as her invaluable contributions in meetings. C Cook also congratulated her on her recent appointment as Student Guild Executive – a position she would be taking up later in the month.</p>
2.0	Minutes for approval and Action Tracker/Matters Arising:
	<p>2.1 <u>Minutes from the previous meeting:</u> 9 June 2021</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 9 June 2021 were approved by the Board.</p>

	<p><u>2.2 Action Tracker and Matters Arising</u></p> <p>C Cook reported on the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 29.01.20 Item 11 relating to the mapping of our corporate and academic governance arrangements against the revised CUC Code of Governance. As noted at the March 2021 Board meeting, this action will be considered when we undertake our next internal review of our Corporate and Academic Governance Framework, and Articles of Association. • Action 10.03.21 Item 16.1: Estates and Facilities are currently developing guidance documents on procedures for responding to a terrorist incident. • Action 09.06.21 Item 18: Completed. Covered under Agenda Item 12 below. • Action 09.06.21 Item 19: Completed. Covered under Agenda Item 11 below. • Action 09.06.21 Item 20: Completed. Covered under Agenda Item 22 below. <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p> <p><u>2.3 Minutes of the meeting of 24 May 2021</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 24 May 2021 were approved by the Board.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Chair's Actions</p> <p>C Cook confirmed that she had taken Chair's Action to approve the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement following minor amendments recommended by J Forsblad at the June 2021 Board meeting. The amended Statement has been tabled for information at Agenda Item 22.</p>
<p>Part 1: Operational Reporting</p>	
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Corporate Report (for information)</p> <p>J Fairhurst presented the July 2021 Corporate Report explaining that he will be reviewing the content of the Report to avoid duplication of information that is already available elsewhere. He added that if significant changes were to be made, it might be that the Board would find it helpful to start receiving Divisional/Departmental Reports as well. Such reports are submitted to the SMLT at the same time as the Corporate Report.</p> <p>J Fairhurst reported that the University of Northampton's Qualifications Board had met the previous week and from the first batch of students whose results have been considered, 72% (180 students) have obtained a good honours degree. The Board commended the students' achievement.</p> <p>C Cook asked whether Bloomsbury Institute's graduation ceremony this year would be face-to-face. J Fairhurst confirmed that this is the intention and that to accommodate numbers, we would hold two ceremonies on the same day – one in the morning and another in the afternoon. J Fairhurst also reported that the University of Northampton has invited all our students who graduated last year to an in-person ceremony this year, adding that we will be providing assistance with travel expenses if any of our students should need it. C Cook said that she had attended the last two of Bloomsbury Institute's own graduation ceremonies (one face-to-face and one virtual), and commented on how extremely moving and different they have been compared with others she has attended. She therefore encouraged all Board members to attend a future ceremony if they are able to do so.</p>

<p>5.0</p>	<p>Covid-19</p> <p>J Fairhurst reported on the new guidance that was issued in relation to the lifting of restrictions (with effect from 17 May 2021) on in-person teaching and learning for all remaining students within HE providers. He explained that at that point, all our teaching had finished for the academic year. However, we surveyed our students to see whether they would prefer to have this year's Get Ahead activities online or face-to-face, and the majority reported a preference for face-to-face activities. Our Get Ahead programme will therefore include a combination of online and face-to-face events. J Fairhurst added that we are planning for a full face-to-face experience from September 2021, but have a contingency plan in place for either partial or full online delivery should either scenario prove necessary. In anticipation of online delivery, we are currently looking to integrate Teams links within our student timetables. G Ursachescu said that this would be a much-welcomed feature if online delivery were to prove necessary.</p> <p>J Fairhurst reported that the phased return to work for staff is working well and that staff are appreciating the opportunity of a gentle return to a sense of normality, with an extended flexible working scheme that allows staff to start earlier and finish earlier, or start later and finish later. A full return to work will be delayed until the new site at Great Portland Street is ready for occupancy. We are due to sign the lease on Great Portland Street shortly and, once we do, we will need to allow 6 weeks for refurbishment works and then a further week for delivery of all the new furniture. J Fairhurst added that academic staff contracts include provision for the opportunity to work from home one day per week.</p> <p>C Cook welcomed the flexibility that staff have been given during the phased return to work in terms of start and finish times.</p> <p>C Cook raised the subject of proctoring software that we are using for admissions and suggested that it might be helpful for the Academic Committee to receive a report on the subject. J Fairhurst confirmed that we only use proctoring software for our admissions assessments, and he agreed that it would be interesting for the Academic Committee and also the Board to receive a report on our experiences in this area.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Jackson to ask A Jeram to submit to the September 2021 Academic Committee and the Board of Directors a report on the use of proctoring software for admission test purposes covering use, experiences, issues etc.
<p>Part 2: Financial</p>	
<p>6.0</p>	<p>Financial Reports (for consideration)</p> <p>6.1 <u>Re-forecast P&L 2020-21</u></p> <p>6.2 <u>Re-forecast P&L 2020-21 Commentary</u></p> <p>S Karim presented the above reports explaining that no changes have been made to our reforecast position since the June 2021 meeting of the Board and that even allowing for financial end-year adjustments, no material unexpected/unbudgeted costs are anticipated. Consequently, expenditure levels are expected to be in line with those forecast and, in some areas, some small savings may be seen. In terms of income, our final SLC payment for AY 2020-21, for students who originally started their course in January, is not due until October 2021.</p>
<p>Part 3: Office for Students</p>	
<p>7.0</p>	<p>7.1 <u>OfS Condition A1 Action Plan – Update Report July 2021</u></p> <p>7.2 <u>OfS Compliance Register – Update Report July 2021</u></p>

	<p>J Fairhurst presented both of the above reports together with a copy of the Quality and Compliance Divisional Report that went to the July 2021 SMLT as on pages 4 and 5 of the latter, a summary report has been provided in terms of compliance with the OfS Compliance Register.</p> <p>The contents of all three reports were noted by the Board.</p> <p>J Fairhurst explained that in their capacity as members of the SMLT, both he and S Karim receive a copy of the OfS Compliance Register and the OfS Condition A1 Action Plan in full on a monthly basis, and asked whether the Non-Executive Directors would like to continue receiving the documents in full or whether they would prefer to receive a summary report similar to the one provided within the Quality and Compliance Divisional Report. C Cook said that it had been important for the Board to be involved in the approval of both documents when originally developed, but suggested (and the Board agreed) that summary reports should be provided in future with written compliance assurances (or otherwise) from the relevant document lead and access (by request) to the full document so that Board members can interrogate the documents further if they wish to do so. The summary report should also identify any changes or issues since the previous report.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Jackson to notify the Head of Quality and Compliance of the Board’s reporting requirements in relation to both the OfS Compliance Register and OfS Condition A1 Action Plan.
<p>Part 4: Risk Monitoring</p>	
<p>8.0</p>	<p>Corporate Risk Register (recommended by the SMLT for approval)</p> <p>C Cook noted that the next review of the Corporate Risk Register was not due until September 2021.</p>
<p>9.0</p>	<p>Key Performance Indicators 2020-21 (for information)</p> <p>9.1 <u>July 2021 Update</u></p> <p>J Fairhurst presented the July 2021 KPI Update Report and commented on the report the Audit Committee had asked the Board to commission in relation to KPIs 8 and 9 covering performance at Levels 5 and 6 given the Semester 1 results at first sit. An interim report was subsequently produced and discussed at the June 2021 joint meeting of the Academic Committee and Board of Directors and a final report with resit data should be available for consideration at the September 2021 Board meeting. In the meantime, the Board noted an improvement in results for Accounting and Finance, and Business and Management since the last report. Less encouraging was the update on performance on the LLB.</p> <p>T Bolton expressed concern at some of the Level 6 results given that he would not expect to see students struggling in their final year. He commented also on the importance of applying the learning from this year to next year and so the early availability of the final results would be critical in terms of our ability to improve practices early on. He emphasised the need for full reflection within the final report on lessons learned and measures needed to improve both submission rates and performance levels. In the circumstances, M Jackson was asked to liaise with the Head of Quality and Compliance to ensure that the final report on KPIs 8 and 9 includes a reflection on performance and lessons learned as well as details of what actions are being taken to improve performance in 2021-22.</p> <p>J Fairhurst reported on an extremely constructive meeting he and other colleagues had had with CILEx the previous week, explaining that CILEx have recently undertaken a full reform of their CPQ (CILEx Professional Qualification) in order to make it very practice-focused from Level 4 upwards. He said that we would be reflecting these changes in the redesign of our LLB in 2021-22 for delivery of either our own degrees or a validated model with a new academic partner as the changes envisaged would also be appropriate for those students wishing to go down the solicitor route.</p>

	<p>J Fairhurst reported that Leroy Bunbury (our new Head of Governance and Legal Services due to join on 19 July 2021) would be involved in the review of our LLB given his experience as a qualified barrister and 25 years working at the University of Westminster as a sessional Law lecturer. J Fairhurst added that our proposed new Law Clinic would provide our LLB students with legal practice experience that would complement our new LLB programme.</p> <p>T Mortimer said that introducing to the LLB a greater focus on practice would help to engage students more with the subject. This, in turn, should improve continuation rates and performance levels. C Cook agreed, commenting on the fact that such a dynamic discipline as Law deserved a better approach in terms of subject content and delivery than the traditional degree model.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Jackson to liaise with the Head of Quality and Compliance to ensure that the final report on KPIs 8 and 9 includes a reflection on performance and lessons learned as well as details of what actions are being taken to improve performance in 2021-22.
10.0	<p>Prevent Risk Assessment (recommended by the SMLT for approval)</p> <p>C Cook noted that the next review of the Prevent Risk Assessment was not due until September 2021.</p>
Part 5: Annual Planning Cycle	
11.0	<p>Strategic Framework 2021-24</p> <p>C Cook reminded the Board that the Strategic Framework 2021-24 had been submitted to evidence the changes recommended at the June 2021 meeting of the Board.</p>
12.0	<p>KPIs 2021-22</p> <p>C Cook reminded the Board that the KPIs 2021-22 had been submitted to evidence the changes recommended by the Academic Committee and the Board of Directors at the June 2021 meeting.</p>
Part 6: Corporate and academic governance	
13.0	<p>For information</p> <p>13.1 <u>External Review of our Corporate and Academic Governance Arrangements</u></p> <p>C Cook reported that the review of our Corporate and Academic Governance Arrangements would be discussed under Reserved Items later in the meeting.</p>
Part 7: Student Voice	
14.0	<p>Joint Report from the Guild Manager and Student President</p> <p>C Cook noted that the Joint Report had been discussed at the June 2021 Board meeting, but invited N Kazinda and G Ursachescu to provide any subsequent updates that they might have. G Ursachescu reported that the Guild would be involved in the Open Day taking place at Cambridge House on Saturday 17 July 2021.</p>
Part 8: TDAP	
15.0	<p>Update</p> <p>J Fairhurst reported that ACDAP would be meeting on 9 September 2021 to consider our TDAP application. In the meantime, we have been asked to reserve 2 August 2021 for a possible meeting (virtual) with the</p>

	Panel. J Fairhurst added that he has explained to the QAA that T Mortimer would not be available on that date.
Part 9: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	
16.0	For information
	16.1 <u>EDI Update Report: July 2021</u>
	M Jackson presented the July 2021 EDI Update Report and flagged the following key points from it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the context of work being undertaken at Bloomsbury Institute in relation to the OfS Statement of Expectations on Harassment and Sexual Misconduct, the Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has chaired the first meeting of the Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Working Group. • Following the delivery of specialist training earlier in the year, a small group of staff will be acting as Mental Health First Aiders in the new academic year. Information on their role has been included within our Disability Policy, our Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and our Student Guide to Mental Health and Wellbeing. The scheme will also be promoted via our website. • A Zaman (the Academic Lead for EDI) has established a Black Lives Matter Working Group.
Part 10: Prevent duty	
17.0	For information
	17.1 <u>Prevent Update Report: July 2021</u>
	M Jackson presented the July 2021 Prevent Update Report and flagged the following key points from it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OfS will not be undertaking any random sample Prevent Review meetings in 2021. The focus will, instead, be on review meetings (online) with new providers. • The OfS are currently reflecting upon how they can reduce the reporting burden of the Annual Accountability Data Return which is due for submission in December 2021. • There has been a further delay with the Independent Review of the Prevent duty.
Part 11: For Approval	
18.0	Adoption of IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism [Following recommended approval from the SMLT]
	M Jackson presented the supporting paper that had been submitted to the SMLT for consideration of the recommendation made by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) to adopt the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, and briefly summarised the discussions had at both the EDIC and the SMLT. C Cook and T Mortimer thanked M Jackson for what they regarded to be an excellent paper.
	The Board agreed to adopt the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism as recommended by the EDIC and SMLT, whilst noting that, as a values-based institution, Bloomsbury Institute's existing policies are sufficiently robust in terms of ensuring a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination or harassment of any kind.
Part 12: For Discussion	
19.0	Confirmed minutes from other forums or committees
	19.1 <u>Academic Committee: 24 March 2021</u> Actions referred to BoD (if applicable): None
	19.2 <u>EDIC: 10 February 2021</u>

	<p>Actions referred to BoD (if applicable): None</p> <p>19.3 <u>SMLT: 2 June 2021</u> Actions referred to BoD (if applicable): None</p> <p>The minutes of the above meetings were received and noted. No actions had been referred to the Board from any of the meetings.</p>
20.0	<p>Actions referred from other forums/committees where the minutes are unconfirmed/not yet available</p> <p>20.1 <u>Academic Committee: 9 June 2021</u> Actions referred to BoD (if applicable): None</p> <p>20.2 <u>EDIC: 23 June 2021</u> Actions referred to BoD (if applicable): None</p> <p>20.3 <u>SMLT: 7 July 2021</u> Actions referred to BoD (if applicable): None</p> <p>20.4 <u>Health and Safety Committee: 8 April 2021</u> Actions referred to BoD (if applicable): None</p> <p>It was noted that no actions had been referred to the Board from the above meetings.</p>
Part 13: For Information	
21.0	<p>Student Recruitment and Admissions 2021-22</p> <p>J Fairhurst provided an overview of student recruitment and admissions activities, highlighting the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We opened for recruitment just after Easter with the launch of both an internal and external social media campaign. One of the external media campaigns is being managed by House of Education and, within the space of just three days, resulted in approximately 800 international leads for our Business Management Top-up. Although these campaigns have resulted in lower than expected applicant numbers - to date we have received approximately 100 applications – we will be continuing with them in order to help raise our profile. • An Open Day has been organised for Saturday 17 July 2021 and, to date, 22 possible applicants have signed up for the event. • We are developing a partnership with Change Grow Live (CGL) which is a charity that works to help those with mental health illnesses and addiction issues change their lives and fulfil their potential. Our first initiative with them is provision of a short taster course that will be piloted within a small group of CGL’s staff, clients, volunteers and ex-prisoners. We aim to offer three sessions that will be designed to raise aspirations in terms of entering higher education. The first two sessions will be recorded sessions that participants can listen to at a time convenient for them, and the final one will be a face-to-face session hosted at Bloomsbury Institute. Included within the sessions will be video recordings of former Foundation Year students given the power of the student voice. Following the pilot there will be an evaluation, and following any changes it will be rolled out throughout CGL London and then nationally. • We are exploring progression routes with two local FE Colleges who do not offer Level 4 or HND qualifications as well as private providers who do not offer Top-up degrees. • We are currently in discussions with a college in Ireland that offers an Ofqual-accredited Level 3 Business and Management programme (aimed at international students) with a view to entering into a progression agreement for students to join our 3-year and 2-year accelerated degrees. The college already has two academic partners in the US and is looking to establish a sole partner in

	<p>the UK. If discussions prove successful, the joint offering would be available to see student progress to our degrees in 2022-23.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the above initiatives are designed to eliminate the need to work with student recruitment agents, we will be working with a small number of domestic agents this year in order to meet recruitment targets. We have also recently entered into an agreement with one international student recruitment agent. Our Finance Department has enhanced our due diligence procedures for appointing and managing agents, and no agent will be appointed without having first been through these stringent procedures. <p>J Fairhurst also reported on the Covid-related concessions that have now been granted by the UKVI, explaining that international students who are unable to travel to London for the start of term will be able to start their courses online without a CAS having been issued provided the student arrives in the UK by 6 April 2022. We will be producing a short student-facing document explaining the above and also the processes the students would need to follow upon arrival in the UK.</p> <p>Finally, J Fairhurst reported that one of Bloomsbury Institute's former Managing Directors is in the process of setting up a student loans company in the UK for international students. It is expected that the regulatory approval process will be completed, and a decision made in August 2021. If approval is granted, we would be able to offer our January 2022 international student intake funding for both tuition fees and maintenance.</p>
22.0	<p>Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement</p> <p>As reported earlier, C Cook explained that the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement had been submitted to evidence that the minor changes recommended by J Forsblad at the June 2021 meeting had been made, and approved by Chair's Action.</p>
23.0	<p>Student Protection Plan</p> <p>S Karim presented the Student Protection Plan, explaining that when we submitted the Plan (as approved by the Board) to the OfS they had informed us that they were not approving partial revisions or plans with only minor updates. Consequently, given the advice that we should retain the Plan approved for 2020-21, we have removed from the document any reference to the year so as to avoid any confusion.</p> <p>The Board noted and approved the minor amendments made.</p>
Part 14: Any Other Business	
24.0	<p>24.1 <u>Annual Teaching and Learning Conference</u></p> <p>S Karim reported on the Annual Teaching and Learning Conference, explaining that it had been delivered face-to-face for a small number of attendees and then live streamed for everyone to view on 9 July 2021. She said the conference had been a great success with impressive speakers exploring the concept of identity. Video recordings of the event will be available in due course. N Kazinda echoed S Karim's reflections on the day, highlighting the contributions that Bloomsbury Institute's students had also made in terms of both speaking at the conference and assisting with its organisation.</p>
Part 15: Date/Time of Next Meeting	
25.0	<p>Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting: To be confirmed once Quality and Compliance have finalised the meeting schedule for 2021-22.</p>