

## Confirmed Minutes

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Board of Directors' Meeting</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>29 July 2024</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>1 pm – 3 pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Online via Teams</b>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Carol Cook - <b>Chair</b>	Non-Executive Director
Melanie Fellowes	Non-Executive Director
Abdul Pisavadi	Non-Executive Director
John Fairhurst	Principal and Chief Executive Officer
Shabnam Karim	Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer
Alena Bakare*	Student Representative
Sayed Sadat	Student Representative (Student President)
Orlagh Maye*	Staff Representative (Academic)
Maria Jackson - <b>Secretary</b>	Head of Governance and Company Secretary

In attendance:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Sunmi Ayorinde	Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Cal Courtney*	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Joan O'Mahony	Deputy Principal

<b>PRELIMINARY ITEMS</b>	
<b>1.0</b>	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>C Cook welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>M Jackson reported that apologies had been received from A Bakare, O Maye and C Courtney.</p> <p><b>Declarations of interest</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest made.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<p><b>Minutes for approval and Action Tracker/Matters Arising:</b></p>
	<p><b>2.1 <u>Minutes from the meeting of 3 June 2024</u></b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 3 June 2024 were approved subject to the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reference be made to the fact that the shareholders had been invited to attend the meeting, and did attend, but they did not take part in any decision-making.</li> <li>J O'Mahony's comments on the HEPI report under Agenda Item 4 to be reworded in line with wording to be provided by J O'Mahony outside of the meeting.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reference on page 7 to the Student Staff Consultative Committee be amended to read Student Staff Consultative Forum.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>J O'Mahony to send M Jackson revised wording for the entry in the minutes of the June 2024 meeting relating to the HEPI report under Item 4.</b></li> </ul> <p><u>2.2 Action Tracker and Matters Arising</u></p> <p>C Cook highlighted the following from the Action Tracker where updates were due:</p> <p>November 2022 Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action 1 Item 20b – Update: The action (to ensure that consideration is given in advance of the next External Review of our governance arrangements to requesting an assurance of compliance with the OfS Conditions of Registration) will be considered in M Jackson's internal review of our governance arrangements.</li> </ul> <p>June 2024 Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Action 1 – Update:</b> The action for M Jackson to submit to the July 2024 Board meeting a report on how the Student Voice is facilitated within the structures set out in our Corporate and Academic Governance Framework and how it is heard in practice, covering also its effectiveness and impact, has been deferred to the September 2024 meeting.</li> <li><b>Action 2 – Completed.</b> M Jackson emailed the Board on 5 June 2024 with advice from the Guild Manager on procedural consent requirements for the Guild to become an affiliated member of the NUS.</li> <li><b>Action 3 – Update.</b> See Agenda Item 2.3 below.</li> <li><b>Action 4 – Completed.</b> New comms around exit awards have been written by the Deputy COO to be sent out to students at the time of receiving their award. This clarifies what students are able to do and who to contact with any queries.</li> <li><b>Action 5 – Completed.</b> At the request of the Chair of the Board, the Board will be asked to approve the agenda for the January 2025 Board meeting at its November 2024 meeting. This is to ensure that going forward the focus of the January Board meetings will primarily be on strategy.</li> </ul> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p><u>2.3 UoN student numbers and mapping</u></p> <p>J O'Mahony presented the University of Northampton Student Numbers and Mapping report, highlighting the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mapping for October 2024 re-enrolment has yet to be completed as UoN's Award and Progression Board will not be meeting until the first week of September 2024.</li> <li>We currently have 61 UoN students but of these 20 have just completed their course and 11 are likely to be withdrawn for accumulated failure.</li> <li>No students have expressed an interest in transferring at this point, but J O'Mahony will report back on this at the Board meeting in September 2004.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<p><b>Chair's Update [including Chair's Action taken since previous meeting]</b></p> <p><u>3.1 Student Protection Plan</u></p>

	<p>C Cook reported that she had taken Chair's Action on the Student Protection Plan as following approval of the Plan at the June 2024 Board meeting, an issue had been spotted in the text about Bloomsbury Institute's agreement with Birkbeck College over the provision of facilities. This entry was subsequently amended along with some other textual amendments. All were approved by the Chair.</p> <p>S Karim added that the Student Protection Plan has now been approved by the OfS as submitted. We were not required to supply any further information or make any amendments.</p>
<b>STRATEGIC BUSINESS</b>	
<b>4.0</b>	<p><b>Principal's Report</b> (For information)</p> <p>The Board received and noted the Principal's Report.</p> <p>J Fairhurst presented his Principal's Report. He also flagged Sir David Behan's Independent Review of the Office for Students that C Cook had emailed the Board about earlier in the week, reminding the Board of the following reference to Bloomsbury Institute on page 45 of the report:</p> <p>"It was argued that the Bloomsbury Institute's successful court appeal in 2020 against the OfS's decision not to register the provider had a significant and long-term impact of reducing the organisation's risk appetite. This was suggested to have led to the OfS's caution of legal challenge from the sector."</p> <p>J Fairhurst advised against viewing Sir David Behan's report as a reflection of the new government's position on the OfS as he reminded the Board that the review began under the Conservatives.</p> <p>J Fairhurst commented on the very welcoming speech made by the Secretary of State the previous week that had been directed at international students. He said that the positive message given in the speech about building partnerships for the future has been welcomed by our recruitment agents.</p>
<b>ACADEMIC QUALITY AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE</b>	
<b>5.0</b>	<p><b>Student Guild Report</b></p> <p>S Sayed provided the following updates.</p> <p><u>Graduation Ceremony</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although unable to attend the May Graduation Ceremony at Wrexham University in person, S Sayed enjoyed watching livestreams of the event to see many of the 2022 and 2023 students he had helped to enrol when he was working as a Peer Advisor.</li> <li>The Vice Chancellor at Wrexham talked to our students about the importance of being global students, excelling in their chosen field, and their potential for future employment.</li> </ul> <p><u>DiversiTea Cafe at Euston Road Campus</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response to Birkbeck College's decision not to open their cafe at Euston Road this semester, the Student Guild have set up a DiversiTea Café in the basement area to help provide a welcoming enrolment environment for the June 2024 intake, and especially for the latecomers.</li> <li>With the support of student leaders, student representatives and some Guild and Bloomsbury Institute staff members, and using donations from Wrexham's Student Union, the café is providing free refreshments.</li> </ul> <p><u>Guild Restructure</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been a recent restructure in the Guild involving one staff member of staff taking redundancy. The employability role that the staff member had had will be taken on by student workers in 2024-25.</li> </ul> <p><u>NUS Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board of Trustees (BoT) meeting to consider applying for membership of the NUS has been rescheduled to 31 July.</li> <li>The Student Trustees will be actively involved in the decision-making process, ensuring representation of the whole student body.</li> <li>S Sayed hopes to serve as a Trustee in his final year.</li> </ul> <p><u>London Pride</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Equality Officer and the Student Guild participated in London Pride with fellow students, staff and friends.</li> <li>Participation in the event was made possible by funding provided by M Jackson from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion budget.</li> </ul> <p>J O'Mahony took the opportunity to thank S Sayed for a very detailed report on recent Guild activities as well as for all the collaborative work he undertakes with the Guild Manager. The Board endorsed these comments.</p> <p>C Cook commented on the key role the Student Guild has to play and the strength of the Guild's heartbeat at Bloomsbury Institute. She also asked M Jackson to share with the Board the link to the recording of the Graduation Ceremony at Wrexham University.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>M Jackson to share with the NEDs the link to the Wrexham University Graduation Ceremony.</b></li> </ul>
<b>6.0</b>	<p><b>Academic Performance Report – June 2024</b></p> <p>J O'Mahony explained that the Academic Committee did not receive an Academic Performance Report at its June 2024 meeting as no new data had been available at that point. As a result, she did not have a written report to share with the Board. However, she provided a verbal report on the updates made in the report submitted to the Academic Committee at its July 2024 meeting. This covered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updates have been made to the data in sections 2 and 3, showing that 96.5% of the June 2023 intake of PG students passed all modules compared with 66.3% of the June 2022 intake. <b>[Redacted]</b></li> <li>Although we only had 11 UG students in the June 2023 intake, 63.6% passed all or trailed one module.</li> <li>B3 data and reasons for discontinuation are now being reported through the Risk Management Working Group.</li> </ul> <p>J O'Mahony also reported that the July 2024 Academic Performance Report would be the last one in this particular format.</p>
<b>7.0</b>	<p><b>Academic Assurance Report – June 2024</b></p> <p>The Board received the Academic Assurance Report for June 2024 and sought clarification as to whether any updates had been made since the March 2024 iteration as it did not seem to do so. J O'Mahony confirmed that the report did include updates, but realised in the meeting these had been accidentally missed off the Cover sheet. Updates are also noted in the Academic Committee minutes and in the report from the Academic Committee. In the circumstances, C Cook asked J O'Mahony to identify within the July</p>

	<p>2024 Academic Assurance Report what the updates are. J O'Mahony agreed to do so. It was clarified that the June updates were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The addition of a section on Pre-Module Boards in order to provide the Board with some internal assurances.</li> <li>• Updates to the entry on annual monitoring.</li> <li>• Reports on the review and approval of our Admissions Policy and our Course Approval, Withdrawal and Suspension Policy in Section 10.</li> </ul> <p>J O'Mahony reminded the Board that the July 2024 Academic Assurance Report would be the final one for the current academic year, explaining that the July version would include the 2024 NSS results and updates on our pre-module Boards.</p> <p>C Cook asked J O'Mahony about how we report back to key stakeholders (e.g. staff and students) on whether they can be assured of academic standards and enhancements. J O'Mahony said she would check on sector practice in this space and report back at the September Board meeting.</p> <p>C Cook said that whilst it is important for the Board to continue to receive assurances of academic quality and standards, the Audit and Risk Committee had discussed whether J O'Mahony was possibly providing assurance reports a bit too frequently given the cycle of events against which she was reporting. C Cook therefore recommended that J O'Mahony consider this in the context of the other documents that the Board receives and the timing of the same. In the meantime, J O'Mahony asked C Cook for advice on how frequent the Academic Assurance Reports should be. C Cook suggested the Board receive such reports twice each year. However, it was agreed that J O'Mahony would make a recommendation around frequency at the September 2024 Board meeting.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>J O'Mahony to ensure that any updates to her Academic Assurance Reports are identified.</b></li> <li>• <b>J O'Mahony to report back to the Board in September with a recommendation on the frequency and timing of Academic Assurance Reports and sector practice on which stakeholders receive a copy of the Academic Assurance Report at year end.</b></li> </ul>
<b>8.0</b>	<p><b>Academic Committee Report – June 2024</b></p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Academic Committee Report.</p> <p>C Cook welcomed the planned relaunch of the Law Clinic at the start of 2024-25. She also asked whether a new Head of the School of Law had been appointed yet. J O'Mahony reported that she had advertised the position internally and that she would be interviewing the following week.</p>
<b>9.0</b>	<p><b>Student Recruitment and Admissions Update</b></p> <p>J Fairhurst provided the following key updates on student recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a target of 90 new domestic students for October 2024 and are on track to hit (if not exceed) the target on the strength of the applicants (around 55) who have accepted us as either their firm or insurance choice through UCAS, and the 100+ direct applications received.</li> <li>• A Burgos (our former Paraguayan Scholarship) is proving a great asset in his role as Admissions Executive.</li> <li>• Our global target for international students is 300 for October 2024.</li> <li>• 7 International students have chosen us as their first choice through UCAS and we have made around 140 unconditional offers to international students, but we have a number of meetings planned with agents in India (both North and South) to boost this number.</li> <li>• <b>[Redacted]</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of our academics will be visiting Pakistan shortly and will be making spot offers whilst there. We are also in talks to secure partnership agreements with institutions in Lahore, Islamabad and Southern Pakistan. One private institution in Islamabad is very keen to partner with us in order to allow students on its 4-year degrees to take our Top-up courses in their 4<sup>th</sup> year. This would enable them to qualify with a degree in their own country and qualify also for a UK degree upon successful completion of one of our Top-up courses. Such partnerships would enable us to reduce the work we do with agents and invest the commission we would otherwise have paid into student scholarships and academic exchanges for example.</li> <li>• We are considering the possibility of offering a free 2-month bridging course for our international students. [We had previously developed a 1-month course.] The course would focus on a number of areas including English language, academic study skills and employability and would be delivered by a couple of our former Foundation Year tutors. Having this bridging course would enable us to set an earlier cut-off point for enrolment as anyone unable to meet the deadline set would then join the bridging course prior to starting their degree course at the next intake point.</li> <li>• The students we have on our Top-up Business Management course from Pakistan are performing well and we are seeing a growing interest in our Top-up courses from Pakistan.</li> <li>• To date we have had only one visa application for June 2024 rejected and one student stopped at the border. The visa rejection was due to an error on the part of the applicant in that she submitted a recent bank statement in support of her application rather than one that showed funds over the required 28-day period. The student stopped at the border had been stopped over concerns regarding their English even though the student had a good level of English (demonstrated through her English Test scores that had been verified, and her recorded interview that was conducted via CAS Shield). The Head of Compliance was able to resolve the issue with the UKVI and the student has subsequently enrolled.</li> </ul> <p>C Cook welcomed the idea of offering a 2-month bridging course given the risk students arriving late for their degree courses run by arriving late.</p>
<b>10.0</b>	<p><b>NSS Results 2024</b></p> <p>S Ayorinde presented Bloomsbury Institute's 2024 NSS results which she said had again been very positive. She highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From a small cohort of eligible students (45), we have seen a 64% response rate compared with one of 72% at a sector level.</li> <li>• Compared to all other London Universities (excluding specialist providers) Bloomsbury Institute has ranked: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2nd for Business courses (3rd in England)</li> <li>○ 3rd in Teaching</li> <li>○ 2nd in Learning Opportunities</li> <li>○ 2nd in Assessment and Feedback</li> <li>○ 7th in Academic Support</li> <li>○ 3rd in Organisation and Management</li> <li>○ 8th in Learning Resources</li> <li>○ 3rd in Student Voice</li> <li>○ 2nd in Student Guild representing students' academic interests</li> <li>○ 3rd in Communicating information about mental wellbeing support services</li> <li>○ 19th in Freedom of expression</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>S Ayorinde explained that a detailed analysis of the results would be shared with both the SMT and the Board of Directors at their September 2024 meetings.</p> <p>C Cook congratulated S Ayorinde and colleagues for another strong performance in the NSS and stressed the importance of making maximum use of the information from the NSS for marketing and recruitment purposes as this is an objective indicator of good practice at Bloomsbury Institute. She added that this was</p>

	<p>especially important in order to improve domestic student recruitment numbers. C Cook also advised using the information to express the nature of the experience students have at Bloomsbury Institute rather than using it for comparative purposes in our marketing. S Ayorinde agreed fully with C Cook on these points especially given that we might not have a large enough cohort to participate in the survey in 2025.</p>
<b>AUDIT AND RISK</b>	
<b>10.0</b>	<p><b>Prevent Risk Assessment</b></p> <p>It was noted that the next review of the Prevent Risk Assessment is due September 2024.</p>
<b>12.0</b>	<p><b>Access and Participation Plan KPIs</b></p> <p>12.1 <u>APP KPIs July 2024 Update Report</u></p> <p>J O'Mahony reminded the Board that it had received APP KPI data at the June 2024 Board meeting and explained that new data had only just been published by the OfS earlier in the week. This new data would inform her next KPI report.</p>
<b>FINANCIAL AND CORPORATE</b>	
<b>13.0</b>	<p>It was noted that there were no reports for the July 2024 meeting.</p>
<b>NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE</b>	
<b>14.0</b>	<p>14.1 <u>Governance Updates</u></p> <p>M Jackson presented her Governance Updates report, highlighting the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She has reviewed our knowledge and experience audit template for the Board and circulated the same to the Executive and Non-Executive Directors for completion in order to identify any gaps. A report will follow in September 2024.</li> <li>• She has drafted a proposal paper for consideration by the Nominations and Governance Committee that sets out information on possible and recommended approaches to our forthcoming review of Board effectiveness. The aim is to identify both current effectiveness and effectiveness going forward.</li> <li>• Publication by Minerva of a report entitled "Relationships, risk and innovation in the board room" that calls for governance to be "proportional" in the context of risk.</li> <li>• Details of Advance HE's training programme for the new academic year and a Governor Competences Map that Advance HE have developed.</li> </ul> <p>M Fellowes said that she had recently attended an Advance HE event and had found it very interesting. She asked whether anyone was planning to attend the Advance HE Governance Conference 2024: Transformation in HE - governing with humanity (4 December 2024). C Cook said that she would not be attending this event but is planning to attend one of Advance HE's events in February 2025. C Cook also took the opportunity to encourage the Non-Executive Directors to use the CPD budget they are allocated each year to attend events such as those on offer from Advance HE. J O'Mahony endorsed the events organised by Advance HE.</p> <p>M Jackson reported that she had recently attended an event hosted by IHE at which Aaron Porter had presented on "Governance and Leadership: Emerging Leaders". Aaron Porter is Associate Director Governance at Advance HE and holds a number of other roles including Chair of the BPP University Board</p>



of Directors and Deputy Chair of Goldsmiths University of London. M Jackson offered to share the recording and slides of the presentation with Board members.

**Actions:**

- **M Jackson to share with the Board the recording and slides of Aaron Porter's presentation at IHE on Governance and Leadership: Emerging Leaders**

14.2 Proposed Amendment to our Articles of Association

M Jackson presented for approval a proposal that Regulation 50 of Bloomsbury Institute's Articles of Association regarding the tenure of the Non-Executive Directors be amended. She explained that currently Regulation 50 of the Articles states the following:

The maximum period of office of an independent non-executive director is four years, subject to the period being extended by a decision of the directors, acting on a recommendation of the Nominations Committee, for one further period of no more than four years.

She then presented the following text to be added to the above:

In exceptional circumstances (to be recommended by the Nominations and Governance Committee and subject to the approval of the Board), the directors may extend the period of office for a third term not exceeding four years, subject to the right of the directors to terminate the third term at any time should the directors deem that the exceptional circumstances no longer exist.

In addition, M Jackson explained the approval process for any amendment to Regulation 50 given that it is an entrenched provision:

- the directors to decide by a majority vote to amend the regulation and
- the shareholders to ratify by special resolution the decision of the directors.

In practical terms, this would entail the following:

- The directors and shareholders to approve an amendment to the Articles.
- A Notice of Resolution to be filed with Companies House.
- Amendment of our Corporate and Academic Governance Framework (in order to mirror the Articles of Association) and approval of the same by the Board of Directors.

At this point J Fairhurst reminded the Board that C Cook's second term of office was due to end in May 2025 and he had discussed this with S Karim and C Cook. He explained that whilst all parties recognised the value of a Board refresh, they also recognised the need for stability beyond May 2025. J Fairhurst added that the ability to extend C Cook's tenure beyond May 2025 would help provide the institution with stability by allowing time for completion of our Board effectiveness review, the skills audit of the Board and also succession planning.

As a result, J Fairhurst recommended approval of the proposal to amend Regulation 50 of the Articles of Association.

The Board unanimously agreed to approve the proposal to amend Regulation 50 of the Articles of Association.



	<p>J Fairhurst then asked the Board to take a view on a possible extension of C Cook's tenure. C Cook left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>In C Cook's absence, the remaining Board members approved, in principle, an extension to C Cook's term of office. Formal consideration of any extension to C Cook's tenure would take place in the Nominations and Governance Committee following the proposed amendments to our Articles of Association.</p> <p>C Cook was invited to rejoin the meeting and was informed of the Board's decision in principle to approve an extension to her term of office.</p> <p>C Cook asked M Jackson to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seek shareholder approval (via a special resolution) to amend the Articles of Association to allow for a NED to serve a third term of office in exceptional circumstances and according to the conditions discussed in the meeting.</li> <li>• amend the Articles of Association and file a Notice of Resolution with Companies House, and to amend the Corporate and Academic Governance Framework (in order to mirror the Articles of Association) for approval by the Board of Directors.</li> </ul> <p><u>Proposed appointment of Mark Levy as a new Non-Executive Director</u></p> <p>A Pisavadi reported that Mark Levy had been interviewed for the position of Non-Executive Director the previous week and that he had subsequently chaired a meeting of the Nominations and Governance Committee (attended by J Fairhurst, C Cook and Gwyneth Pitt) to consider M Levy's appointment.</p> <p>A Pisavadi said that the Committee had felt that M Levy would be a good addition to the Board. A Pisavadi added that if the Board were to approve M Levy's appointment, the Nominations and Governance Committee would recommend that he also be appointed a member of the Audit and Risk Committee. If this were to happen, C Cook would then stand down from the Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p>The Board approved the appointment of M Levy to the Board of Directors for an initial 4-year period to take effect from 1 September 2024 and his appointment to the Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p>C Cook asked J Fairhurst to notify M Levy of his appointment to the Board and the Audit and Risk Committee, and M Jackson to notify Companies House of his appointment and arrange his induction assuming he accepts the offer made.</p> <p>C Cook reminded the Board that the Nominations and Governance Committee (which meets relatively infrequently) was without a permanent Chair, and C Cook proposed that she take on the role.</p> <p>The Board approved C Cook's proposal and noted that the next meeting of the Nominations and Governance Committee was likely to take place in October.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>J Fairhurst to (a) notify Mark Levy that the Board has approved his appointment as NED and his membership of the Audit and Risk Committee for an initial period of 4 years with effect from 1 September 2024 and (b) notify Maria of Mark's acceptance.</b></li> <li>• <b>M Jackson to notify Companies House of Mark Levy's appointment and arrange his Induction (assuming he accepts the position).</b></li> <li>• <b>M Jackson to seek shareholder approval (via a special resolution) to amend the Articles of Association to allow for a NED to serve a third term of office in exceptional circumstances and according to the conditions discussed in the meeting.</b></li> <li>• <b>M Jackson to (a) amend the Articles of Association and file a Notice of Resolution with Companies House, and (b) amend the Corporate and Academic Governance Framework (in order to mirror the Articles of Association) for approval by the Board of Directors.</b></li> </ul>
--	---

## COMPLIANCE AND REGULATION

**15.0** It was noted that there were no reports for the July 2024 meeting.

### **16.0 Access and Participation Plan**

#### 16.1 APP 2020-21 to 2024-25 Update Report

J O'Mahony presented the above report, assuring the Board that all the activities to which Bloomsbury Institute had committed in its Access and Participation Plan (APP) were taking place with the exception of those that the Access and Participation Committee had agreed were no longer feasible. She said that this mirrored the experiences of other providers who had not delivered fully on their APP commitments.

J O'Mahony reported that all "live" activities were subject to ongoing reviews and evaluation and that an internal toolkit would be used to provide relevant committees with updates. As a result, she reported that there was no cause for concern in relation to the implementation and evaluation of our current APP activities.

J O'Mahony also reported that the OfS will have higher expectations around evaluation in the new APPs that providers are developing. As a result, providers will need to carry out evaluations in a prescribed manner and then publish them. J O'Mahony added that SEER would be providing support in relation to our evaluation activities.

#### 16.2 APP Travel Bursary Evaluation Report

C Cook commented on the high level of detail in the Travel Bursary Evaluation Report and how helpful the recommendations made were. She also asked how the information was going to be processed and used. J O'Mahony said that we needed to do more work with the data to establish fully the impact of the travel bursary on continuation.

S Karim explained that the data presented in the Travel Bursary Evaluation Report covers AY 2023-24 and provides a more comprehensive data set than had the interim evaluation report. Given the findings from the report, S Karim said that her team has been researching other possible financial initiatives in the sector to inform a proposal paper that she will be submitting to the Access and Participation Committee for consideration.

#### 16.3 APP 2024-25 Risks and Objectives

J O'Mahony explained that providers are required to focus on the risks to equality of opportunity where they are able to make a difference. She added that Bloomsbury Institute would be focusing on IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation) measures as those students from IMD Quintiles 1 and 2 are not experiencing the same outcomes as those from less deprived areas in relation to both continuation and attainment. Two other target groups being considered are Black students and ABMO students.

#### 16.4 APP Data

J O'Mahony reported that the OfS had published all data across the student life cycle on 25 July 2024 and that she would be using this data to inform our assessment of performance for our new APP.

C Cook asked whether we were required to use the OfS terminology of a "good honours degree" as by defining it as a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2:1, we are devaluing anything below a 2:1. J O'Mahony agreed with the Chair that we should avoid this language, and commented on the debate within the sector around the terms "attainment gap" and "awarding gap". She added that she would be very mindful of language in our APP submission.

## POLICY AND DOCUMENT APPROVAL

17.0

### Risk

[For approval]

17.1 Risk Management Framework

17.2 Principal Risk Report Template

17.3 Sample Principal Risk Report

17.4 Sample Corporate Risk Register Template 2024

17.5 Sample KPIs From September 2024

J Fairhurst presented the above documents and highlighted the following key points:

- In response to feedback provided previously, the role of the Audit and Risk Committee has been more clearly defined. As a result, the Committee has now been assigned responsibility for oversight and challenge of the Institution's management of risk. This entails ensuring that the Executive have an effective system in place to manage risk.
- The Working Groups established in accordance with our Risk Management Framework have begun to meet and will be focusing not only on risk within their designated areas, but also on the oversight of operations and strategy in those same areas.
- A Manning supports the approach taken in terms of presenting the Board with a high-level Corporate Risk Register dashboard with links to the Principal Risk Reports articulating how each Working Group has arrived at the information included within the dashboard should the Board wish to interrogate a particular risk rating.

A Pisavadi said the Audit and Risk Committee had approved the above approach. However, he noted that nothing had been included in the documentation around property or infrastructure risks as suggested by the Audit and Risk Committee previously. J Fairhurst explained that this was an area that he had discussed with A Manning and the latter had advised against having such a specific risk given our current structure. A Pisavadi asked what would happen if there were to be a fire at Birkbeck College, leaving us without (or with reduced) teaching space. J Fairhurst explained that this is a scenario that is anticipated and mitigated against within our Business Continuity Plan. He also stated that the intention is to link our Risk Management Framework directly to our Strategic Framework by identifying the risks that would prevent us from achieving our Strategic Goals.

S Karim added that at its July 2024 meeting, the SMT had approved our Business Continuity Plan and that it would be working through some live scenarios shortly. She also reminded the Board that business continuity planning is an area that has been identified for review in the 2024-25 Internal Audit schedule.

A Pisavadi said that he was happy for property and infrastructure to be excluded from risk management provided it was fully covered within our business continuity planning.

C Cook asked whether the Audit and Risk Committee and Board of Directors should receive a copy of the Business Continuity Plan. However, S Karim advised that it was very much an operational document and that there would be little value in the Board receiving a copy. However, she added that the Board would see it eventually once the Plan and its implementation is reviewed by Internal Audit.

M Fellowes asked if the clarification of the Audit and Risk Committee's role in relation to risk had been reflected in the Corporate and Academic Governance Framework. J Fairhurst said that the clarification is fully aligned with the current Corporate and Academic Governance Framework, but makes the position clearer, and that this clarity would be taken into account as part of the internal review M Jackson would be conducting of our governance arrangements in 2025.

	<p>The Board approved the documentation presented by J Fairhurst.</p> <p>J Fairhurst explained that the Board would receive a new “populated” Corporate Risk Register and KPIs from September 2024 for approval at its September 2024 meeting.</p>
<b>18.0</b>	<p><b>Bloomsbury Institute and Student Guild Relationship Agreement 2024</b> [For approval]</p> <p>The Board approved the Bloomsbury Institute and Student Guild Relationship Agreement 2024 as recommended for approval by the Senior Management Team.</p>
<b>OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
<b>19.0</b>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There were no matters for Any Other Business.</p>
<b>DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b>	
<b>Date: 30 September 2024, 1 pm to 3 pm, venue to be confirmed.</b>	