

**Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors
held on Thursday 23 March 2023, 4:00 PM — 6:00 PM GMT
London South Bank Technical College, Belmore Street, Wandsworth Road,
London, SW8 2JY**

Present

Jerry Cope (Chair)
Michael Cutbill (Vice Chair)
Duncan Brown
Shona Brown
John Cole
Ruth Farwell
Abdirahim Ibrahim
Devonte James
Mark Lemmon
Nicki Martin
Ola Obadara
Dave Phoenix
Andreas Raffel
Rashda Rana
Jeremy Parr

Apologies

Peter Fidler
Tim Fransen
Vinay Tanna

In attendance

Michael Broadway
Tara Dean
Richard Flatman
Deborah Johnston
James Stevenson

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting. The above apologies were noted.

The Board had just received a tour of the newly opened South Bank Technical College at Vauxhall, part of South Bank Colleges. The Board commended the state-of-the-art facilities and noted the positive impact that

the Technical College should have on the local area and increasing opportunities for learners.

The Board had received an informative presentation on the Knowledge Exchange Framework, likely to be published in autumn 2023.

2. **Welcome to new Chair designate**

The Board welcomed Andreas Raffel to his first Board meeting as independent governor and Chair designate.

3. **Declarations of interest**

No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 24 November 2022 and their publication as redacted. Some further redactions were approved.

5. **Matters arising**

The Board noted the matters arising.

6. **Chair's business**

The Chair reported that Shona Brown and Peter Fidler had agreed to be lead governors for apprenticeships.

The Chair reported that Devonte James had agreed to be the Chair of the Honorary Awards Joint Committee.

The Vice Chair updated the Board on actions taken since the Board EDI sessions in November 2022 and January 2023, to ensure that EDI remains a focus for the Board.

7.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8. Students' Union update

The Board congratulated Devonte James and Abdirahim Ibrahim on their re-election as Students' Union (SU) President and Chair of Student Council. They would both continue as student governors for a second term of one year. The Board noted the lower turnout for the elections but noted that this was not reflective of student engagement with the SU more generally.

The President of the (SU) updated the Board on the work of the SU including encouraging students to complete the NSS, coaching students as part of the 'phone back project', developing a sports partnership with South Bank University Academy students, recruitment for a commercial trustee on the SU Board of Trustees, support for a black mental health project and providing support for resits for students. A review of progress against the SU strategy was underway.

9. Vice Chancellor's report

The Board discussed the Vice Chancellor's report.

The Board noted that student applications are currently 4% down on the previous year. This is in line with competitors. The offer rate and acceptance rate is in line with last year.

The Board expressed its concern with continuation rates below target. The Board noted that the decline in continuation rates is both a university-wide issue and an individual School issue with significant failure rates in some modules, which is being addressed by the relevant school.

The Board noted that appropriate support for students is vital to help improve continuation. Additional funding had been released to provide extra support to students doing re-sits. Additional hardship funding had been made available to students to allow them to prioritise their studies.

Early engagement with students as part of the induction process is being prioritised. The significant investment in IT systems would allow better engagement with students during their studies, including personal development plans. The Executive is developing leading indicators to allow a more timely response to this issue in the future.

The Board requested an update on continuation in July and a fuller report in October when more data analysis will be available.

The Board discussed an update on apprenticeships. The Board noted that an Ofsted inspection of LSBU's apprenticeship provision was expected shortly.

The Board questioned whether LSBU could achieve its target of being the largest HEI apprenticeship provider in three years. The Board noted the intention of encouraging future part time employer-sponsored students (currently around 6,500 students) to enrol on degree apprenticeship courses. The group-structure and associated pathways were a unique offer. The Board supported the Executive's targeting of high achievement rates and ensuring a good environment for apprenticeship students as a priority.

A strategic oversight group is looking at models of delivery to increase the potential market from local skills development to nationwide while ensuring continuous improvements across the apprenticeship provision.

The Board noted that an external review of the quality of apprenticeships is taking place. It agreed that the Executive would use the findings to enhance the positive impact on all learners and improve the quality of education provided.

The Board noted the strategic importance of apprenticeships in delivering LSBU's mission and requested to be updated as appropriate.

The Board noted that funding of [REDACTED] for T-level delivery in SBA and SBC had been approved.

The Board noted that good progress is being made with the launch of South Bank Sixth Form in SBA. The Board noted that there continue to be concerns with student progress and student recruitment at South Bank University Academy, which were being addressed by the Executive.

10. **Annual education report from Academic Board**

The Board discussed the annual education report from the Academic Board, which provided assurance to the Board on how the University was meeting its obligations under the OfS's 'B' conditions of registration.

The Board noted that the 'B' conditions of registration were relatively new with 'B1', 'B2', 'B4' and 'B5' coming into force on 1 May 2022 and 'B3' coming into force on 3 October 2022.

The Board noted that areas to develop are 'B2' (covering resources and support for students) and the racial awarding gap.

The Board discussed 'B2' in detail. The Board noted that the Executive is reviewing the student staff ratio to ensure an appropriate level of academic support for students. Benchmarking data indicated that appropriate funding was being spent on academic schools. The distribution of this funding is being reviewed.

The Board noted the assurances from the Executive that LSBU has in place appropriate mechanisms to meet expectations for conditions of registration 'B1', 'B3', 'B4' and 'B5'.

The Board noted that assurance on academic governance would be an area of focus in the governance effectiveness review.

The Board welcomed the update and was assured that progress is good for all the 'B' conditions. The Board noted the need to continue to develop the approach to 'B2' and the racial awarding gap, which would continue to be areas of focus for the Executive.

The Board requested that future reports provide assurance on the effectiveness of the systems in place to meet the 'B' conditions and an explicit link to performance through the KPIs.

Michael Cutbill left the meeting

11. **CFO report**

The Board discussed the CFO report, which updated on current year financial performance for both LSBU and SBC, 2023/24 budget planning, cashflow and covenants, audit matters, estates related matters and risk.

The Board noted that the current forecast for 2022/23 is to deliver to budget. A forecast income shortfall of £3m against budget is forecast to be offset by lower-than-expected pensions costs.

The Board noted that the insurers have agreed a pay-out of [REDACTED] for the cyber incident, which the Executive has agreed to accept on a commercial basis.

{Secretary's note - subsequently the Chair and the Vice Chair were briefed on entering into a settlement agreement on the basis set out in the minute.}

The Board noted the improved forecast in SBC for a deficit of £2.3m against a budget deficit of £3m. The main risk to the forecast is for in year growth funding. This is being closely monitored by management.

The Board noted that the Executive is reviewing facilities management across the group, including services delivered by SW4 Catering for SBC, with the aim of having a consistent group-wide approach. This may lead to outsourcing services to a third-party contractor.

The Board noted an update on budget planning for 2023/24. The main challenge for income is continuation rates. A number of scenarios are being modelled ahead of discussion at the April Board strategy day.

The Board noted that two firms ([REDACTED]) had submitted bids as part of the external audit tender process. As part of the selection process both firms are presenting to a panel of the Group Audit and Risk Committee (GARC) and the SBC Audit Committee. The LSBU Board and the SBC Board would be requested to approve the appointment of the group external auditors following a recommendation from GARC and the SBC Audit Committee.

12. **Health and safety annual report**

The Board discussed the annual health and safety report for 2021/22.

A particular focus of the health and safety team during the year had been on fire safety, in particular responding to new legislation. FPR would continue to monitor the fire doors project.

The Board noted that during the year a new travel emergency support service had been introduced, and the health and safety team had supported the safe

opening of a number of new buildings (the Croydon campus, the Hub and the South Bank Technical College).

In relation to the Prevent duty, there had been no references to 'Channel' during the year.

The Board expressed its concern at the completion rates for health and safety training and requested an update from the Deans of the Schools of Business, and Built Environment and Architecture on how these schools are addressing low completion rates.

Overall, the Board was assured on management controls.

13. Mid-year update on LSBU business plan and KPI performance

The Board noted the update which would be discussed in detail at the strategy day of 27 April 2023.

14. Corporate risk register

The Board noted the corporate risk register.

15. Reports and decisions of committees

The Board noted the reports and decisions of committees.

16. Declarations of interest

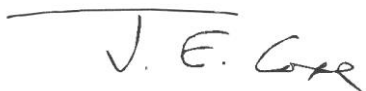
The Board authorised the declared interests of Andreas Raffel and Michael Cutbill which will be published in the register of interests.

Dates of next meetings

10am on Thursday, 27 April 2023 – strategy day

4pm on Thursday, 20 July 2023 – board meeting

Confirmed as a true record



(Chair)

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