



## NCHNL Board Meeting

2 April 2020 – via online meeting

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### MINUTES

1. Attendance and apologies
  - 1.1. Attendance:
    - Darren Campili (DC)
    - Rob Farquharson (CEO, Secretary)
    - Dr Kenneth Henderson (KH)
    - Prof A C Grayling (Master)
    - Ralph Martin (RM, Chair)
    - Thomas Nedell (TN)
    - Maria Payro (MP, Observer)
    - Dr Deanna Raineri (DR, Vice Chair)
    - Patricia Wood (PW)
    - Martin Smith (ED, Observer)
  - 1.2. Notice of meeting:
    - 1.2.1. Notice of this meeting had been given to all Governors
    - 1.2.2. All the Governors present confirmed that they had no personal interests to disclose matters to be transacted in the meeting in accordance with sections 177 or 182 of the 2006 Act and the Company's articles of association
    - 1.2.3. The meeting was quorate.
2. Minutes of last meeting
  - 2.1. The previous minutes from the 30 January 2020 were **APPROVED**.
3. Matters Arising
  - 3.1. The matters arising from the previous Board meeting were all reported as complete.
4. Chairs Action
  - 4.1. There were no Chairs actions to report but reported that a putative candidate for independent Governor had been interested but due to a

new role was unable to pursue the opportunity, so the search was continuing.

5. Coronavirus Update

5.1. The Master, CEO and ED updated the Board about the response of the College to the Coronavirus pandemic. The College transitioned to online delivery from 16 March 2020 and the move to online teaching and administration had gone smoothly with staff and student morale appearing to be good with obvious concern about assessments from students.

5.2. The ED explained how recruitment events had moved online to positive responses and how offers were being given in line with regulatory requirements.

6. Master's Update.

6.1. The Master updated the Board about the transition to online learning and on the preparations being made for assessments (exams/dissertations/summative assessments). The current plan was to retain the three-hour format but allow leeway for technology glitches or other pandemic related circumstances.

6.2. The Master added that there were the beginnings of contingency planning for the possibility of online teaching in September using the learnings from the end of this term.

6.3. He went on to report no major faculty issues, that morale seemed good and there were no negative student experience issues to highlight over and above the disruptions caused by the pandemic.

6.4. The proposed new programme proposals were reviewed. The Master said that since the documentation was sent that the Head of the Faculty for Philosophy had suggested combining the two Philosophy MA's and deferring the MSc until 2021. With those proposed changes the programmes were **APPROVED**.

6.5. **NOTED** – Quarterly Quality Standards Report Update. No significant points of concern were raised.

7. CEO Updates

7.1. Operational update

7.1.1. In terms of teaching space there were short term requirements and then a longer-term solution.

7.1.2. To fulfil the short-term needs contracts had been secured with CIEE and Anglo Education who were both based in Russell Square and there were ongoing conversations with London Met to use both lab and classroom space. However, with the change to proposed Fall programmes the need for space was being revisited.

7.1.3. The operational roll out of the online learning tools had gone smoothly and the pandemic had shown the benefits of access to online content and to Northeastern's systems. KH

stated that a working party was being set up to drive that integration forward.

7.2. Regulatory update

7.2.1. The CEO confirmed that the College had been awarded TDAP in February 2020 and RoATP in March 2020 and that preparations were in place to ensure that both those regimes were followed and adhered to.

7.2.2. With the pandemic the DfE, OfS, QAA and other regulatory bodies were issuing guidance to deal with the changed circumstances, that guidance and close consultation with its validating institutions, the faculty and student body were directing how the College was approaching this time.

7.2.3. The correspondence with the Charity Commission had advanced and a path to approval was now clear and would be taken by the College and Northeastern to ensure prompt registration.

8. ED Update

8.1. ED relayed how the 2020 recruitment process that had been moved online. In addition, all offer holders had been made unconditional on 20 March, three days before the DfE/OfS moratorium. The College felt able to do that due to the rigorous nature of its admissions process – which rejects around 45% of all applications and then interviews all remaining viable candidates. As such the College had a standalone reference point to make that decision. In addition, all offers were made with 'no strings attached' leaving applicants with the usual timetable (now extended) to make their decision.

8.2. Redacted – restricted information.

8.3. In regard to the most significant initiative to secure College acceptances from the larger institutions, the ED reported that the Accelerate was very unlikely to happen in Boston this summer and that he was discussing with Chris Gallagher how a summer of year 1 programme could be run. KH supported that plan.

8.4. Lastly, he added that come August/September of this year that the College would get a full UKVI Tier 4 licence which would give students more leeway around areas like working/dependents etc.

8.5. MP asked if that would cover existing Tier 4 students, but the ED replied that sadly it would not.

**ACTION: ED to send information about these new rights to DR and KH.**

9. Any other business.

9.1. The request from the CEO to accept an unpaid non-executive directorship on a start-up was **APPROVED**.

9.2. There being no other business the Chair declared the open agenda had been covered and that the reserved agenda would now be covered.

10. Date of next meeting – 18 June 2020

11. MP left the meeting

**RESERVED MINUTES**

12. CEO Update

12.1. The CEO started with an operational update;

12.1.1. Redacted – restricted information.

12.1.2. The draft 2020-21 budget and extended 5-year plan were reviewed. While there were several big potential differences that would impact the budget, most notably the size and shape of the Northeastern mobility programmes. It was **RESOLVED** that the budget be accepted as presented, but that ongoing monitoring would be done to highlight how reality was deviating from it.

12.1.3. TN asked about cost mitigation for FY21 and the CEO agreed to prepare that and circulate with Kerry Gallivan and Anthony Rini for presentation to TN.

**ACTION: CEO to share mitigation ideas with TN.**

12.2. The CEO reported to the Board, in terms of an HR update that the discussions about voluntary recognition with University and Colleges Union were still ongoing.

13. There being no other business the Chair declared the reserved agenda had been covered and the meeting closed.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**15 OCTOBER 2019**

Action Number	Action Item	Action Owner	Expected Completion Date	Progress/Update
1	Sign final version of audited accounts and file	Master / COO	End February	<b>COMPLETED</b>

**30 JANUARY 2020**

<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Expected Completion Date</b>	<b>Progress/Update</b>
1	Inform Head of Quality and Registrar and invite the student governor to the April Board	CEO	April	<b>COMPLETED</b>
2	Get Eversheds to reply to the Charity Commission	CEO	ASAP	<b>COMPLETED</b>
4	Reappoint Crowe as auditors and ask for letter of engagement	CEO	ASAP	<b>COMPLETED</b>

**2 APRIL 2020**

<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Expected Completion Date</b>	<b>Progress/Update</b>
1	Send information to DR and KH on Tier 4 changes	ED	ASAP	
2	Share budget mitigation ideas with TN	CEO	June	