



NCHNL Board Meeting

21 January 2021 – via online meeting

MINUTES

1. Attendance and apologies

1.1. Attendance:

Darren Campili (DC)

Rob Farquharson (CEO, Secretary)

Dr Kenneth Henderson (KH)

Prof A C Grayling (Master)

Camille Kluttz-Leach (CKL, Observer)

Phi Mackness (PM, Observer)

Ralph Martin (RM, Chair)

Thomas Nedell (TN)

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.

1.2.4. CKL and PM were welcomed by the other Board members.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The previous minutes from the 8 October, 26 October and 8 December 2020 were **APPROVED**.

3. Matters Arising

3.1. The matters arising from the previous Board meetings were all reported as complete or in progress to be completed at this Board.

3.2. It was reported by RM that the search for an Independent Governor was looking positive and that it was hoped that a candidate could be put forward to the nominations committee.

4. Chairs Action

4.1. There were no Chairs actions to report.

5. Master's Update.

5.1. The Master updated the Board on the work of Academic Board. The board has been busy reviewing and approving regulations and policies, course modifications as well as reviewing the impact of COVID and assessing how to reflect that in the teaching and assessment approach. The external candidate on Academic Board was to be replaced as the current person's appointment term had ended.

5.2. Both the Dean of Faculty and Dean of Academic Development and Innovation were busy working on various initiatives around faculty management and development as well as course and pedagogical innovation.

5.3. There were no major factors impacting student experience issues over and above the disruptions caused by the pandemic but because of that there were initiatives around welfare and engagement following exercises to understand student sentiment and reports were also received by Academic Board from the Contingency Planning Group and the Academic Planning Group in these regards.

6. CEO Update

6.1. The CEO started with an operational update and reported that the campus was closed to all staff and students with England being in a third lockdown. These were currently running until reading week at the end of February. but would be reviewed this week following a review of the conditions, government guidance and student's views. It is likely that this remote provision would continue until the end of term at Easter as there were no signs of lockdown ending before then in any meaningful way.

- 6.2. The Devon House project seemed to be going well but there was still the unknown impact of the pandemic on construction timelines.
- 6.3. PW asked about requests for refunds, the CEO replied that we do not have our own accommodation so that was not an issue for the College, and we had not had requests for fee refunds due to online learning. Indeed, nationally the focus for refund demands was on accommodation.
- 6.4. The CEO then covered the regulatory area:
 - 6.4.1. The CEO provided an update on the application for University title. The OfS has confirmed that they expected the process to be reopened at the start of February. The College had made an application for University title earlier this week.
 - 6.4.2. The CEO presented the programme approval documents for consideration with DR providing context around their development and how they fitted into and expanded the existing portfolio of apprenticeship degrees.
 - **BSc (Hons) Applied Data Science**
 - **BSc (Hons) Applied Digital & Technology Solutions with ServiceNow / AWS**
 - **BSc Project Management and Digital Transformation (DA)**
 - **MSc Applied Digital & Technology Solutions (DA)**
 - **MSc Applied Artificial Intelligence and Data Science (DA)**

The Programme approval documents were **APPROVED**

ACTION: CEO to inform Director of Apprenticeships

- 6.4.3. Lastly the CEO shared the fact that meetings had been held with staff, current students and alumni on the EW report and EDI action plan which were largely positive. The Action Plan has been split into three workstreams with leads and the Board would be updated in progress in each.

7. ED Update

7.1. *Redacted – restricted information*

- 7.2. The current apprenticeship numbers were suppressed again due to the pandemic, but it was hoped that these enrollments were delayed not lost.
- 7.3. The Masters in CS was being recruited from the excess recruitment pool from the Boston's programme. *Redacted – restricted information.*
8. Any other business (open agenda).
 - 8.1. There being no other business the Chair declared the open agenda had been covered and that the reserved agenda would now be covered.
9. Date of next meeting was noted as April 29th.
10. PM left the meeting

Reserved Meeting Minutes

11. CEO financial and HR updates
 - 11.1. The CEO started with the FY22 draft budget and FY21 reforecast.
 - 11.1.1. FY 22 – the Board was not being asked to approve the budget that would be at the April Board, today the request was to approve the recruitment necessary to support the delivery of the draft budget and authorize KH to sign a Housing contract.
 - 11.1.2. The focus for next year was to grow across a broad base of programmes to diversify our portfolio, to build resilience into our model and also to allow for consistent demand over an academic year which is then easier to build upon resource-wise rather than having uneven semesters.

Redacted – restricted information

The numbers put forward in the draft budget relied upon recruitment from the Boston based enrollment team especially for Spring semester mobility programmes as well as the NU Masters programme.

So, between now and April more work was needed to firm up the actual programmes and numbers with GEO and also understand budgeting approach with EDGE and Kirsten Gilbert.
 - 11.2. *Redacted – restricted information*

The Board **NOTED** the draft budget and reforecast and **AUTHORISED** the requested spend to prepare for academic year 2021-22

- 11.3. The audits for FY20 had been finalised with the auditors and reviewed by NCH and PW; PW said that she had had a conversation with the auditors that she felt were a good fit and who should be reappointed.

The Board, constituted as the Audit committee, **APPROVED** the FY20 audited accounts (NCHNL and NCHL) and delegated the authority to sign them to the Master and TN respectively. The Board then **APPROVED** the reappointment of Crowe as the auditors for FY21.

ACTION: CEO to ensure accounts are signed and filed and auditors reappointed

- 11.4. The paper on Academic Titles was introduced by Andrew Ginger, NCH's Dean of Faculties who provided context for the Board about the proposed change.

The Board **APPROVED** the changes to Academic.

ACTION: CEO to inform Andrew Ginger.

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

MATTERS ARISING

8 OCTOBER 2020

Action Number	Action Item	Action Owner	Expected Completion Date	Progress/Update
3	Oversee finalization of FY20 accounts for January Board	PW	January	COMPLETED

26 OCTOBER 2020

Action Number	Action Item	Action Owner	Expected Completion Date	Progress/Update
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1	Oversee finalization of EW report, drafting of an action and communication plan for approval	ExCo	ASAP	COMPLETED
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21 JANUARY 2021

Action Number	Action Item	Action Owner	Expected Completion Date	Progress/Update
1	Inform Director of Apprenticeships of programme approvals	CEO	ASAP	
2	Ensure accounts are signed and filed and auditors reappointed	CEO	ASAP	
3	Inform Andrew Ginger about academic titles	CEO	ASAP	