



## University Executive Board

### Minutes of the meeting of 7 September 2021

#### Attending

Professor Shearer West (Vice-Chancellor), Professor John Atherton (FPVC Medicine and Health Sciences), Professor Dame Jessica Corner (PVC RKE), Dr Paul Greatrix (Registrar), Professor Jeremy Gregory (FPVC Arts), David Hill (CDO), Jaspal Kaur (Director of Human Resources), Professor Sam Kingman (FPVC Engineering), Professor Todd Landman (FPVC Social Sciences), Professor Andrew Long (DVC), Professor Sarah Metcalfe (Interim Provost UNM), Professor Nick Miles (Provost UNNC), Professor Robert Mokaya (PVC GE), Margaret Monckton (CFO), Sarah Speight (PVC ESE) until minute 21.118, Professor Zoe Wilson (FPVC Science)

#### Attending

Rowena Hall (Secretary), Professor Jonathan Garibaldi (Head of the School of Computer Science), Professor Richard Emes (Co-Chair, Research Strategy Action Group) for minute 21.114, Professor Neil Crout (APVC Research and Knowledge Exchange) for minute 21.114, Dr Lisa Carroll (Commercial Director) for minute 21.115

#### 21.111 Welcome, Apologies, Quoracy and Declarations of Interest

- .1 The Chair welcomed Professor Jonathan Garibaldi, Head of the School of Computer Science, to the meeting as an observer.
- .2 The Secretary confirmed that the meeting was quorate.
- .3 There were no declarations of interest.

#### 21.112 Minutes of the 4 May, 20 and 23 July and 11 August 2021 Meetings and Action Log

- .1 The minutes of the meetings held on 4 May, 20 and 23 July and 11 August 2021 were confirmed as a true record.
- .2 The following updates to the Action Log were NOTED.
  - .1 Action 19.104.7 – UEB Structure, Powers, Responsibilities and Accountabilities- the scope of the action had been expanded. Broader governance arrangements were being reviewed and the action would be brought within that activity. It was anticipated that a paper would be submitted for consideration at the December UEB meeting.
  - .2 Action 21.18.07 – Science Based Carbon Reduction Targets for the University of Nottingham UK Campuses - the submission of the carbon management plan to UEB had been delayed until November 2021.
  - .3 Action 21.97.9 – Performance and Ambition Task and Finish Group - the action had been completed.

#### 21.113 Chair's Business



1. The Vice-Chancellor had circulated a report to UEB prior to the meeting.
- .2 UEB had a detailed discussion on ways to support increased numbers of staff returning to work on campus and to support Heads of School in managing individual staff circumstances.
- .3 It was observed that a small number of departments/programmes within the University were facing challenges to deliver the required level of face-to-face teaching as a result of some staff members' concerns about returning to work on campus. This appeared to be more prevalent in the areas which had suffered more disruption as a result of the pandemic and where there had been limited face-to-face teaching since November 2020.
- .4 Where an individual staff member had an ongoing health consideration, the appropriate adjustments could be made, however it was reported that a number of cases related to more general underlying anxiety about returning to campus.
- .5 Potential approaches and mechanisms for supporting staff to return to campus were suggested:
  1. Occupational Health services were available where appropriate. Student expectation and the importance of face-to-face delivery would be threaded through such discussions.
  2. Opportunities to bring staff onto campus for short periods to support them to acclimatise such as catch ups with Heads of School.
  3. A further round of Town Hall meetings could be organised.
  4. Peer reassurance. Schools which had been operating face-to-face delivery for some time sharing their experiences with other Schools/ programmes.
  5. Utilising University communications channels to promote the benefits of being back on campus by sharing details of on campus events and activities.
- .6 UEB AGREED that:
  - .1 A set of general principles would be developed for communication across the University setting out clear expectations on the delivery of timetabled activities on campus, and the University's approach to self-isolation periods, the wearing of face coverings, social distancing and vaccination.
  - .2 A tool kit would be provided to Heads of Schools to supplement HR guidance to support them to manage individual cases and implement local decision-making.
  - .3 The frequency of Senior Leaders' meetings would be increased throughout the start of session.
- .7 The Chief Financial Officer provided an update on the USS negotiations. The UUK proposal had been voted for by the JNC and a 60-day consultation on the proposal would begin imminently.

	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>DUE</b>
.8	To prepare general principles setting out the University's clear expectations on the delivery of timetabled activities on campus and the University's approach to issues such a wearing face coverings.	Director of Human Resources	14 September



.9	Ensure a tool kit was made available to Heads of School to support them to manage individual staff concerns about returning to campus.	Director of Human Resources	14 September
.10	Increase the frequency of Senior Leader meetings.	Registrar	14 September

**21.114 Research SDP 2022-27 White Paper**

- .1 UEB RECEIVED the paper (UEB/21/105) from the PVC RKE which contained the final draft of the Research Strategy White Paper.
- .2 UEB considered the draft document and made the following observations:
  - .1 The White Paper should reference the consultation that took place at UNNC and UNM. Explicit references to the campuses would encourage better engagement with the consultation process for staff at UNNC and UNM.
  - .2 Different categories of staff were still referenced in the introduction and other parts of the document. It was suggested that using “Team” would be more appropriate and develop the sense of the University working together.
  - .3 “We” was used throughout the draft, but it was not clear to whom “we” referred. In the different contexts that the term was used, it should be clear who was captured within the definition. Without such clarity, managing performance and accountability would be more challenging.
  - .4 The questions posed to the University community should not be open questions and should not ask for priorities to be ranked. An option would be to ask staff how they would contribute to the ‘Team’.
- .3 UEB NOTED that the final version of the Research Strategy would need to provide the necessary reassurance to Council that performance issues would be addressed and ensure it was clear to the University community what changes would result from the new strategy.
- .4 UEB welcomed the level of consultation associated with the development of the research strategy

	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>DUE</b>
.5	To amend the White Paper in accordance with the suggestions made during the meeting before its release for consultation.	PVC RKE	14 September

**21.115 Modern Slavery Act Statement for 2021**

- .1 UEB RECEIVED the paper (UEB/21/104) from the CFO and which was presented by the Commercial Director.
- .2 The Commercial Director confirmed that the presentation of the statement had changed significantly since the previous year.
- .3 It was confirmed that reliance on the Rights Lab to deliver the actions under the statement had been reduced over time and in particular, with additional resource within the Procurement team. Whilst it was NOTED that there was a large number of actions to be delivered, the Commercial Director confirmed that it was considered realistic to deliver the actions listed.
- .4 Any links to slavery in the University’s past were being reviewed by a task and finish group.



- .5 The Provost UNNC confirmed that UNNC had already reviewed UNUK activity and had begun planning its own approach.
- .5 It was AGREED that further information would be made available on an internal version of the statement to indicate the responsibilities for the delivery of actions.
- .6 UEB ENDORSED the Modern Slavery Statement for 2021 for submission to Council for approval.

	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>DUE</b>
.7	To ensure that the responsibility for delivery of actions within the statement was clear in internal versions of the statement.	Chief Financial Officer	15 October
.8	To submit the statement to Council for approval.	Chief Financial Officer	30 September

**21.116 Roundtable Discussion**

- .1 First year students were arriving at UNNC the next day. There had been some challenges for a number of 2+2 students obtaining their visa for entry to the UK, but with the help of the Consulate in Shanghai, the majority of cases had now been resolved.
- .2 The Malaysian government had confirmed that universities would be permitted to open for face-to-face teaching from October.
- .3 Any queries about support for the small number of Afghan students at the University should be directed to the PVC GE.
- .4 Meetings of the University’s industrial action task group had resumed to ensure that preparations were in place to manage any potential industrial action over the coming months.
- .5 The FPVC Medicine and Health Sciences provided a brief update on the results of the Care Quality Commission inspection of Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.
- .5 Congratulations were given to Professor Sam Kingman who had been elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering.
- .6 Professor Paul Wilson would become the new Head of the School of Biosciences from 1 October 2021 and Professor Paul Hegarty had been appointed as the next head of School for Culture, Languages and Area Studies to take effect from 1 August 2022.
- .7 Professor Paul Grainge had been appointed as Academic Director for Digital Nottingham.
- .8 Professor Katherine Linehan had been appointed as the new PVC EDI and would join the University on 1 January 2022 from the University of Sheffield.