



University Executive Board

Minutes of the meeting of 6 June 2022

Attending

Professor Shearer West (Vice-Chancellor), Professor JVT (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 Katherine Linehan (PVC EDI and People), 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), Professor Zoe Wilson (FPVC Science)

Attending

Rowena Hall (Secretary), Professor Barrie Kellam from minute 22.64, Dr Andreas Fulda from minute 22.64, Michael Skinner from minute 22.64, Laura Clayton (Director of Planning, Performance and Strategic Change) for minutes 22.67 and 22.72, Sally Blackamore (Financial Controller) for minutes 22.68 and 22.69, Helen Lawrenson (Deputy Director of Finance) for minutes 22.68 and 22.69, Professor Neil Crout (APVC Research) for minutes 22.70 and 22.71, Dr Sandra Mienczakowski for minutes 22.73 and 22.74, Kate Gallagher (Director of Legal Services) for minute 22.74, Lisa Carroll (Commercial Director) for minute 22.76, Rosalie Parkin (Head of Procurement) for minute 22.76, Andrew Naylor (Chief Executive Officer Nottingham Technology Ventures) for minute 22.77.

22.64 Welcome, Apologies, Quoracy and Declarations of Interest

- .1 The Chair welcomed Professor Barrie Kellam (Head of School of Pharmacy), Dr Andreas Fulda (Associate Professor Politics and International Relations), and Michael Skinner (Chief Information Security Officer) to the meeting as observers.
- .2 The Secretary confirmed that the meeting was quorate.
- .3 There were no declarations of interest.

22.65 Minutes of the and Action Log

- .1 The minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2022 were confirmed as a true record.
- .2 The Action Tracker was NOTED.

22.66 Chair’s Business

The Vice-Chancellor had circulated a report to UEB prior to the meeting.

22.67 Business Planning, Performance and Strategic Framework

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/22/76 from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Director of Planning, Performance and Strategic Change. UEB NOTED that the paper would be submitted to the next meeting of Council.



- .2 Members were reminded of the purpose of business planning in the context of the interlinked elements of the strategic framework (performance and risk management, financial planning) and were provided with an update on the current round.
- .3 For clarity, the University’s Strategy, thematic priorities, and the associated outcomes as measured by the KPIs, had been summarised on a single page as set out in the paper.
- .4 A further two additional KPIs, in addition to those approved by UEB in April 2022, were proposed: Average Tariff and a composite Staff Engagement target to be derived from the responses to a set of questions asked as part of staff survey to be held in November 2022. UEB was reminded that the targets reflected the University’s ambition. Their delivery would require the robust support of UEB and Senior Leaders and the appetite to take difficult decisions when prioritising resources and phasing activity.
- .5 The following points were made during discussion:
 - .1 Clear UEB direction would be required to prioritise the focus of activity on areas with the biggest potential impact on targets.
 - .2 There was a complex interrelationship between the KPIs (and their targets) which would require careful management and oversight to ensure no incongruity.
 - .3 Through various initiatives, the University had sought to address NSS performance without significant success. A new institutional and more directive approach would potentially be required. It was AGREED that a University-wide approach to NSS should be adopted.
- .6 UEB APPROVED the additional KPIs and NOTED both the importance and challenge of the successful delivery of the targets.

	ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.7	To develop a University-wide approach to NSS for the next round.	PVC ESE, Deputy Registrar	Ongoing

22.68 Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and DISCUSSED paper UEB/22/86 from the Chief Financial Officer, Financial Controller and Deputy Director of Finance.
- .2 The paper set out the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022/23 including key assumptions, risks and opportunities consistent with those presented to UEB in April.
- .3 It was NOTED that the £20m cost saving previously identified had been removed through actions to incorporate opportunities that had arisen from the 2021/22 LRF3. Flexibility was built into the plan to ensure that it had capacity to respond to the changing environment, the immediate concern being inflation.
- .4 A group of UEB members had reviewed the investment pipeline to endorse the items to be prioritised during the MTFP period. There was consensus that discussions designed to identify areas for disinvestment should continue.
- .5 The level of the scholarship budget for 2022/23 was DISCUSSED. The Deputy Director Finance confirmed that historically the scholarship budget had not been effectively managed leading to regular underspend. Further information would be shared after the meeting on request.
- .6 The key messages of the MTFP would need to be shared across the University and with Senior Leaders. It was considered that involving local leaders where possible would support the delivery of the central key messages more effectively at a local level.



- .7 UEB RECOMMENDED the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2022-23 to Finance Committee for APPROVAL.

	ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.8	To identify a mechanism to ensure that disinvestment opportunities continued to be explored.	Chief Financial Officer	31 July.
.9	To develop a plan to share the key messages of the MTFP as appropriate across the University.	Chief Financial Officer	31 July

22.69 The Budget 2022/23

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and DISCUSSED paper UEB/22/85 from the Chief Financial Officer, Financial Controller and Deputy Director of Finance.
- .2 UEB RECOMMENDED the Budget 2022-23 to Finance Committee FOR APPROVAL.

22.70 Research Strategic Delivery Plan Business Case

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and NOTED a paper (UEB/22/77) from the PVC RKE which included a summary of the draft business case to support the delivery of the Research SDP. The business case would be presented to Council at its next meeting for comment before consideration for approval in the autumn.
- .2 The business case would request £27.9m investment over five years to establish and implement a programme of 12 strategic initiatives for the delivery of SDP priorities that required additional resources. The initiatives were designed, specifically and strategically, to directly benefit the University KPIs.
- .3 There was some discussion about how to ensure that the Nottingham Research Fellows programme could be leveraged to support more inclusive recruitment across disciplines and to assist the development of research clusters.
- .4 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor confirmed that there were discussions at Planning and Resources Committee about research culture and ambition, and their relationship with HR initiatives. Discussions led to an agreed timetable for monitoring progress.
- .5 The ability to adjust the balance of focus on the various initiatives in response to progress was considered as well as exit strategies where initiatives were identified to not be successfully driving the required improvements. Research Citations in top 10% KPI was highlighted as a lag indicator.
- .6 Subject to any changes necessary as a result of the discussion, UEB AGREED that the paper should be submitted to Council for consideration and feedback.

22.71 Post-REF-Review Delivery

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/22/78 from the PVC RKE which included headline interpretation of the key results of REF2022 and, in light of those results, proposed revisions to the post-REF review process previously agreed by UEB.
- .2 UEB DISCUSSED the results and highlighted the following points:
 - .1 The review should be progressed with pace within the timescales proposed and should ensure that the challenging questions were posed and answered across the University.
 - .2 Consideration should be given to prioritising actions for larger reporting areas which were likely to have a greater impact on overall results.



- .3 If the priority was to improve the quality of research, that should be made very clear to all staff.
- .4 The review should be designed to pick up all EDI considerations.
- .3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor reminded UEB that quality, rather than quantity, of research was a criterion for promotion. If considered necessary, further communications could be issued to reiterate the position.
- .4 A UEB discussion on the University’s ambition for the next REF would be required and should include the relationship between that ambition and the performance framework and finances.

	ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.5	To ensure that the size of the units of assessment were reflected in the visual representation of results.	PVC RKE	31 July
.6	To schedule an item on the UEB forward plan to consider University REF ambition	Secretary, PVC RKE	31 July

22.72 The University of Nottingham Entry into World Rankings

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/22/80 from the Director of Planning, Performance and Strategic Change.
- .2 UEB determined that the decision as to whether a single entry or separate entries to university world rankings, was a decision for UEB. It was AGREED that the University should make one submission to world rankings. There was no appetite or rationale at the present time for separate submissions for UNNC and UNM and such an approach was contrary to the University’s positioning as ‘one University campuses in three countries’. If circumstances changed, the decision could be revisited.

22.73 East Midlands 16-19 Maths School

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/22/80 from the PVC ESE which provided an update on the development of the proposal to establish a specialist 16-19 Maths School in the East Midlands in partnership with the East Midlands Education Trust and included the draft of a business case for the initiative. The draft business case would also be shared with the Department for Education for feedback.
- .2 The key requirements for the specialist maths school as defined by the Department for Educations were outlined:
 - .1 Direct teaching of small cohorts in a maths enriched environment.
 - .2 Outreach to primary and secondary schools across the East Midlands.
 - .3 The delivery of CPD to maths teachers.
- .3 UEB was invited to provide comments on the proposals prior to receiving a final version of the business case for approval in July. UEB directed that the final version of the business case should include:
 - .1 A detailed assessment of the costs, including the level of resourcing required from the School of Mathematics and other relevant schools, to support the establishment and operation of the Maths School and the expected benefits of the initiative. It was NOTED that it had been previously indicated that cash investment would not be required for the initiative.



- .2 Assurances from the relevant schools of their support for the initiative and of their ability to deliver the level of resource determined.
- .3 An analysis of the risks associated with the initiative.
- .4 Details of current widening participation activity which would cease as result of the initiative.
- .5 A clear and realistic exit plan.
- .4 The risk of local students attending the Maths School and then leaving the area to attend other universities was highlighted. A strategy for encouraging the Maths School students to apply to the University should be explored.
- .5 UEB considered the naming of the Maths School and determined that it should include reference to the University.

22.74 University of Nottingham Online Legal Status

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/22/81 from the CEO of the University of Nottingham Online (UoNO) which set out options for the legal and operational status of UoNO.
- .2 The Director of Legal Services provided an overview of the benefits and risks of the options which had been explored with relevant key stakeholders and upon which external legal advice had been sought. Areas considered included UoNO’s relationship with the Office for Students and Office of the Independent Adjudicator, as well as HR concerns such as how staff would be contracted to create and deliver content, necessary amendments to HR policies, and equal pay concerns.
- .3 UEB NOTED that the options had been considered by the Commercial Governance Board which had recommended that UoNO operated as a ‘Department ‘of the University with associated academic and assurance functions.
- .4 UEB NOTED that operating as a ‘Department’ would mean that UoNO would be subject to all the conditions of Office for Students registration. UoNO’s operation would need to be reflected across the Quality Manual and other student/education policies. Any breach of the Office for Students conditions of registration by UoNO would risk the University’s registration.
- .5 The CEO of UoNO assured UEB that the operation of UoNO would not impact the University’s Office for Students’ registration. The Registrar recommended that further legal advice was obtained in order that the University was fully apprised of any potential risk.
- .6 UEB AGREED that there remained issues to be resolved in connection with Office for Students conditions of registration and HR matters, but that at the current time UoNO should be operated as a ‘Department’ of the University. The approach to the operating model could be revisited in the future as appropriate.

	ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.7	To obtain further legal opinion on UoNO and any impact on the Office of Students conditions of registration.	CEO UoNO	31 July

22.75 Professional Services Steering Group (PSSG) Terms of Reference

- .1 UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/22/81 from the Registrar and Chief Financial Officer which proposed that the Professional Services Steering Group be formalised as a committee of UEB in order to provide additional support in leading operational work and managing the governance of programme delivery.



- .2 It was NOTED that, if agreed, UEB would be asked to agree a name for the committee and a list of its priorities for 2022/23 at the next UEB meeting.
- .3 It was AGREED that:
 - .1 The Professional Services Steering Group should be formalised as a committee of UEB.
 - .2 Membership of the committee should be reviewed further to consider how the committee would best draw UNNC and UNM into its activity or discussion and ensure that there was a link to and alignment with academic leadership. A suggestion was made that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor be included as a member.
 - .3 Consideration should be given to, and reflected in the Terms of Reference, the decision-making responsibilities of the committee.
 - .4 The revised terms of reference should be submitted to the next UEB meeting for approval along with a proposed list of priorities for the committee and a proposed name.

	ACTION	OWNER	DUE
.4	To submit revised terms of reference and a list of committee priorities to the next UEB meeting.	Registrar, CFO	5 July

22.76 Agile Procurement –Review of Public Contract Regulations

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and DISCUSSED paper UEB/22/83 from the Chief Financial Officer, Commercial Director and Head of Procurement.
- .2 The paper set out the recommendation for the University to determine that the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR15) no longer applied, as it could be demonstrated that the University was not a Contracting Authority as defined in the Regulations. The paper also:
 - .1 Set out the challenges faced by the University in the application of the PCR15;
 - .2 Demonstrated that the application of a more agile procurement process could enable the University to achieve greater benefits and better commercial value, and why now was the time to change;
 - .3 Set out the risks of change and how those risks would be mitigated.
- .3 UEB ENDORSED the recommendation that the University should opt out from PCR15, and confirmed its view that the University was not a Contracting Authority under the PCR15 from August 2022. It was AGREED that the recommendation and accompanying paper should be submitted to Finance Committee for approval with a view to its implementation from 1 August 2022.

22.77 Midlands Investment Vehicle

- .1 UEB RECEIVED and DISCUSSED paper UEB/22/85 from the Chief Executive Officer, Nottingham Technology Ventures which set out a proposal to enter into partnership to create an ‘Midlands Investment Vehicle’ (MIV) to raise capital for investment in early-stage tech companies.
- .2 The proposal was a response to the creation of similar funds in other regions and as a mechanism to address a lack of spin out funding in the Midlands region. It was anticipated that the partnership could potentially raise £300m capital funding from external investors.



- .3 A new company would be formed with the full backing and involvement of the 8 university partners in the Midlands Innovation network, each of which would provide seed funding. Nottingham, Birmingham and Warwick would be the cornerstone universities.
- .4 It was suggested that the level of the success of the partnership would depend on the quality of the team assembled to lead it.
- .5 UEB considered the formation of the partnership to be an important opportunity for the University and NOTED that the negotiation of the heads of terms and development of the partnership framework would continue over the coming months. Further information would be provided to UEB as required.

22.78 Roundtable Discussion

- .1 Work was ongoing to develop remote study options for Chinese students for future academic years.
- .2 Meetings continued in connection with professorial banding decisions. Following the completion of the initial banding process, the framework for professorial pay banding would require renaming.
- .3 A project had been launched to review the support available to students from the disability support service on arrival at the University
- .4 Covid restrictions in Malaysia had been lifted which had allowed face to face delivery of teaching to resume.