

## University Executive Board

### Minutes

03 February 2026

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**Present:** Professor Jane Norman (Vice-Chancellor, Chair), Professor Sube Banerjee (FPVC MHS), Jason Carter (Chief Governance and Risk Officer), Professor Jeremy Gregory (FPVC Arts and FPVC Social Sciences), Professor Katherine Linehan (PVC ESE), Professor Zoe Wilson (FPVC Science), Chris Hunt (Chief Operations Officer), Professor Tom Rodden (PVC RKE), Helen McNamara (Chief People Officer), Professor Sam Kingman (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Kylie Colvin (Interim Chief Strategy Officer), Professor David Fitzpatrick (Provost and Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Nottingham Malaysia), for minute 26.17, 26.18, 26.19 and 26.29

**Apologies:** Professor Chris Tuck (FPVC Engineering), Professor Jon Garibaldi (Provost and Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Nottingham Ningbo, China)

**In Attendance:** Emily Murtha (Secretary), Paul Channon (Director of Finance Strategy), Alison Reeves (Associate Director of Educational Excellence) for minute 26.20, Kev Thompson (Director of Governance and Assurance) for minute 26.20 and 26.23, Paul Steeples (Director of Financial Management) for minute 26.30, Rachel Brereton (Director of Research and Innovation Operations) for minute 26.21, Zoe Goodwin (HR Project Manager) for minute 26.33, Becci Brown (Talent Manager) for minute 26.33, Emily Rycroft (Programme Manager) for minute 26.34, Chris Garrod (Faculty Operations Director, Medical and Health Sciences) for minute 26.34, Gary Moss (Chief property and Facilities Officer) for minute 26.22, Laura Armitage (Director of Estates Master Planning) for minute 26.22, Sara Troy-Brown (Senior Governance Manager) for minute 26.23, Kerry Williamson (Director of Procurement and Financial Operations) for minute 26.24

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### 26.17 Welcome, Quoracy and Declarations of Interest

The Secretary confirmed that the meeting was quorate. There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

### 26.18 Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 December 2025, 18 December, 6 January 2026, 19 January 2026, and Action Log

1. UEB APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held 2 December 2025, 18 December, 6 January 2026, 19 January 2026 (UEB/26/27)
2. The Action Log was noted, and members were asked to progress outstanding actions

### 26.19 Chairs Brief

1. The Chair provided an update on the publication of the University's accounts, noting an operating surplus of £8m, the inclusion of exit costs and asset depreciation, and that some adverse media coverage was anticipated
2. The Chair emphasised the requirement for papers to be submitted on time to allow adequate consideration and confirmed a zero-tolerance approach to late submissions.

### 26.20 Academic Quality Assurance

1. UEB RECEIVED and NOTED paper UEB/26/20 titled Academic Quality Assurance from the Associate Director of Educational Excellence and the Director of Governance and Assurance.



2. The paper set out the introduction of revised, risk-based quality assurance processes at programme level, designed to reduce workload and target areas of risk, alongside changes to governance arrangements including the relocation of the Quality Assurance function to Governance and Assurance.
  1. UEB NOTED the implementation of revised academic quality assurance arrangements, including an annual risk-based and enhanced periodic review process, that early implementation has been positive, and that clear accountability for programme improvement planning is required at Head of School level, with stronger prioritisation of programme-level engagement within Schools.
  2. UEB DISCUSSED whether Heads of School should be accountable or responsible for programme improvement planning, noting the need for the accountability framework to reflect new academic leadership structures including at College level.
  3. UEB NOTED the respective oversight roles of the Assurance Committee in supporting implementation and the Academic Performance Committee in scrutinising outcomes prior to reporting to Council, and the need to align with PSRB requirements to avoid duplication while retaining institutional oversight.
  4. UEB ENDORSED the approach to Academic Quality Assurance outlined in the paper
  5. UEB AGREED the accountabilities and ownership for Academic Quality Assurance, as set out below, subject to amendments agreed at the meeting.
    - The Chief Governance and Risk Officer holds overall accountability for ensuring independent academic quality assurance across the University.
    - The Deputy Vice-Chancellor is accountable for ensuring that academic quality standards are adhered to.
    - The PVC Education and Student Experience is accountable for ensuring that Education and Student Experience strategic plans sufficiently consider and meet quality standards.
    - Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors are accountable for the delivery of programme improvement action plans.
    - Heads of School are responsible, rather than accountable, for the ownership of programme improvement plans and the delivery of actions required to ensure quality standards are met across undergraduate, postgraduate taught, postgraduate research and degree apprenticeship provision.

## **26.21 Research Financial Performance**

1. UEB RECEIVED paper UEB/26/23, Research Financial Performance from the Director of Research and Innovation Operations.
2. The paper outlined the University's research financial performance, noting underperformance against in-year research income and margin targets due to issues with the timing and consistency of research spend postings, and set out the root causes, current interventions, and proposed further actions
  1. UEB NOTED that payroll costs represent a significant proportion of research expenditure and that manual recoding requirements, combined with inconsistent coding practice and limited system automation, are contributing to delays and data integrity issues.
  2. UEB NOTED that process changes introduced since December have reduced error rates, but that a backlog of historical errors remains, impacting the ability to accurately report research spend and margins.



3. UEB AGREED that a monthly progress update should be brought to UEB on the stabilisation of research financial performance
4. UEB APPROVED the establishment of two APM2 fixed-term roles (six months) to address payroll workflow pressures within HR
5. UEB ENDORSED further exploration of accelerated UniCore stabilisation, including additional product team capacity and potential contractual escalation with Mastek and/or Oracle, subject to appropriate governance approval
6. UEB ENDORCED focused Research and Innovation finance activity to correct miscoding, reallocate research costs where appropriate, and improve UniCore compliance, with systemic issues escalated as required.

ACTION		OWNER	DUE DATE
03/02/2026 26.21.1	Provide a monthly progress update to UEB on the stabilisation of research financial performance, including progress on correcting historic miscoding, improvements to data integrity, and the impact on in-year research income and margin.	Director of Research and Innovation Operations	July 26

**26.22 Review of Mothballing Opportunities**

1. UEB RECEIVED and DISCUSSED paper UEB/26/25 titled Review of Mothballing Opportunities from the Chief Property and Facilities Officer and the Director of Estates Master Planning.
2. The paper outlined a high-level review of mothballing opportunities across the estate, identifying up to 27 under-utilised buildings potentially suitable for mothballing, subject to further analysis, to reduce the estate footprint, deliver operational cost savings and release space for external leasing
  1. UEB NOTED that properties on the amber list located at Sutton Bonington would require investment to relocate specialist equipment and ENDORSED the progression of a feasibility study to explore mothballing options for these buildings.
  2. UEB NOTED that a wider review of Lakeside and the Farm is underway, that these assets remain on the list for completeness, and that separate papers will be brought forward in due course.
  3. UEB NOTED that the Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Engineering will act as Executive Sponsor for the programme
  4. UEB APPROVED the mothballing of the buildings on the green and amber lists.
  5. UEB APPROVED the funding of an APM5 Project Manager on a six-month fixed-term contract, on the basis that all alternative internal resourcing options had been considered and that appointment would proceed only where no suitable alternatives were available
  6. UEB APPROVED the provision of a £200k revenue fund to support delivery of the mothballing programme, with expenditure to be brought forward to the Estates Committee for approval.
  7. UEB ENDORSED the principle of retaining and protecting cash generated from property sales to fund a demolition programme, subject to planning permission



### **26.23 Committee Paper Standards and Requirements**

1. UEB RECEIVED and NOTED paper UEB/26/22 titled Committee Paper Standards and Requirements from the Director of Governance and Assurance and the Senior Governance Manager
2. The paper set out proposed standards, requirements and responsibilities for the preparation and submission of papers to Council, Senate, UEB and their committees, including an associated paper template, and sought approval prior to submission to Council.
  1. UEB NOTED the importance of supporting implementation through guidance, training and engagement, including development of an open governance SharePoint site and planned engagement sessions with senior teams and key paper authors.
  2. UEB APPROVE the proposed paper standards and requirements.

### **26.24 ECCTA Failure to Prevent Fraud Offence Update on Action Plan**

1. UEB RECEIVED and NOTED paper UEB/26/18, ECCTA Failure to Prevent Fraud Offence Update on Action Plan from the Director of Procurement and Financial Operations.
2. The paper provided an update on progress against the University's action plan to address compliance gaps relating to the Failure to Prevent Fraud offence under the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023, which came into effect on 1 September 2025
  1. UEB DISCUSSED recent and emerging fraud cases, noting an increase in active cases compared to the previous year and the importance of demonstrating to the Audit and Risk Committee that robust action is being taken
  2. UEB AGREED that further work should focus on mandatory fraud awareness training, improved visibility of fraud risks and themes, and strengthening investigative capability
  3. UEB NOTED the value of external engagement, including potential briefings from regional law enforcement, to reinforce senior leadership awareness and capability.

### **26.25 Gift Acceptance and Ethical Fundraising Policy**

1. UEB APPROVED paper UEB/26/17, Gift Acceptance and Ethical Fundraising Policy

### **26.26 NTU Collaboration**

1. UEB NOTED paper UEB/26/16, NTU Collaboration

### **26.27 People and Culture Terms of Reference**

1. UEB APPROVED paper UEB/26/15, People and Culture Terms of Reference

### **26.28 eCirculation Outcomes**

1. UEB APPROVED, via eCirculation, the dates and next steps outlined in paper UEB/26/21 for dissemination of the People and Culture 2025 Survey results to local areas.