Present:

Mr Ian Blatchford (Chairman)   Mr Mike Kapur
Professor Dominic Shellard (Vice-Chancellor)   Mr Oliver Mishcon
Mr Mark Anderson   Professor Tim O’Sullivan
Mr Alan Charlton   Ms Suzanne Overton-Edwards
Ms Ann Ewing   Ms Marcia Saunders
Miss Christine Hancock   Mr Tony Stockdale
Professor Robert Harris   Mr Ian Warrington

In Attendance:

Professor David Wilson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Business and Law
Mr Ben Browne, Director of People and Organisational Development and Operations
Mr Simon Ambrose, Executive Officer to the Vice-Chancellor
Ms Rebecca Jenkyn, Clerk to the Board of Governors
Ms Sue Francis, Assistant Clerk to the Board of Governors (Secretary)

Guest Attendance

Mr Paul Marshall, Director of Strategic Planning (Item 2019 only)
Mr James Gardner, Dean of International (Up to and including item 2020)
Dr Gerard Moran, Academic Director of Overseas Engagement (Item 2020 only)
Mr Jonathan Shuter, Director of Finance (Item 2020 only)
Mr Dieter Kraftner, Director of Information Technology and Media Services (Item 2021 only)
Professor Andy Downton, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning (Item 2021 only)

2015 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2016 Declaration of any Pecuniary, Family or other Personal Interests

No interests were declared.

2017 Chairman’s update

The Chairman welcomed two new governors, Mr Alan Charlton and Mr Oliver Mishcon, to their first Board meeting. Governors were advised that this was Professor Tim O’Sullivan’s final meeting and that the process to elect his successor was underway.

An update with regard to the appointment of additional governors would be provided at the November 2013 Board meeting.

The Chairman further reported that he had visited 10 Downing Street that morning, along with the Vice-Chancellor, the Dean of International and the Executive Officer to the Vice-Chancellor. The purpose of the visit was to promote De Montfort
University's (DMU's) bid to be the education partner for the Government's flagship GREAT events during 2014. Further details would be provided later in the agenda by the Vice-Chancellor ([item 2022 refers](#)).

The Board was advised that the agenda items would be discussed out of the proposed order to accommodate a short meeting of the Remuneration Committee.

### 2018 Report by the Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor gave an oral update to governors, which covered the following topics:

1. 10 significant things about DMU;
2. Admissions 2013 and beyond;
3. Withdrawal from the University Alliance; and
4. #DMUglobal.

#### 10 significant things about DMU

The Vice-Chancellor summarised the university's key achievements:

1. DMU was a highly popular university. For the second year running, the university had exceeded its Student Number Control (SNC) target. This year had also seen the university recruit to its SNC+3% allowance.
2. The quality of the university’s student intake was increasing. The average entry tariff was now three A-level grade Bs (BBB) and offers to ABB+ grade students had been 8% above target.
3. The university was an international leader in the Creative Industries.
4. The university undertook vital research and achieved its highest ever research and commercial income for 2012/13.
5. A significant £8.7m (£4.2m operating) financial surplus was reported for 2012/13. The surplus would be reinvested in the appointment of up to 30 new academic staff members, each with a full teaching load and research profile.
6. [point redacted for commercial sensitivity].
7. Continual investment was being made in the staff and student experience: £20m would be invested in IT improvements, £90m on Campus redevelopments, and an increased annual funding of £1m was being provided to De Montfort Students’ Union (DSU).
8. The university was committed to the Public Good, with all staff being paid a living wage and the university being committed to its local community (Square Mile). In October 2013, the university would welcome the Rector and ten students from the Federal University of Santa Maria (UFSM), Brazil, for a respite holiday following a fire at the Kiss nightclub in the City, in January 2013, which claimed the lives of 138 UFSM students.
9. The university was committed to its region. Dynamic partnerships had been formed with Leicester City Football Club, Leicester Tigers, Leicestershire County Cricket Club and the Curve theatre.
10. To support student employability, the university had introduced a number of schemes, including DMU Graduate Champions (400 internships), Frontrunners, Unitemps and #DMUglobal.
Admissions 2013 and beyond

Governors were advised that, early in the 2013/14 recruitment process, the university had seen a slight dip in undergraduate applications. A major review was undertaken of demand against course provision which demonstrated that there was potential to increase both intake and quality. Additional offers were made in high demand and high quality areas, supported by a greatly enhanced conversion campaign.

The revised strategy had led to a significant increase in acceptances from good to high tariff students. As a result, the university entered Clearing with its smallest historic target. Academic staff had responded positively to the strategy. Securing the Bond had been significant in allowing investments to be made in these programmes and enabling the university to grow its student numbers, particularly in Game Art Design and Fashion Design.

Demand for home Post Graduate Taught (PGT) programmes remained a challenge, reflecting a sector trend. Conversion work in this area has also been enhanced, leading to a higher number of acceptances despite decreased demand.

It was acknowledged that the sector as a whole was currently experiencing a decline in A-level student numbers. However, an improving BTEC population was opening-up new opportunities for the university, with a growth in the number of candidates completing BTEC courses and 45% of these students achieving the equivalent of A-level grades ABB+. It was considered that the university’s portfolio was well aligned to high calibre BTEC candidates and significant communications would be undertaken to maximise recruitment opportunities.

A comment was made with regard to a recruitment cap being applied by the Government to Pharmacy student numbers. The Board was advised that the university would be undertaking a review of its Pharmacy provision and the Vice-Chancellor invited Ms Saunders to contribute to the review.

Withdrawal from the University Alliance

The Board was advised that the university’s Executive Board had taken the decision to withdraw from the University Alliance due, in part, to an increasing amount of university business considered to be commercially sensitive. It was considered that the university had begun to create its own unique identity and was keen to continue to do this without alignment with any particular mission group. The university’s Communications directorate was finalising a plan to convey this decision to the Alliance itself and the public more widely. An announcement would be made in due course.

The Board supported the decision.

#DMUglobal

The Vice-Chancellor updated the Board on a new initiative, #DMUglobal, which aimed to provide a majority of DMU students with an international experience during their studies, from short visits for language training and cultural exploration, to full-year placements with other universities, or with one of the university’s global business partners.
Governors were advised that, at present, only 6% of UK students spent time overseas during their time at university and, in this regard, UK higher education lagged significantly behind Europe and other parts of the world.

It is proposed that all DMU students would be eligible to participate in the scheme, which the university was intending to part-fund to reduce the costs for students. It was anticipated that, subject to Board approval, circa £1.5m would be invested in the scheme per year, which would be funded from a combination of DMU resources and from external fundraising.

The university was currently exploring the possibility of an alliance with British Airways with a view to reducing associated travel costs.

It was planned that the initiative would be announced to university staff that day, followed by a series of focus groups with academic and professional services staff to shape the project’s content and direction. It was hoped that the initiative would gain the backing of the Minister of State for Universities and Science, the Right Honourable David Willetts MP.

A pilot project would commence in the spring of 2014, after which formal approval of the expenditure for this project would be sought from the Board. It was envisaged that the full programme would begin in the 2014/15 academic year.

A question was raised as to whether there would be sufficient take-up of the scheme. The Board was advised that the university was investigating ways in which students could gain credit in their modules for participating. Students would be advised that, through participation, they would gain a broader cultural awareness and ‘world-view’ than they would usually gain from an education based solely in the UK.

It was further suggested that the initiative would provide a unique selling point to enhance student recruitment. However, it was important to offer a wide choice of locations.

The Board fully supported the initiative.

2019 Annual Sustainability Assessment by Governing Bodies

The Director of Strategic Planning introduced the paper outlining proposals for submission of the Board of Governors’ formal annual sustainability assessment to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

Governors were advised that the Wakeham Review had recommended that funding councils introduce a series of metrics into the accountability process around sustainability, and that institutions’ governing bodies make a formal annual assessment to assure themselves with regard to sustainability. The recommendation had led to the new HEFCE mandatory requirement for an institutional sustainability report to be developed.

A number of metrics, particularly around financial health, had been set by HEFCE for use by all institutions. However, individual institutions had discretion over the metrics used for ‘research’, ‘learning and teaching’ and ‘other’ areas (up to two per area).
The Executive Board had recommended the following metrics, derived from the university’s existing set of strategic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

**Teaching and Learning:**

1. Average Intake Tariff Score. Tariff points were used to indicate the quality of the student body, and could be used as a proxy for the demand for DMU courses.
2. NSS – Overall satisfaction with course. This would give an important indicator of how final year students viewed their overall DMU experience.

**Research:**

1. Number of postgraduate research (PGR) students per academic full-time equivalent (FTE).
2. Research grants and contracts income per academic FTE.

Both measures were standard indicators of the health of a university’s research base across the sector.

**Other:**

1. Moody’s credit rating.
2. Percentage employed six months after graduating in ‘graduate-level’ jobs.

The university considered both measures to be important for sustainability, not covered in other areas.

It was agreed that a metric for student retention performance would be included within the report, to demonstrate the university’s strong focus on this issue.

A question was raised as to whether the university should re-consider its benchmark group in order for comparisons to be made against institutions that better reflect DMU’s aspirations. The Director of Strategic Planning confirmed that he would be reviewing the current benchmark group as part of the 2013/14 planning process, with a view to generating a comparator group of similar institutions, and a further group of aspirational institutions.

The Board approved the proposed metrics, subject to the inclusion of an appropriate metric to measure student retention performance, and noted that a final Annual Sustainability Report, outlining current performance and targets for the next 5 years, would be presented for approval at the next Board of Governors’ meeting, on 21 November 2013.

**2020 Appointment of International Pathway Provider**

The Dean of International introduced a paper, which updated governors on recent developments around the university’s engagement with a potential international pathway provider, with whom the university would work to offer pre-degree and related pathway programmes for international students.

Governors were advised that the proposal for consideration remained as outlined in the paper submitted to the Board of Governors’ meeting in July 2013. However, since then, considerable progress had been made in that:
a) The first phase of contract negotiation on the key principles of the arrangement had been completed to all parties’ satisfaction;
b) Full legal and financial due diligence had been completed with no concerns being highlighted on the company’s viability;
c) A full business case had been constructed, which was provided to governors within the meeting papers; and
d) A full review of the work had been undertaken by the Risk Management Committee.

In addition, governors Mr Mike Kapur, Mr Tony Stockdale and Professor Robert Harris had been involved in detailed discussions with the proposed provider, ISIS Education.

It was reported that some governors had received an email communication on 18 September 2013 from the Chair of the DMU branch of the University and College Union (UCU) outlining concerns over the proposed partnership with ISIS.

The Chair advised governors that this was, potentially the final time that the Board would collectively discuss the proposal and, as such, it should be given very careful consideration.

It was reported that the contract terms were still subject to legal agreement, but there had been acceptance in the negotiation stage to the operation of a break clause option at Year 5 of the contract. This would provide the university with an opportunity to formally review the partnership and, should it be deemed to be failing to meet a specific set of Key Performance Indicators, the university would be able to terminate the contract at that point without any on-going liability. In addition, termination grounds would be included throughout the length of the agreement with provisions to ensure that students already registered on the programmes were able to complete their studies without any adverse consequences.

It was recognised that the key to maximising progression rates and thereby achieving the commercial aims of the contract was to ensure that all students enrolled on the foundation programmes were fully incorporated within the life and services of the university from the outset. It was proposed that this would be achieved by:

• Providing teaching space within the 1 Mill Lane building in the heart of the campus;
• Sourcing living accommodation via existing Nomination Agreements with private Halls accommodation providers, to ensure integration with existing students;
• Providing students with access to all the same benefits and services as existing university students, subject to exceptions for those students who are under 18 years of age;
• Providing a graduation ceremony; and
• Inviting students to university events.

A Steering Board and an Academic Board would determine priorities and would agree the content of programmes and the management of those programmes as the relationship progressed. Both the university and ISIS would be represented in equal numbers on the Board and the university would hold the casting vote on decisions. It was considered that the partnership was equally as important to ISIS as the university and that ISIS fully understood how vital the quality dimension was to the success of the arrangement.
The Board was advised that the arrangements were subject to UK Border Agency (UKBA) guidance and requirements. There were a number of options available to both parties to ensure the arrangement was compliant. Negotiations were proceeding to determine which would be the most advantageous to the university. The Board was assured that, if no agreement could be reached with UKBA, the contract would not come into force.

Governors were advised that the university had secured an exclusivity arrangement with ISIS, based on both geographical location and specialist expertise. This would ensure that ISIS could not contract with:

- Other Higher Education providers within a 40 mile radius of the Leicester campus; or
- Specified institutions across the UK considered to be direct competitors.

There was a requirement on the university to pay ISIS a commission on a per capita basis for students who progressed to a DMU award each year. The university had negotiated for this to be on a tapered basis with the highest rate of 15% of tuition fees only being payable once progression rates equalled the agreed figure.

The university’s income from the arrangement would be predicated on the progression rates when students enter the university as Undergraduate or Masters students. [remainder of paragraph redacted for commercial sensitivity].

Governors were reminded that, as the selection of ISIS had not been within a formal tender process, approval had been given to issue a Voluntary Ex-Ante Transparency (VEAT) Notice in The Official Journal of the European Union Awards section. The VEAT notice was subsequently placed, alerting the market to the university’s intention to award a contract to ISIS. The university had received no objections to the notice from competitors in the market, thus mitigating any future challenge.

A question was raised with regard to the university’s confidence in achieving the predicted 85% progression rate. It was suggested that high levels of progression would be achieved primarily through ensuring pathway students felt part of the university.

A further question was raised with regard to the university’s ability to absorb the additional students onto DMU courses. It was confirmed that, once it was known which courses students wish to progress onto, resources would be shifted as required. This exercise, which would be undertaken at a university level, would need to be repeated annually, since demand would differ each year. It was acknowledged that certain courses currently had capacity to absorb additional students. Where this was not the case, additional staff would be recruited. Link tutors would be established within the faculties and would utilise ISIS’s career guidance expertise to ensure that students were guided to the appropriate courses.

A question was raised as to which member of university staff would be responsible for the day-to-day management of the partnership. It was confirmed that there were two crucial aspects to the success of the partnership, these being ‘quality’ and ‘international’, and that these aspects would be overseen by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning and the Dean of International, respectively. The day-to-day logistics would be managed by the Chief Operating Officer up to the point of the Centre opening. There would also be scope for the Academic Director of Overseas Engagement to have overall responsibility for the project. In addition, DSU would closely monitor the partnership.
The university felt that a strong relationship had already developed with ISIS.

The Chair invited Professor Robert Harris, Mr Mike Kapur and Mr Tony Stockdale to provide their thoughts on the proposal, given their involvement in the discussions. All advised that they were content with the investigations undertaken to date and endorsed their support for the partnership.

The Board approved:

a) the continuation of discussions with ISIS towards finalising contract terms; and
b) the provision of delegated authority to the Vice-Chancellor and the Chairman of the Board to complete the contract documentation.

2021 IT and the digital campus at DMU

IT infrastructure investment

The Director of People and Organisational Development (POD) and Operations and the Director of Information Technology and Media Services (ITMS) gave a presentation on IT infrastructure investment.

It was reported that the university had suffered from significant under-investment in its information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure for a number of years, which had created a number of risks across university operations.

In recognition of this situation, in 2011 the university had commissioned Hewlett-Packard to undertake a thorough evaluation of the existing situation. The evaluation provided much needed external verification that significant investment was required in systems and technologies to address all outstanding risks.

An ICT transformation programme was now underway, encompassing IT infrastructure and academic and business solutions. The programme of work had been divided into work streams, each with a defined reporting line. Careful project planning had identified pinch points affecting delivery timescales and adjustments were made as appropriate.

The main risks and challenges to successful delivery of the programme were identified as follows:

1. Capacity to deal with change;
2. Limited window for change within the academic calendar;
3. Resistance to change culture;
4. Inconsistent administrative processes across the university; and
5. Ability to absorb increased revenue pressures.

In terms of revenue pressures, there was a need to ensure that the project achieved its planned return on investment. This would be addressed through staffing reductions, facilitated by the introduction of automated processes.

It was also recognised that a staffing restructure may be required to ensure staff were appropriately matched to roles going forward.

The programme of work would incorporate sufficient time for user support and training. In addition, assuming no slippage to the programme timescale, a one-
month window would be available during which students would be invited to test the proposed systems. DSU was involved in the projects and would provide support students, as required.

A post-implementation review would be undertaken, including a value-for-money assessment.

Impact of IT investment on teaching

The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning gave a presentation on the impact of IT investment on teaching at De Montfort University (DMU).

Governors were advised that, nationally, DMU was in a good position in terms of its learning services, with many staff, across all faculties, already actively engaging with technologies. A significant development for the university had been the recent introduction of a mobile Blackboard interface. Other short-term planned improvements included on-line timetabling.

The university was in the process of defining a new vision and strategy for Enhanced Learning through Technology (ELT) to encourage university-wide adoption, to a specific minimum and consistent level by focussing on:

- An explicit e-learning strategy and accompanying communications;
- 100% target for virtual learning environment and core ELT provision/support;
- Step-change in e-learning provision and delivery;
- E-learning content management systems automation;
- Continued incentives for trailblazers and pedagogic researchers;
- Recognition and appropriate balance of blended learning and personalised student support.

The development and delivery of e-learning would, in turn, enable face-to-face lectures to be devoted to high-quality teaching time, to spark debate and to check students’ understanding of subjects.

Governors were shown a diagram detailing ‘core’, ‘arranged’, ‘recommended’ and ‘recognised’ technological innovations. It was suggested that the diagram could be redeveloped to centre around the ‘learner’.

A question was raised as to whether the use of technology would better enable small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) to engage with the university. It was confirmed that methods to enable businesses to contribute to learning resources would be explored.

2022 2014 and 2015 GREAT Campaign

In a change to the planned discussion, the Vice-Chancellor updated the Board of Governors on the university’s bid to become the Government’s Education Channel partner in the forthcoming GREAT campaign.

Governors were reminded that GREAT was an ambitious international marketing campaign, launched by the Government in 2012, to showcase the very best of what Britain had to offer, with a view to encouraging the world to study, visit and do business with the UK.
In 2014, a flagship programme comprising a series of spectacular festivals of British creativity and commercial opportunities would take place. The event would be hosted by the cities of Hong Kong, Istanbul, Shanghai. Each venue would offer valuable recruitment opportunities for the university, plus opportunities for networking with leading sector brands.

The week-long events would comprise a series of themed days combining business and entertainment programmes, including summits, workshops, masterclasses and cultural events. One of the themed days would be Education Day, focusing on the strengths and successes of British education, and showcasing designs, products, service solutions and people.

The investment required by the university, if selected as the Education Channel partner [figure redacted for commercial sensitivity]. However, it was considered that the return on this investment would potentially be very significant. The benefits to the university from being chosen as the Education Channel partner would include:

- Brand exposure on event materials and in media coverage;
- Interview opportunities with local media;
- A dedicated page on the GREAT website and a double-page spread in the official event programme;
- The right to host VIP event during the event;
- Representation on panel discussions;
- A generous number of delegate and VIP passes to the event, for which it is hoped to invite a number of DMU students.

It was not known, at this stage, whether the university, if successful, would be chosen as the sole education partner, or whether the role would be shared with one or more universities.

The university would be informed of the outcome of its bid during week commencing 30 September 2013 and, if successful, would have claim to all marketing rights under the GREAT brand throughout 2014. A paper on the DMU brand would be presented to a future Board of Governors meeting.

2023 Portfolio Review

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced a discussion on ‘What DMU would be teaching in 2016’. A summary of the discussion has been provided below:

Governors were informed that a review of Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) enrolment trends over the last three years had thrown-up a number of key patterns that were potentially indicative of subject demand over the next three years. Many were already DMU priorities following the recent Portfolio Review:

- Undergraduate demand for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects had continued to gather momentum, with mathematics, physics and chemistry showing particular promise.
- Improvements in both mechanical and electrical engineering recruitment at undergraduate level (both domestic and international) were continuing. It was considered that levels of future investment may pose an issue for the university.
- The overall trend over the last three years had been on growth in subjects with clear, tangible employability links. As such, areas such as Pharmacy, Nursing, Journalism, Teacher Training and Fashion had performed well. With the
growing importance placed on employability, it was highly likely that the key vocationally-oriented subjects would continue to perform well.

- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor would be leading a review of Nursing and Midwifery teaching provision.

- DMU placed great emphasis on professional qualifications, with 126 professionally accredited courses currently offered. However, the published Key Information Sets did not accurately reflect this.

- Sports Science (an area currently not served by DMU) ranked in the top ten in terms of enrolments at undergraduate level. The university was currently exploring this subject area, though it was noted that recruitment was skewed towards institutions offering applied provision.

- Despite the employability advantages that modern languages carried, the appetite for French, German and Spanish at ‘A’ Level remained weak, and this pattern was mirrored by the falling number of UCAS acceptances. However, Chinese studies and language were exhibiting traces of growing interest at undergraduate level. In terms of postgraduate trends, an upward pattern was emerging for Eastern, Asiatic and African languages. DMU was moving forward with the development of the Confucius Institute, alongside other language initiatives.

- Overseas markets continued to be drawn to the business, management and finance subjects, and market observers such as the British Council Education Intelligence Unit pointed to this pattern continuing. The university would need to be fleet of foot to adapt to future trends.

- ‘Alternative’ sectors continued to expand provision in the market. DMU would need to prepare for growing levels of competition in the areas of business and law, as well as the applied design fields.

In conclusion, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported that, whilst technological developments would be harnessed by the university, face-to-face teaching by passionate lecturing staff, and imparting on students valuable employable skills, would be key to differentiating DMU from its competitors.

It was confirmed that a portfolio review would be undertaken on an annual basis.

2024 Campus Transformation

The Director of POD and Operations provided a brief update on campus transformation projects.

Two questions were then put to the Board which governors were asked to reflect on:

1. Whether, if the opportunity arose in the short-term, the university should consider the purchase of additional premises to accommodate potential future growth in student numbers.
2. Whether the university should undertake a necessary refurbishment of its two Halls of Residence, at a cost of circa £6m, or seek to sell or lease the buildings to a private accommodation provider.

With regard to the purchase of additional premises, the Chair of the Finance and Human Resources Committee indicated that, subject to there being an appropriate business case, the university should pursue suitable opportunities that arise.

2025 The Student Voice

The DSU President introduced the topic.
Governors were advised of the changing relationship between the university and the DSU in that there was now a much less formal approach to raising issues, with students now communicating directly with university management. As such, the role of the DSU was primarily to mediate, by initiating and delivering change through its elected officers, using market research and by empowering individual students. It was considered that the student voice was most powerful when all three factors were present.

In addition, issues raised by students were now much less focussed on national and international issues, in favour of university-specific matters of directly concern, for example, increasing personal tutor time per student. This campaign had now been taken forward and proposals would be presented to the next meeting of the Academic Board. Governors acknowledged that personal tutoring was a fundamental element of the role of all teaching staff and that training may be required to ensure that all were equipped with the necessary skills to successfully discharge this responsibility. In addition, there was a need to ensure that staff-student ratios were consistent across the university.

Governors were advised that it was often a challenge to appoint sufficient students to undertake the role of course representative and the DSU Executive were considering whether a small financial incentive would encourage more students to put themselves forward.

Further comment was made that the introduction of matriculation ceremonies seemed to have contributed positively to student induction.

2026 Any Other Business

The Vice-Chancellor informed governors that he had participated in a very informative campus tour 'Revealing the Hidden Heritage on DMU's Campus', delivered by the university’s archivist, and proposed that a similar tour be arranged for governors.

2027 Close and Date of Next meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Governors would be held at 10am on Thursday 21 November 2013, in Leicester.

Signed by the Chair of the Board of Governors

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Date: ...........................................................