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| <b>Minutes:</b>       | Board of Governors                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Time and date:</b> | Thursday 2 July 2026 at 10:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Location:</b>      | The Yard, rooms 3.02 and 3.05                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Present:</b>       | Ian Squires (Chair), Tamera Campbell, Stuart Dawkins, Justin Dobson, Phil Grierson, Dilpreet Kaur, Jonathan Kerry, Jonathan Mills (items 149-166), Katie Normington, Sardip Sandhu (from item 150), Aftab Sayed, Beverley Shears, Shikha Singh, Peter Tansley (from item 150), Rama Thirunamachandran, and Paul Woodgates                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>In attendance:</b> | Jill Cowley, Pro Vice-Chancellor Extended Education and Director of DMU London (item 156),<br>Chloe Keenan, Governance Officer,<br>John Hurst, Director of Strategic Planning and Insight (item 157),<br>Johnny Morris, Global Marketing Officer (item 152),<br>Debbie Muddimer, Executive Director of Finance and Procurement,<br>Simon Oldroyd, Pro Vice-Chancellor Sustainability and Dean of Health and Life Sciences (item 157),<br>Nikki Pierce, Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board,<br>Lisa Stansbie, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education, Equalities and Student Experience |
| <b>Secretary:</b>     | Nick Jeffs; <a href="mailto:nick.jeffs@dmu.ac.uk">nick.jeffs@dmu.ac.uk</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

**CONFIRMED**

#### **144 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Alison Court, Shreena Dasani, Vivek Ganotra, Mike Kagioglou, Patrick Moody, Abdul Mullick, and Catherine Njoroge. Apologies for late arrival had been received from Jonathan Mills, Sardip Sandhu, and Peter Tansley. Apologies for early departure had been received from Jonathan Mills.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting the student governors, Dilpreet Kaur and Aftab Sayed, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education, Equalities and Student Experience, Lisa Stansbie, who would be attending board meetings from now on (along with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Planning Research and Innovation, who had given his apologies on this occasion).

#### **145 Declarations of any pecuniary, family or other personal interests**

No declarations of pecuniary, family or other personal interests were made in respect of any items on the agenda.

The university maintains a Register of Interests, which records standing declarations of pecuniary, family or other personal interests from all members of the Board of Governors and the University Leadership Board.

**146 Decision taken between meetings**

RESOLVED:

That the decision to approve of the appointment of Dilpreet Kaur and Aftab Sayed as the board's student governors, which was taken between meetings, be noted.

**147 Minutes of previous meeting**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the 14 May 2026 meeting of the Board of Governors [147] be approved.

**148 Matters arising**

The listed matters arising [148] had either been completed prior to the meeting or were scheduled for consideration at a future meeting of the board.

*Jonathan Mills joined the meeting during the following item*

**149 Report from the Chair**

The Chair of the Board delivered an update concerning a range of issues:

- i. The Chair, Vice-Chancellor, Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board, and Executive Director of Finance and Procurement had met with the OfS to discuss the university's financial position.
- ii. The search for a new Chancellor for DMU continued, and the New Chancellor Search Group would be convened following the board meeting to consider a potential additional candidate for the role.
- iii. The Chair reminded governors that the annual appraisal process was ongoing.
- iv. The Chair reminded governors of a visit to the DMU Museum, which would take place following the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

*Sardip Sandhu and Peter Tansley joined the meeting during the following item*

**150 Report from the Vice-Chancellor**

The Vice-Chancellor introduced a report [150] concerning a range of recent developments in relation to the university and the higher education sector as a whole. Arising from the discussion of this item, and questions from governors, the following points were highlighted:

- i. It was noted that a paper on the university's league table performance would be shared with the board at its meeting in November 2026. This paper would reflect any improvements to the university's league table positions as a result of its performance in the 2026 National Student Survey.
- ii. **[Redacted]**

- iii. It was noted that the executive continued to be mindful of its capacity given the range of issues that the university was dealing with simultaneously. It was recognised that, whilst some of those issues had fallen or would be falling away, some of the remaining issues were significant. It was noted that the executive was freeing up some of its capacity to focus on the existential 'Thinking Beyond Us' work, with other tasks being delegated to senior colleagues where possible and appropriate.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

#### **151 Report from the Student Governors**

The student governors delivered an update concerning a range of issues, including:

- i. A new strategy for the students' union had been approved by the union's Trustee Board.
- ii. The union was working on the welcome events that would take place at the start of the 2026/27 academic year.
- iii. The union extended an invite to the board to visit the welcome events.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

#### **152 [Redacted]**

#### **153 2025/26 financial position update**

The Executive Director of Finance and Procurement delivered a presentation concerning the university's financial position as at 31 May 2026.

In discussing this item, the board noted the downgrading of the university's credit rating from A1 negative to A2 stable, noting that this was a positive outcome given the various financial pressures facing the sector, and welcomed the positive feedback that Moody's had provided following their review. It was noted that the downgrading had no implications for the university's bond.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation was noted.

#### **154 [Redacted]**

#### **155 [Redacted]**

#### **156 [Redacted]**

#### **157 Empowering University performance update**

The Director of Strategic Planning and Insight, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education, Equalities and Student Experience, the Executive Director of Finance and Procurement, and the Pro Vice-Chancellor Sustainability introduced reports concerning a high-level

overview of institutional performance against the KPTs of the 'Empowering University' strategy. Appended to the report were implementation plans for the following themes/pillars of the strategy: Equality for All; Financial Strength; Knowledge Creation; Partnerships with Purpose; and Sustainability and the SDGs. Arising from the discussion of this item, and questions from members of the committee, the following points were highlighted:

- i. It was noted that this would be the final set of reporting on the KPTs for the current version of the strategy.
- ii. It was noted that work was underway on how reporting to committees and the board might be developed for the KPTs associated with the new strategy.
- iii. In discussing DMU's pay gaps, it was noted that the university continued to take measures to improve its position in this area but that changes in working patterns over time had made this more of a challenge. It was agreed that it would be important for the university to continue to have robust targets for its pay gaps as a means of indicating where its aspirations lay in terms of addressing this issue.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the current performance against the university's KPTs be noted.
- b. That the progress delivered through the five strategic implementation plans supporting the Empowering University strategy be noted.
- c. That the emerging strategic risks and opportunities associated with delivery of the current strategy, as outlined in the report, be noted.
- d. That the preparations being made for the transition to the university's next strategic planning cycle and KPI framework be noted.

## **158 Strategy refresh: final approval**

The Vice-Chancellor introduced a report [158] concerning the final refreshed 'Empowering University' strategy package for approval by the Board of Governors. Arising from the discussion of this item, and questions from members of the committee, the following points were highlighted:

- i. The board commended the proposed strategy, noting that it balanced ambition with what might realistically be achieved given the current context of the higher education sector.
- ii. It was noted that there was still some work to be done on the timeline for the implementation of the strategy and the order in which supporting projects would be prioritised.
- iii. It was suggested that some of the wording used within the strategy might be made more inclusive of DMU London and DMU Dubai, thus emphasising the importance of and commitment to those campuses.
- iv. It was noted that the strategy would be launched formally at the Annual Leicester Dinner in September and then with staff at an event on campus in October. It was suggested that the university might look to hold a similar launch event with De Montfort Students' Union, which would be tailored for a student audience.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the final refreshed strategy package, which would be DMU's strategic framework to 2031, be approved.
- b. That the refreshed strategy would be titled 'The Empowering University: Engage. Educate. Elevate.' be noted.

- c. That the final visual identity, designed strategy document, and launch assets would be developed by the Marketing and Communications directorate ahead of the proposed launch in the autumn be noted.
- d. That further work would continue on KPI definitions, baselines, and end-point targets be noted.

**159** [Redacted]

**160 Annual academic quality overview report for 2024/25**

The Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board introduced a report [160] concerning the university's academic quality activity and outcomes for the 2024/25 academic year. Arising from the discussion of this item, and questions from members of the committee, the following points were highlighted:

- i. It was noted that the report had been considered by the Academic Board at its meeting on 25 February 2026.
- ii. It was suggested that it would be useful for the next version of the report to comment on the university's position in terms of the OfS B3 metrics (relating to student outcomes). It was noted that the board would receive an update on the Teaching Excellence Framework at its meeting on 24 September, which would cover B3 metrics.
- iii. It was noted that having 81 programmes subject to intervention was not unusual in a university of DMU's size, and that some of those interventions might relate to support for the introduction of block teaching.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

**161 Corporate Risk Register and risk management update**

The Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board introduced a report [161] concerning the university's Corporate Risk Register and related risk management activities.

In discussing this item, it was noted that the revised Risk and Resilience Policy, as appended to the report, more clearly defined the roles played by the Board of Governors and the Audit and Risk Committee in having oversight of the university's risk management framework.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the updated position of the Corporate Risk Register be noted.
- b. That the addition of a new strategic risk relating to partnerships and collaborative activity be noted.
- c. That the updated Risk and Resilience Policy be approved.

**162 UKVI update**

The Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board introduced a report [162] concerning the latest position in terms of the university's UKVI compliance.

In discussing this item, it was noted that the university was seeking to establish 'lead governor' roles for UKVI compliance in a similar manner to the existing lead governors

for Ofsted and skills. Governors who were interested in taking on this role for UKVI compliance were encouraged to contact the Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board direct.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

#### **163 Ofsted SAR/QIP submission**

The Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board introduced a report [163] concerning the university's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for programmes that fell under Ofsted for the purposes of quality assurance.

RESOLVED:

That the SAR and QIP be noted.

#### **164 Member's updates**

i. Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee had last met on 8 June 2026, and the unconfirmed minutes of that meeting had been included later in the agenda at item 168. The Chair noted that a number of items of business from that meeting had already been considered by the board earlier in the agenda. In addition, the committee had considered a range of internal audit reports and the internal audit plan for 2026/27.

ii. Finance and Performance Committee

The Chair of the Finance and Performance Committee noted that a number of items from its most recent meeting, which had taken place on 15 June 2026, had already been considered by the board earlier in the agenda. In addition, it was noted that the committee had considered an update on the SAP Futures programme and a proposed new Procurement Policy for the university.

iii. People and Culture Committee

The People and Culture Committee had last met on 1 June 2026, and the unconfirmed minutes of that meeting had been included later in the agenda at item 174. The Chair noted that a number of items of business from that meeting had already been considered by the board earlier in the agenda. In addition, the committee had considered the annual workforce profile and the results of a recent staff pulse survey.

iv. Academic Board

The Academic Board had last met on 24 June 2026. Key items of business that had been considered at that meeting included updates on the Student Retention Project and DMU's Skills Strategy, as well as the approval of the Student Charter for 2026/27 and the Student Contract for 2027/28.

v. Lead governors for Ofsted and skills

The lead governors for Ofsted and Skills continued to meet with the Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board and the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Extended Education. Topics considered at recent meetings included the introduction of new apprenticeships in housing management and secondary teaching, as well as the introduction of an audiology 'top-up' programme and a suite of new Higher National Certificates and Diplomas.

RESOLVED:

That the updates be noted.

**165 CUC Higher Education Code of Governance update**

The Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board introduced a report [165] concerning a high-level comparison between the 2020 version of the Committee of University Chairs' Higher Education Code of Governance and the draft 2026 revision. Arising from the discussion of this item, and questions from members of the committee, the following points were highlighted:

- i. It was noted that a more comprehensive mapping exercise would be carried out over the summer and a further update brought to the board at its 24 September meeting.
- ii. It was agreed that, whilst there was no formal penalty for choosing not to comply with the code, the board would continue to ensure that it was compliant as a means of demonstrating publicly its commitment to adopting sector best practice in good governance.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the comparison exercise between the 2020 code and the draft 2026 code, outlining at a high-level the changes to the code, be noted.
- b. That a mapping exercise and gap analysis would be undertaken during the summer to identify and resolve areas of non-compliance with the new code be noted.
- c. That the new code was intended to signal a step change in university governance be noted.

*Jonathan Mills left the meeting at this point*

**166 Secretary's report**

The Registrar (Academic) and Secretary to the Board introduced a report [166] concerning a number of governance-related matters, including: proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation and the Standing Orders; the Instrument and Articles of Government (for which no changes were proposed); the cycle of business for the board for 2026/27; and the constitutions of the Audit and Risk Committee, the People and Culture Committee, and the Finance and Performance Committee for 2026/27.

In discussing this item, it was noted that reporting around compliance and performance in relation to the university's subcontracted provision had been added to the terms of reference of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Finance and Performance Committee respectively.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation be approved.
- b. That the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders be approved.
- c. That the Instrument and Articles of Government (for which no amendments were proposed) be approved.
- d. That the cycle of business for the Board of Governors be noted.
- e. That the constitutions of the Audit and Risk Committee, the People and Culture Committee, and the Finance and Performance Committee for the 2026/27 academic year be endorsed.

**167 Draft agenda for 22 October 2026 strategic away day**

The Vice-Chancellor introduced the proposed agenda [167] for the board's forthcoming strategic away day, which would take place on 22 October 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed agenda be noted.

**168 Unconfirmed minutes of the 8 June 2026 meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes [168] be noted.

**169 Audit and Risk Committee cycle of business**

RESOLVED:

That the cycle of business [169] be noted.

**170 Annual internal audit plan for 2026/27**

RESOLVED:

That the plan [170] be noted.

**171 Student complaints and OIA data**

RESOLVED:

That the report [171] be noted.

**172 Minutes of the 23 April 2026 meeting of the Finance and Performance Committee**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes [172] be noted.

**173 Finance and Performance Committee cycle of business**

RESOLVED:

That the cycle of business [173] be noted.

**174 Unconfirmed minutes of the 1 June 2026 meeting of the People and Culture Committee**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes [174] be noted.

**175 People and Culture Committee cycle of business**

RESOLVED:

That the cycle of business [175] be noted.

**176 Minutes of the 6 May 2026 meeting of the Academic Board**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be [176] be noted.

**177 Student complaints procedures**

RESOLVED:

That the report [177] be noted.

**178 DSU election report**

RESOLVED:

That the report [178] be noted.

**179 Items placed under the university seal**

RESOLVED:

That the report [179] be noted.

**180 Review of the board's performance**

Members were content that the board had been effective in discharging its responsibilities, and that all present had been enabled to be effective in their contribution to the meeting.

**181 Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Board of Governors would take place at 10:00 on Thursday 24 September 2026 in The Yard, rooms 3.02 and 3.05.

**182 Any other business**

No items were raised.

*Meeting duration: 10:00-14:26*