



HARTPURY

Minutes of the Meetings of Hartpury University and Hartpury College Boards 10 am Wednesday 18th September 2024 Gwynne Halford, Hartpury

Members

Edward Keene
Alison Blackburn
Patrick Brooke
Robert Brooks
Amber Smith-Burchall
Barbara Buck -
Andy Collop (Professor)
Alastair Grizzell
Ella Smith
Mary Heslop
Henry Hodgkins
Thomas Legge
Melissa Orritt
William Marshall
Chris Moody
Lucie Hammond
Ian Robinson (Professor)
Sue Blake
Rose Stephenson
Helen Wilkinson

In Attendance

Mick Axtell
Rosie Scott-Ward
Gillian Steels
Claire Whitworth

Lesley Worsfold
Hannah Lennon
Rayna Edwards

Morgan Hearn

Sharon Glover

University Board

Present (Chair)
Present (Co-opted Governor)
-
Present
Apologies (HE Student Governor)
-
Present (Vice-Chancellor)
-
-
Present (from 10.23am)
Present (HE Staff Governor) (left 11.30am)
-
Present
Apologies
Present
Present
Present
-
Present
-

Present (Chief Operating Officer)
Present (Deputy-Vice-Chancellor)
Present (Clerk to the Board)
-
Apologies (Deputy-Principal Resources)
-
Head of Safeguarding & Wellbeing (Present item 10/09/24)
Assistant Head of Wellbeing (present Item 10/09/24)
Governance Professional SGS – attending for professional development purposes

College Board

Present (Chair)
-
Present
-
Present (Vice-Chair)
Present (Principal)
Present
Present (FE Student Governor)
Present
-
-
Present (FE Staff Governor)
-
-
Apologies
-
-
Present
-
Present online until 11am
Present (Chief Operating Officer)
-
Present (Clerk to the Board)
Present (Deputy-Principal Further Education)
Apologies (Deputy-Principal Resources)
Deputy FE Student Governor (Present)

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
01/09/24	Welcome	
	The Chair welcomed new governors to the meeting. Introductions were provided.	
	Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy Apologies as detailed above.	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	It was confirmed the meetings of the University Board and the College Board were quorate.	
02/09/24	<p>Declaration of Interest</p> <p>The Clerk advised that members' interests would be taken as those disclosed in the Register of Members Interests.</p> <p>Standing Interests – Chair, Vice-Chancellor/Principal and Chris Moody members of both University and College Boards</p>	
03/09/24	<p>Minutes of the meetings</p> <p>The Minutes of the University Board and the College Board meetings held on the 10th July 2024 were agreed by the respective Boards to be true and accurate records.</p> <p>The Electronic Approval of the Appointment of Sue Blake by the FE Board was NOTED.</p>	
04/09/24	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>An action log had been provided updating on issues raised at previous meetings.</p> <p>Outsourcing of Catering Provision – it was noted that the KPIs were to be agreed and the contract finalised for signing.</p> <p>The update was NOTED.</p>	
	Part 1 Priority Agenda Items	
05/09/24	<p>Vice-Chancellor and Principal's Update</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor and Principal provided a presentation.</p> <p>The presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External environment • Hartpury Highlights • Staffing • National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) & league tables 	
1.	<p>External environment</p> <p>Latest information from the new labour government noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on a range of significant proposals started as per manifesto (Skills England, VAT on Public School fees, ...) • Preparing ground for October budget – “£22bn hole” • Health spending, defence, schools protected – more pressure on other budgets including FE & HE • Whitehall expecting stand-still budgets <u>at best</u> <p>Colleges</p> <p>It was highlighted that FE had not been included within the 5.5% made to school teaching staff, this was disappointing after the progress made the previous year in relation to parity between FE and schools. The one-word OFSTED ratings for schools had been scrapped. No announcement had been made in relation to FE.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>It was noted that the Advanced British Standard was not to be progressed. A pause had been announced on defunding while a review was carried out. The outcome would not be known until January 2025 which was difficult for planning. The Education Skills Funding Agency was to be closed in March 2025 as a separate agency with the functions devolved back to the Department of Education. The impact of this was awaited.</p> <p>University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Every person who meets the requirements & wants to go to university should have their aspiration supported” • Work on “teaching standards”- replacing previous government focus on “low value” • Create a secure future for HE – fees, review – timescales unknown • Apprenticeship Levy replaced by Growth & Skills Levy • New statutory role in Local Growth Plans (LSIP+) – already in place for colleges • No mention of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ International students ➢ Student maintenance 	
2.	<p>Hartpury Highlights</p> <p>Tilly Abbott – pod cast with Adam Henson on wellbeing of farmers</p> <p>Premier League – contract to support young people not progressing with premier league</p> <p>GROWs School Residential – University of Gloucestershire, Hartpury and Royal Agricultural University working together to encourage aspirations school children in FE and HE.</p> <p>Knowledge Exchange Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a range of information on the knowledge exchange activities of higher education providers in England • 4th publication (KEF3) released on 18th September (first released in 2021) • Hartpury placed in top 20% of UK universities for impact on “local growth and regeneration” and “working with business” • £300m impact • £90m in Southwest <p>Celebration of Eventing</p> <p>The summer equine events had been very successful and raised Hartpury’s profile. Conversations were ongoing about events for 2025. Everyone who had contributed to the success of events was thanked. It was noted that this year the weather had been very good, and recognised that poor weather would have a significant impact.</p> <p>Staff Changes</p> <p>Recent staff changes were noted:</p> <p>Interim Head of Finance, Interim Head of Estates, Academic Dean Teaching and Learning, Procurement and Contracts Manager.</p>	
3.	<p>National Student Survey (NSS)</p> <p>It was noted that Hartpury continued to score well, but that the scores had reduced and the learning Resources feedback had been particularly impacted, reflecting the delay in the ULH. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor advised that she was reviewing the feedback, including the individual comments and would be providing more detailed feedback to HE QuEST in November. It was agreed that the results were disappointing.</p> <p>Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	The feedback was largely positive, although similarly resources had scored less well. Hartpury had been ranked top in assessment which was very pleasing.	
	League Tables <u>2025 Guardian University Guide</u> Animal Science & Agriculture 12 th /18 Sports Science 4 th /86 – the Team had been congratulated on this achievement <u>2025 Complete University Guide</u> Agriculture & Forestry 12 th /19 Sports Science 26 th /86 <u>2025 Daily Mail University Guide =127th/129 – a new guide</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20th Student Support & 41st Teaching Excellence <u>2024 Good University Guide =112th/131 (2025 delayed)</u> 6 th Teaching Quality & 14 th Student Experience Animal Science 14 th /25 Sports Science 56 th /82 Agriculture 9 th /9 It was noted that some rankings were impacting by Hartpury's small engagement with research. The detail from the tables was to be further considered.	
	Confidential Item - 5 years – commercial sensitivity The Vice-Chancellor and Principal's Update was NOTED. 11am Helen Wilkinson left the meeting (technical IT issues)	
06/09/24	Confidential Item - Commercial Sensitivity 3 years	
11/09/24	Student & Staff Voice Student Governor <i>College Student Governor & Deputy</i> – online enrolment had worked well – better than last year. Catering at the farm – options were limited for grab and go. The student governor had been involved in tours of student accommodation and some comments had been less favourable, however from her views of university accommodation it seemed similar. Staff Governors <i>University Staff Governor</i> –enrolment was ongoing. Positive feedback to date. Staff and students were keen to know the position re the ULH. Given growing numbers work was ongoing to manage in the existing space. Demand on Graze was highlighted. <i>College Staff Governor</i> – The June Symphony Staff Development event had been very helpful. Staff were busy now with planning, co-creation events and sequencing. Enrolment had gone well with record numbers being inducted. Governor Link Activity Ian Robinson and Robert Brooks – Climate Change/Sustainability Training Barbara Buck – regular Safeguarding Meetings each month Barbara Buck - Wellfest	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>The Updates were NOTED.</p> <p>The Chair thanked governors for their involvement in the link governor scheme which helped to triangulate the information provided at the meetings.</p>	
07/09/24	<p>Management Accounts - June</p> <p>The Accounts provided an update on the financial position of the University Group, and enabled the Boards to monitor whether financial performance was on track and gain assurance on, any areas of potential concern. It was noted that the operating result for the 11 months ending June 2024 was a surplus of £3,232k compared to a budgeted surplus of £3,077K. It was highlighted that although this was ahead of the forecast out-turn income levels in July were significantly lower as student income is significantly lower.</p> <p>It was noted that a detailed reforecast had been undertaken in January. This remained in line with the earlier reforecast and predicted an increased surplus of £1,172k compared to the original budget of £1,024k. Cash balances at the month end were £8,079k. The University has an overdraft facility of £1m. The University complies with its bank covenants and is forecast to continue to do so.</p> <p>The position regarding the utilities was being investigated, as the closing account was higher than expected. The year-end position continued to be in line with the revised forecast. It was recognised that 2024/25 would be a challenging year.</p>	
	<p>The University Board and the College Board NOTED the June Management Accounts.</p>	
08/09/24	<p>HE Report</p> <p>Student recruitment overall continued to be in line with budgeted income. However, some groups were behaving differently to predictions. While International and Postgraduate Taught were behind where we would have hoped, Home new and returning students were looking more favourable. It was recognised the next few weeks were key and indicators were being monitoring closely.</p> <p>Student retention had to date, been a success story in the 2023-24 academic year. The significant activities put in place had resulted in 2.4% reduction in withdrawals compared to the same point last year.</p> <p>Student Survey feedback – as discussed above, reflected some dissatisfaction amongst the student body regarding the current learning resources available to students. While there were a number of positive headlines, the teams were concerned regarding some downward trends, and what that illustrates regarding the current student experience and the potential impact on future TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework) submissions (NSS is a key metric for this with the data from prior year, current year and next year being used).</p> <p>Curriculum developments updated regarding the work on introducing undergraduate Veterinary Physiotherapy and Sports Psychology (planned 2026) / Psychology. The need for some investment was highlighted. It was noted that Equine Dentistry and Business were up and running.</p> <p>Research and knowledge exchange progress included a successful annual Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) conference, further PhD completions and work</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>towards Knowledge Exchange Framework) KEF and Research Excellence Framework (REF).</p> <p>Quality and Standards continued to align to Office for Students (OfS) benchmarking, based on assessment against recent OfS data updates.</p>	
	A governor queried the reference from external examiners to “appropriate. It was confirmed this confirmed satisfaction and there was not a higher level.	
	<p>Governors thanked staff for the work which had been done to increase recruitment and retention, and noted that Hartpury remained within the top 25 % for NSS and number one for PTES.</p> <p>Governors queried if recruitment had been supported by discounting tariff on entry. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor advised that where a potential student had missed required grades by a small margin an individual review had been undertaken. Tests to check maths and written word skills had been applied. This had led to a small number of students being enrolled, but overall, the tariff had not been significantly reduced. It was confirmed that Hartpury had not made unconditional offers. Clearing had been an effective recruitment means, but not as large as last year. 109 students had been recruited to Veterinary Nursing. Sport had recruited well. General animal and equine recruitment was down on target.</p> <p>It was recognised it was a challenging time for HE.</p>	
	The HE Report was NOTED.	
	11.30am Thomas Legge left the meeting	
09/09/24	FE Report	
	POLICY / EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: the external environment continued to evolve as discussed within the Vice-Chancellor’s presentation.	
	<p>RECRUITMENT: Over 2,000 students had been recruited. Hartpury’s biggest cohort of A ‘level students had been recruited and recruitment for agriculture T’level had been very strong. Animal, which had been declining in previous years, was almost at target. Governors queried the level of students who were resitting English and Maths this year. It was noted the new condition of funding, introduced under the previous government, for increased hours of study for maths meant that class sizes had been increased.</p> <p>Governors queried how staff were being prepared for teaching T’levels, recognising these were a very different type of qualification. The Deputy Principal advised that staff had received support to prepare for this transition, and that Hartpury had benefitted from the range of training being offered by City and Guilds and the Education & Training Foundation, and from talking to colleges who had already adopted the qualifications. It was recognised it would be a challenging year for staff who would be teaching B’tecs and T’levels. Governors were pleased to note required equipment to deliver T’levels was in place. Governors who had visited the workshops recently commented that they were looking very good.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: It was noted that this remained a constant focus and the further development of our practices and expectations in support of the skills agenda had been a priority as well as continuous development of teaching, learning and assessment. BTEC overall pass rate and high grades had shown further improvement compared with last year. A Level overall pass rate was 0.4% lower than the overall national rate and A*-C slightly higher than last year but not as high as our pre-COVID performance. This will remain a key area of focus. Our new, emerging Quality Improvement Plan captures all areas of focus for 2024-2025 and associated actions. This would be considered by FE QuEST and then the Board in November.</p> <p>The FE team were congratulated on their strong recruitment and preparation for 2024/25.</p> <p>The FE Report was NOTED.</p> <p>11.40am The Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing and the Assistant Head of Wellbeing joined the meeting</p>	
10/09/24	<p>Safeguarding Annual Report, Policy and Briefing</p>	
	<p>The Board had been provided with the Annual Safeguarding Report and the updated Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. It was noted that the changes to the policy reflected the updates to the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance issued by the DfE. It was noted that the aim of the guidance was to keep everyone safe, and to intervene as early as possible. The requirements were communicated to staff through a range of mechanisms, including the Professional Code of Conduct, induction, training and ongoing training, a safeguarding newsletter, communications on how to log a concern on My Concern, resources and a safeguarding quiz to test knowledge. It was confirmed there were a range of support mechanisms students could call on. Whisper was an anonymous tool for raising concerns which was available to staff, students and parents. It was noted that support was offered both to victims and perpetrators, and that this was reflected within Hartpur policies and procedures.</p>	
	<p>The report covered: Introduction</p> <p>1.1 Restructure of the Residential Provision - the recent OFSTED residential monitoring visit had confirmed that all concerns raised previously had been responded to. The feedback had been very positive, including reference to "systemic change". A full inspection was due pre-May 2025. The changes to structure to respond to the previous inspection were set out. It was noted that PREVENT and behaviour management now also came under safeguarding to ensure a rounded picture was being considered.</p> <p>1.2 Staffing during the 2023/2024 academic year</p> <p>1.3 Staff Supervision</p> <p>1.4 Staff Training</p> <p>1.5 Ofsted monitoring visit (May 2024)</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Key Current Safeguarding/Wellbeing Priorities for Hartpury <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Key changes to the 2024 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2.2 Child Safeguarding Practice Review 2.3 Supporting Student Wellbeing & Health 2.4 The Residential Support Team 2.5 Child Sexual Abuse 2.6 Child on child/peer on peer abuse 2.7 Mental Health – the link between the internet and suicide 2.8 Looked After Children 2.9 Wellfest - 10-year anniversary 3. Statistics & Referrals <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Total number of concerns across all notification groups 3.2 Triaged concerns 3.3 Non-academic Behaviour Management Concerns 3.4 Concerns reporting Mental Health and Wellbeing 3.5 Concerns reporting Sexual Violence and Misconduct 3.6 Concerns reporting Abusive Behaviours 3.7 External support referrals 4. Hartpury Prevent Update 	
	<p>The range of safeguarding was reflected on. It was noted that OFSTED in their recent inspection had assessed Hartpury's safeguarding processes and found it met requirements.</p> <p>Governors reflected on the increasing number of concerns being reported and the reasons around this were discussed. These included improved awareness and reporting. The Hartpury Wellbeing Model was explained, this was a stepped model which supported autonomy. The aim was to ensure children and young people could thrive. It was confirmed that there were a wealth of wellbeing and safeguarding resources available via moodle and also the Student Assistance Programme (SAP) which could be accessed 24/7 7 days a week. Wellbeing drop ins were also available and the Prepare for Success Certificate for FE students and Wellfest supported students. It was noted that face to face counselling was limited through the NHS, but that this could be available through SAP (or also online or by phone).</p> <p>It was noted that the Office for Students (OfS) was introducing a new condition of registration, Condition E6: harassment and sexual misconduct. This condition of registration will come into force on 1 August 2025 and at that point the OfS will publish it as part of their framework. Hartpury was working to ensure it could meet the requirements. It was confirmed that Hartpury already had a policy of zero tolerance of sexual violence and already stated it would not use Non-Disclosure Agreements for sexual misconduct cases for staff.</p> <p>Wellbeing worked in partnership with the Student Union to support students and ensure safeguarding and wellbeing support had a high profile with students. Continuing work on Active Bystander embedding was planned for 2024/25.</p> <p>A governor thanked the team for a comprehensive report. Recognising the new reporting requirements from OfS she queried whether future reports would differentiate between HE</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>and FE students. The Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing advised this was currently being considered. Currently MyConcern did not provide an easy way to separate the data. The governor commented that it would also be useful to see outcomes. The Head of Safeguarding & Wellbeing advised this would also be considered, subject to this process not making individuals identifiable, recognising the numbers were relatively small. Governors queried whether the different requirements from OFSTED and OfS would mean the policy would need to differentiate between HE and FE students in future, and if so if there would be a risk of confusion. It was agreed the Deputy Principal Resources would look further at this. Governors stressed the importance of the language used being appropriate for HE and FE students.</p> <p>Governors requested further information on the ligature training. It was confirmed this was conducted via a train the trainer process and focused on safely maintaining life.</p> <p>The processes to support students both at Hartpur and at home were explained.</p> <p>The expansion in need for safeguarding and wellbeing services was recognised. It was noted that the funding of Hartpur's services to support these areas exceeded government funding provided. The link governor commented positively on the commitment and resources she saw in place to support these areas in her link activities. It was confirmed that the increased number of concerns and support reflected the position across Gloucestershire, and nationally.</p> <p>Student governors commented on the benefit of drop-in sessions, and noted they were not always available. The Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing commented that the service needed to balance drop-in services against 1:1 sessions.</p> <p>The Deputy Vice-Chancellor advised that work was ongoing to strengthen advice to HE students on accessing support. In talks to potential students, they were encouraged to consider how they would transfer any support and care they were accessing at home to university. Personal Tutors had received guidance on where to direct students to access support. It was confirmed that HE students used SAP, and that it was available throughout the holidays.</p> <p>The Annual Safeguarding Policy was NOTED.</p> <p>The Governor Briefing on Safeguarding and Wellbeing and Prevent was NOTED.</p> <p>The Child Protection Policy and Procedures were APPROVED, subject to some minor clarifications in 4.5 relating to the role of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal.</p> <p>The Board thanked the team for the service and support they provided to students.</p> <p>12.35pm The Head of Safeguarding & Wellbeing and the Assistant Head of Wellbeing left the meeting.</p>	<p>Dep Prin. Resources Nov 24</p> <p>Dep Prin. Resources Nov 24</p>
12/09/24	<p>Application of Hartpur Seal*</p> <p>Grant Agreement Hartpur University and City of Gloucester (18/9/24) – Noted as signed and APPROVED.</p>	
13/09/24	<p>Policies</p> <p>Subcontracting Policy – FE – APPROVED by the FE Board.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	International Fees Policy – FE – APPROVED by the FE Board.	
14/09/24	Any Other Business	
	Noted that the next meeting was at UWE. Upcoming events were highlighted.	
	The meeting closed at 12.40pm	