Board of Governors 2025/26

Board of Governors — Third Meeting (M3)

Wednesday, 25 June 2026 | [11:30 – 1:30] | Tower Hill Campus and via Microsoft Teams

DRAFT — For approval at the next Board of Governors meeting

MINUTES

Present

Dr Sarah McAdam	Chair, Board of Governors	(SM)
Mr Alan Fenton	Independent Governor (ARFC Chair)	(AF)
Mr Mark Bentley	Independent Governor (OIC Chair)	(MB)
Mr Stephen Plant	Accountable Officer (Executive Governor)	(SP)
Dr Manoj Ponugubati	Dean	(MP)
Dr Abul Hossain	Deputy Quality Lead	(AH)
Ms Parleen Arora	Student Experience Lead	(PK)
Ms Agrima Shankar	Governance Manager and Lead (Minute Taker)	(AS)
Ms Oana Ciobanu	Student Governor	(OC)
Mr Mahenoor Ryhan	Director for Quality / Shareholder Director (presenting on behalf of CFOO)	(RY)
Mr Nahid Aminul	Finance Assistant (in attendance)	(NA)

Apologies

Mr Simon Evans	Independent Governor	(SE)
Mr Bola Makinde	Independent Governor	(BM)
Mr Raghav Malhotra	Chief Financial and Operating Officer	(RM)

1. Welcome and Quorum Confirmation

- Dr Sarah McAdam (SM) opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees, including Alan Fenton (AF) who was attending his first Board of Governors meeting as a governor. She acknowledged the heatwave conditions affecting those present and those joining remotely.
- SM acknowledged at the outset the considerable work undertaken by the institution's teams in preparing for the OfS submission. She noted that while it is important to recognise that effort, the Board's role today was to provide constructive challenge, identify any gaps or overstatements, and ensure the documents

are in the best possible shape for submission. She invited members not to hold back from raising gaps or ambiguities.

- The Governance Manager confirmed the meeting was quorate.
- No declarations of interest were made.

2. Declarations of Interest

- The Chair invited members to declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to agenda items.
- No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

- The Chair presented the minutes of the Second Board of Governors meeting (29 April 2026) for approval. No members requested any amendment.
- The Governance Manager confirmed that the consolidated action tracker had been updated since M2. Items marked as archived were complete. Outstanding items were either pending Board approval (including the formal adoption of the Articles of Association) or awaiting submission of the OfS application. The sixth independent governor recruitment process and the Governor Skills Audit map were noted as pending Board review.
- SP noted that a visit from a prospective partner institution's senior leadership was taking place on 2 July 2026. The proposed campus development remained commercially confidential pending finalisation of partnership arrangements; discussions were at an advanced stage, with indications of intent to proceed from both sides. SP confirmed he had recently met separately with a senior representative of the prospective partner, who remained committed to progressing the discussions.
- MP confirmed the proposal related specifically to one campus location, details of which remain commercially confidential.
- The Governance Manager confirmed that two actions remained pending Board approval: the formal adoption of the Articles of Association and the sixth independent governor recruitment process, including a Governor Skills Audit map. These were to be addressed at this meeting.

The Board approved the minutes of the Second Board of Governors meeting (29 April 2026) as an accurate record.

The Board noted the status of outstanding actions from M2.

4. Quality Plan — Review and Approval for OfS Submission

- MP presented the Quality Plan using a summary slide deck. He noted the Quality Plan had been shared with all Board members via live link and that the document would remain live until the submission deadline, allowing for continued revisions.
- MP provided an overview of the institution's key metrics: approximately 2,000 students enrolled, of whom approximately 1,500 were in session (the remainder on a scheduled break as part of the tri-semester model); three campuses at Tower Hill, Brentford, and Croydon; nine validated programmes across three award categories (BSc Business, BSc Hospitality and International Tourism Management, and MBA); a current staff-student ratio of 1:50 with a target of 1:40 and a long-term aspiration of 1:30; and total estimated fee income for 2026 of over £14 million. The institution noted that 92% of learners were mature students (over 21 years of age), 71% were London-based, and 95% were from non-UK, non-European backgrounds.
- MP walked the Board through the key OfS conditions addressed in the Quality Plan: B1 (academic experience), B2 (resources and support), B4 (assessment and awards), B7 (capacity and resources), and B8 (sector standards).
- AF asked whether the additional support needs of mature students were clearly and explicitly articulated within the Quality Plan, noting that the Department for Education was emphasising this in its current narrative around mature student provision. MP confirmed that the institution had a comprehensive support offer for mature students, including a structured induction programme, tutorial sessions built into the teaching timetable, optional additional tutorial support, a dedicated mentoring team offering one-to-one and small group sessions (flexible to student timetables, including mornings, evenings, and weekends), and early identification of students who could benefit from additional support, with those students referred to the mentoring team from within the first two weeks.
- The Chair confirmed that AF's question was whether the plan's narrative was explicit enough on this point, so that the OfS could see it clearly. The Chair asked that colleagues review the relevant sections to ensure the student support offer was clearly evidenced throughout the student lifecycle, not just at induction.
- AF raised a second point regarding LAAT's dependence on its partnership with Plymouth Marjon University, noting that other institutions could be adversely affected through mismanagement by partners, and asked what oversight and risk management was in place. MP confirmed this risk had been considered and that LAAT had benefited from governance inputs from experienced sector professionals from the outset. SP added that this had been raised at the Strategic Partnership Board with PMU and that PMU was currently undertaking a review of all its partnership provision to identify any outliers. LAAT was engaged in that process. An additional point was made regarding LAAT's admissions process, which now incorporated a more robust identity verification process following concerns about identity fraud seen at other providers.
- AF asked whether there was an institutional Annual Review document — covering performance against student outcomes, quality and standards — noting this would be a useful self-reflection tool to present to the OfS. MP confirmed there was not yet a formal Annual Review document, given the institution was only 18 months into its journey. However, an internal action plan process existed, reviewed at each intake point, and the institution was engaged in an ongoing annual monitoring process with PMU. All quality improvement actions were fed through the governance panel and committee structure. A formal Annual Review was planned once sufficient award data was available.

- The Chair raised a concern about language in the document — specifically the use of the terms 'mature' and 'fully embedded' — and asked the Board to consider whether these were defensible given the stage of development. MP confirmed that the institution distinguished between things that had been initiated, things that had been embedded through one or two cycles, and things that were fully embedded. The classification 'fully embedded' was reserved for processes that had gone through sufficient cycles to be established as standard practice. The Chair noted this would need to be carefully evidenced rather than claimed narratively.
- The Chair noted that the OfS would be forensic in its scrutiny and that all statements should be supportable with evidence that could be produced immediately on request.

The Board confirmed it had reviewed and was satisfied with the consolidated Quality Plan.

The Board approved submission of the consolidated Quality Plan to the Office for Students as part of the initial registration application.

The Board noted the outstanding pre-submission actions, which would be checked and completed before the deadline.

[A4.1] Review and strengthen the explicit articulation of mature student support throughout the student lifecycle within the Quality Plan narrative, ensuring it is evidenced throughout rather than concentrated at induction.

Owner: Dean (Manoj Ponugubati) / Student Experience Lead | **Deadline:** Before OfS submission

[A4.2] Review all uses of 'fully embedded', 'mature', and equivalent language in the Quality Plan to ensure they are justified by the evidence base and appropriately qualified where necessary.

Owner: Dean (Manoj Ponugubati) / Governance Manager | **Deadline:** Before OfS submission

[A4.3] Develop a timeline for the institution's first formal Annual Review document, to be produced once sufficient award and progression data is available.

Owner: Dean (Manoj Ponugubati) | **Deadline:** By end of academic year 2025/26

5. Business Plan — Review and Approval for OfS Submission

- MP presented the Business Plan using a summary slide deck, supported by Mr Ryhan and Mr Nahid in respect of the financial detail.
- MP outlined the key financial metrics: a five-year forecast projecting student numbers growing from approximately 2,367 in 2026 to a maximum of 4,000 (the institution's stated ceiling for its franchise provision with its current partner); fee income growth in line with student numbers; a £3.6 million contingency fund held as a shareholder capital reserve; a staffing ratio maintained broadly at 1:50 with aspirations to improve; and a reinvestment policy of 60% of surplus directed to staffing, student support, digital infrastructure, and compliance. Directors had agreed not to take a dividend in year one, with profits to be reinvested.
- MP noted that LAAT had run financial stress-tests at 20% and 40% income reduction scenarios, incorporated as two separate tabs in the financial forecast. Three layers of contingency funding were in place: a

minimum cash reserve, an overdraft facility, and shareholder funding if layers one and two were insufficient.

- AF asked whether the growth plan had been shared with the prospective partner institution and whether they were comfortable with the projected numbers. MP confirmed the plan had been shared, including at working level, and that input had been received during early drafting. A student number ceiling applied solely to the current franchise arrangement; the proposed branch campus and any future partner provisions would be modelled separately.
- AF asked whether the financial forecast had incorporated inflationary fee rises. MP clarified that inflation had been applied to expenditure but not to income, on the basis that any fee increase would place the institution in a stronger position, while the stress-tests modelling student number reductions effectively captured the equivalent downside risk.
- AF noted that letters had been received from the Minister for Skills regarding potential restrictions on growth for low-outcome institutions and on courses not leading to positive employment outcomes. He flagged this as something the Board should be cognisant of, given LAAT's current programme profile.
- AF raised the dividend policy — specifically, whether the policy set out a threshold below which a dividend would not be payable and how the governance of reinvestment decisions worked. He noted the OfS would be interested in this, particularly given the franchising fee structure and the perception of a reduced margin for student experience investment. MP and the Quality Director confirmed that student experience and regulatory compliance were always prioritised before any withdrawal. A commitment was given to revisit the dividend policy to ensure it set out: (i) a threshold for payability; (ii) an approval process through the Board before any withdrawal; and (iii) a clear link to the student protection and teach-out provisions.
- The Chair noted that growth assumptions were clearly and transparently set out with reference to the financial model, and that this was reassuring.
- MP confirmed a residency strategy covered lease utilisation, growth rates, and exit costs, and that a break-even analysis had been conducted at each campus (requiring a minimum of 300 students per site for break-even).

The Board confirmed it had reviewed and was satisfied with the Business Plan.

The Board confirmed the accuracy of the financial projections and approved the financials as presented.

The Board endorsed the dividend policy as presented and noted the action to strengthen its written articulation.

The Board authorised submission of the Business Plan to the Office for Students as part of the initial registration application.

[A5.1] Revisit and strengthen the dividend policy document to include: (i) a threshold below which a dividend is not payable; (ii) a Board approval mechanism before any withdrawal is initiated; and (iii) a clear link to the student protection and teach-out provisions. Share with the Board before submission.

Owner: Dean (Manoj Ponugubati) / CFOO (Raghav) | **Deadline:** Before OfS submission

[A5.2] Monitor DfE and OfS guidance on growth restrictions for low-outcome institutions and on specific course types, and assess implications for the Business Plan projections.

Owner: Accountable Officer (Stephen Plant) / Dean (Manoj Ponugubati) | **Deadline:** Ongoing — update at next BoG

6. Policy Register — Ratification

- The Deputy Quality Lead (AH) introduced the policy register item. All student-facing policies required for the OfS submission had been reviewed and were presented for Board ratification. A small number of outstanding items remained, which would be completed as a priority before submission.
- The Board agreed to ratify the policies as a package, noting that the detailed work had already been conducted through the sub-committee structure.

The Board ratified the institutional policies pack as presented.

The Board noted the outstanding policy items and agreed these would be completed before the OfS submission deadline.

7. Financial Update — Governance Assurance

- Mr Ryhan presented the financial update on behalf of the CFOO (Mr Raghav Malhotra), who had sent apologies due to a medical appointment. The Board noted that the financial reports presented had been prepared by Mr Nahid, Finance Assistant. He confirmed: the institution maintained a minimum cash reserve of £1.6 million; the next fee income payment was expected in July; and the institution was at the final stage of obtaining a £1 million facility from HSBC, with shareholder funding of £400,000 to £1 million also available. The financial resilience position was therefore robust.
- The Quality Director confirmed that an external auditor had been engaged to initiate the audit process. An internal audit advertisement was also in preparation.

The Board approved the financial governance assurance paper as presented.

The Board noted the financial resilience position, including the minimum cash reserve, the HSBC facility in progress, and the available shareholder funding.

8. Staff Update — Town Hall Programme

- SP provided a brief update on the town hall programme. Three town halls had been held since the last Board meeting: the first was an introductory session with inputs from the Accountable Officer, the Dean, and the CFOO; the second focused on staff CPD, pay grading, and policies; and the third, most recently, launched the partnership with Advance HE, which attended virtually and spoke to staff about the available support and professional development offer.
- SP confirmed that staff feedback had been positive across all three sessions. The town hall programme was providing transparency about institutional direction and leadership visibility across multiple campuses.

The Board received and noted the staff update.

9. Articles of Association — Formal Adoption

- AS introduced the item. The Articles of Association had been agreed in principle at the M2 Board meeting (29 April 2026) and sent for independent legal review. The review had been completed. The solicitors had suggested a small number of changes. The overall view was that the institution should have more constitutional documents at management level, which would be implemented through the Management and Governance Framework post-adoption.
- AS confirmed that she had chosen to retain key governance protections within the body of the Articles rather than moving them to the Governance Framework, in order to embed constitutional protections for the Board's independence, ensure the Articles reflected LAAT's commitment to OfS Public Interest Governance Principles, and protect public money. These provisions included the shareholder oversight mechanisms and the non-distribution and assets-lock provisions.
- SP provided context for the Board, confirming that the revised Articles had been worked on and presented by the Governance Manager and approved in principle at M2. The independent legal review was the appropriate next step to avoid the institution marking its own homework.
- No concerns were raised by members.

The Board formally adopted the Articles of Association as revised following independent legal review.

The Board noted that consequential changes to the Management Governance Framework would be made to ensure it is constitutionally consistent with the adopted Articles of Association. The Board confirmed it would review the updated Management Governance Framework at its next scheduled meeting.

[A9.1] File the adopted Articles of Association at Companies House. Update the Management and Governance Framework to ensure constitutional consistency with the Articles and circulate to the Board in advance of the next scheduled meeting for review.

Owner: Governance Manager (Agrima Shankar) | **Deadline:** Within 4 weeks of adoption

9A. CMA Compliance Legal Review — Commissioning of WBD

- The Governance Manager informed the Board that Womble Bond Dickinson (WBD), the firm that conducted the independent legal review of the Articles of Association, had agreed to extend their engagement to conduct a comprehensive CMA compliance legal review of the institution's student-facing documents and practices.
- The review will be conducted in accordance with the OfS requirements for an independent legal review of CMA compliance obligations. The scope of the review will cover, as applicable: student terms and conditions; offer letters and enrolment declarations; fee, deposit and additional-cost information; refund and compensation policy; complaints procedure; cancellation, withdrawal and interruption provisions; course-change and closure provisions; disciplinary and debt-recovery terms; website and prospectus

wording; recruitment and admissions scripts; agent materials; partnership documents that affect students; and accommodation or other ancillary-service terms.

- The review will expressly test compliance with: the Consumer Rights Act 2015; applicable unfair-commercial-practices legislation; CMA higher-education guidance; and OfS Condition C5 and its prohibited behaviours list.
- WBD's engagement will produce: a legal review report or advice letter; a clause-by-clause issues schedule with risk ratings; tracked amendments and before-and-after versions of documents; management responses to each recommendation; evidence that all high-risk issues were resolved; and a record of any advice not accepted and the reasons. Approval of the final documents will be brought to the relevant committee and the Board for confirmation, with evidence that corresponding website, marketing and operational practices have also been corrected.

The Board noted and approved the commissioning of Womble Bond Dickinson (WBD) to conduct a comprehensive CMA compliance legal review in accordance with the OfS requirements, covering all applicable student-facing documents and practices.

The Board confirmed that findings and management responses from the WBD CMA review will be brought to the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee and then to the Board for formal approval.

[A9A.1] Instruct Womble Bond Dickinson (WBD) to commence the CMA compliance legal review. Confirm scope, timeline and fee arrangement and circulate to the Board.

Owner: Governance Manager (Agrima Shankar) | **Deadline:** Before OfS submission

[A9A.2] WBD CMA review findings, clause-by-clause issues schedule, risk ratings, tracked amendments, and management responses to be brought to the ARFC and then to the Board for formal approval.

Owner: Governance Manager (Agrima Shankar) / Accountable Officer (Stephen Plant) | **Deadline:** Following receipt of WBD review

10. Governance Audit — Update

- SP updated the Board on the governance audit. AdvanceHE had been formally engaged to conduct the governance audit. Preliminary and initial engagement was underway, and the audit would proceed in substance in July 2026. The work would be conducted on a predominantly desk-based basis with interviews of key members of staff. The governance audit would also incorporate a financial element. The admissions audit would follow as the next phase.
- SP confirmed the audit would sit under the oversight of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee, with findings reported to the Board.

The Board received and noted the governance audit update.

The Board confirmed that the AdvanceHE governance audit was underway and noted the expected timeline for substantive completion in July 2026.

11. Access and Participation Statement and Student Engagement Framework

- The Student Experience Lead (PK) presented the Access and Participation Statement, prepared using data from four cohorts (January 2025, May 2025, January 2026, and May 2026). The statement included: age profile and mature student data; geographic distribution and postcode analysis; nationality and country of origin; entry qualification profile (over 45% from Level 3 vocational qualifications); and support arrangements through the access and participation framework.
- PA confirmed that no declared disabilities had been received to date, but that the institution was preparing for two students with specific accessibility needs expected in September 2026, including completion of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans and campus arrangements.
- PA presented the Student Engagement Framework, setting out the committee structure from the Student Voice Committee through the Student Representative Forum to the Board, and the escalation pathways for student feedback. The framework incorporated feedback collection at module level (weeks four, eight, and twelve) and at student voice committee level (weeks six and twelve per term). The 'You Asked, We Did' approach was embedded as the institutional standard.
- PA confirmed the framework and relevant data would be uploaded to the institution's website.

The Board approved the Access and Participation Statement.

The Board approved the Student Engagement Framework.

[A11.1] Upload the Access and Participation Statement and Student Engagement Framework to the LAAT website.

Owner: Student Experience Lead (Parleen) | **Deadline:** Before OfS submission

12. Risk Register

- The Governance Manager provided a brief overview of the risk register. The register had been divided into academic, operational, and governance sections. Academic risks were covered by AH; operational and IT risks by the IT and Security Manager; and people and culture risks by the HR system. The Governance Manager had provided oversight and addressed legal compliance and governance risks.
- SP noted that most of the risks identified in the register had been covered through the discussion of the Quality Plan and Business Plan. Key risks included partnership dependency (high risk, given the current reliance on a single partner); recruitment shortfall (medium, mitigated by downside scenario planning); staffing at growth (high, mitigated by proactive recruitment); regulatory compliance (high, though the institution assessed itself as between low and medium given sector insight available through its governance and advisory network); and financial sustainability (high impact, low likelihood given the financial planning in place).
- The Governance Manager confirmed that the Fit and Proper checks for all directors, governors, and ELT members had been completed as of this meeting. A short paper noting this had been circulated and would

be added to the Board's evidence file. An updated organisational chart for the senior management structure had also been included.

The Board received and noted the risk register.

The Board noted that Fit and Proper checks had been completed for all directors, governors, and ELT members as at the date of this meeting.

[A12.1] Maintain the live risk register and continue to present updates through the monthly risk register working group and relevant committee structure.

Owner: Governance Manager (Agrima Shankar) / Accountable Officer (Stephen Plant) | **Deadline:** Ongoing

13. Ratification of Alan Fenton as Independent Governor

- AF was asked to withdraw from the meeting for this item.
- The Chair invited members to raise any concerns or issues regarding the proposed ratification of Alan Fenton as an Independent Governor and as Chair of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee. AF had chaired two ARFC meetings prior to this Board meeting.
- No concerns were raised. The Chair confirmed AF's fit and proper process had been completed satisfactorily. Members noted the quality and depth of AF's contributions during the meeting, and the Chair extended the Board's thanks to him.
- AF was invited to return to the meeting.

The Board formally ratified Alan Fenton as an Independent Governor of London Academy for Applied Technology, and as Chair of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee.

14. Any Other Business

- MB noted that Mr Simon Evans had been unable to attend the meeting due to a period of ill health and hospital appointments. He conveyed Mr Simon's apologies and best wishes to the Board. The Board noted this and wished Mr Saman a speedy recovery.
- MP recorded his thanks to the Governance Manager for ensuring the governance wheels continued to turn in the period leading up to the submission.
- The Chair thanked all members for the quality of their contributions and confirmed that the Quality Plan and Business Plan would remain as live documents, allowing members to add comments over the following days before submission.

15. Date of Next Meeting

- The Governance Manager noted that the next Board of Governors meeting would be scheduled following the OfS submission and in accordance with the annual cycle of business.

[A15.1] Circulate proposed dates for the fourth Board of Governors meeting following the OfS submission.
Owner: Governance Manager (Agrima Shankar) | **Deadline:** Within 2 weeks of submission

16. Summary of Actions and Close

- The Chair thanked all governors, staff, and attendees for their contributions and for the substantial body of work undertaken across the institution in preparation for the OfS submission. She closed the meeting at approximately [insert time].

Decisions Summary

- 3.1 Minutes of the Second Board of Governors meeting (29 April 2026) approved.
- 4.1 Board confirmed it had reviewed and was satisfied with the consolidated Quality Plan.
- 4.2 Board approved submission of the Quality Plan to the Office for Students.
- 5.1 Board confirmed it had reviewed and was satisfied with the Business Plan.
- 5.2 Board approved the financial projections and endorsed the dividend policy.
- 5.3 Board authorised submission of the Business Plan to the Office for Students.
- 6.1 Institutional policies pack ratified.
- 7.1 Financial governance assurance paper approved.
- 9.1 Articles of Association formally adopted following independent legal review.
- 11.1 Access and Participation Statement approved.
- 11.2 Student Engagement Framework approved.
- 12.1 Fit and Proper checks confirmed complete for all directors, governors, and ELT members.
- 13.1 Alan Fenton formally ratified as Independent Governor and ARFC Chair.

Rolling Actions Log — Board of Governors M3

Meeting Date	Ref	Action	Owner	Deadline
25/06/26	**A4.1**	Review and strengthen explicit articulation of mature student support throughout the student lifecycle in the Quality Plan.	Dean (Manoj Ponugubati) / Student Experience Lead	Before OfS submission
25/06/26	**A4.2**	Review all uses of 'fully embedded', 'mature' and equivalent language in the Quality Plan and ensure appropriately qualified where necessary.	Dean (Manoj Ponugubati) / Governance Manager	Before OfS submission
25/06/26	**A4.3**	Develop a timeline for the institution's first formal Annual Review document.	Dean (Manoj Ponugubati)	By end of academic year 2025/26
25/06/26	**A5.1**	Strengthen the dividend policy to include a payability threshold, a Board approval mechanism before withdrawal, and a link to student protection and teach-out provisions.	Dean / Quality Director	Before OfS submission
25/06/26	**A5.2**	Monitor DfE and OfS guidance on growth restrictions and course-type restrictions and assess implications for the Business Plan.	Accountable Officer / Dean	Ongoing — update at next BoG
25/06/26	**A9.1**	File Articles of Association at Companies House. Update Management and Governance Framework for constitutional consistency with the Articles and circulate ahead of next Board meeting for review.	Governance Manager (Agrima Shankar)	Within 4 weeks of adoption
25/06/26	**A9A.1**	Instruct WBD to commence CMA compliance legal review. Confirm scope, timeline and fee arrangement and circulate to the Board.	Governance Manager (Agrima Shankar)	Before OfS submission
25/06/26	**A9A.2**	WBD CMA review findings, clause-by-clause issues schedule, risk ratings, tracked amendments, and management responses	Governance Manager / Accountable Officer	Following WBD review

Meeting Date	Ref	Action	Owner	Deadline
		to be brought to ARFC and then to the Board for formal approval.		
25/06/26	**A11.1**	Upload Access and Participation Statement and Student Engagement Framework to the LAAT website.	Student Experience Lead	Before OfS submission
25/06/26	**A12.1**	Maintain live risk register and present updates through monthly working group and committee structure.	Governance Manager / Accountable Officer	Ongoing
25/06/26	**A15.1**	Circulate proposed dates for the fourth Board of Governors meeting.	Governance Manager (Agrima Shankar)	Within 2 weeks of submission

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