Board of Governors 2024/25
Board of Governors — First Meeting (M1)

Tuesday, 22 July 2025 | 14:00 – 16:00
Beaufort House, Aldgate, London

MINUTES

Present

Name	Role	Initials
Mr Manoj Ponugubati	Academic Dean / Vice-Chair	(MP)
Dr Simon Evans	Independent Governor	(SE)
Dr Mark Bentley	Independent Governor	(MB)
Mr Bola Makinde	Independent Governor	(BM)
Mr Stephen Plant	Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee	(SP)
Mr Raghav Malhotra	Operations Director	(RM)
Ms Dedeepya Galla	Governance Officer (Minute Taker)	(DG)

In attendance:

Name	Role	Initials
External Advisor	External Advisor — governance establishment (chaired this meeting in an advisory capacity only)	--
Dr Jatin Tekriwal	Director and CEO	(JT)
Mr Syed Moheuddin	Finance Director	(SM)
Mr Mehnoor Ryhan	Business Development & Quality Director	(MR)
Mr Showkat Chowdhury	Admissions Director	(SC)

Apologies

None		

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1. Welcome, Introductions and Quorum

- The External Advisor welcomed all members to the inaugural meeting of the Board of Governors and provided opening remarks in a facilitative capacity ahead of the formal appointment of a Chair.

- Introductions were made by all members present.

- No apologies for absence were received.
- An overview of the agenda and meeting objectives was provided.
- Quorum was confirmed by the Governance Officer.
- The External Advisor emphasised the need for frequent and regular meetings of the Board of Governors and relevant sub-committees, particularly at this early stage, to ensure alignment and effective progress.
- The External Advisor reaffirmed that LAAT is aligned with external governance guidelines and reiterated the importance of structured check-ins to ensure a robust governance foundation is established in support of the institution's journey towards Office for Students (OfS) registration.

3. Institutional Strategy, Mission and Vision

- Mr Manoj Ponugubati (MP) presented an overview of the institution's core values, mission, and vision.
- Dr Jatin Tekriwal (JT), CEO, presented the institutional strategy, highlighting that LAAT has been strategic, selective, and risk-averse in its approach to student recruitment and growth.
- JT outlined the robust student recruitment process, including the role of community outreach advisors.
- JT confirmed that all campuses are fully equipped with the necessary facilities to support academic and student needs in line with current and projected growth.
- JT confirmed that a complete academic framework covering assessment, teaching practices, student support, and the approach to academic English (English for Academic Purposes, EAP) would be prepared and presented to the Board by 20 August 2025.
- The External Advisor clarified that LAAT is a selective institution and should not be perceived as primarily a recruiting body, and further clarified that references to "English" in institutional documentation should be understood as English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and not general English language teaching.
- Mr Syed Moheuddin (SM), Finance Director, presented an overview of operations, student recruitment, and academic staffing, providing the Board with insight into institutional processes and staff development.
- The External Advisor highlighted the commendable growth of the institution and emphasised the importance of ensuring resource allocation keeps pace with expansion, and supported documenting institutional growth within a formal strategic framework for continuity and reference in future leadership transitions.

4. Governance Recommendations — Standing Agenda Items

- The External Advisor set out recommendations for standing agenda items to be incorporated into all future Board of Governors and relevant sub-committee meetings:
    - A fixed agenda item for Declarations of Interest and Conflicts of Interest (COI) at the start of every meeting.
    - A standing agenda item aligned with the Risk Register, requiring members to reflect on whether any discussion has an impact on institutional risk.
    - A standing agenda item providing updates on OfS registration compliance.
- The External Advisor also recommended that agenda items be categorised under three headings: Information, Discussion, and Decision.

The Board agreed to adopt the standing agenda items and meeting structure recommendations as set out above.

5. Governance Structure and Subcommittees

- MP presented the proposed governance structure for ratification, explaining the rationale for the sub-committee architecture, the Academic Board, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) committee, and the monthly and weekly panel structure.
- The Board noted that the proposed structure meets all required governance conditions and recommended that the presentation of the structure to external stakeholders be simplified to aid understanding of internal workings.
- The structure was confirmed to be flexible and student-focused.
- SP confirmed that the Operations and Infrastructure Committee would cover finance-related matters, and that the People and Culture Committee would take responsibility for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), with EDI feeding into all relevant governance domains.

The governance structure was approved by the Board for implementation.

Appointment of Chair of the Board of Governors

- The External Advisor facilitated the process for selecting the Chair of the Board of Governors.
- JT confirmed that a number of nominations were in progress and that nominee profiles would be presented at the next meeting.
- The Board agreed the following appointment process:
    - A nomination is made.
    - The nomination is seconded.

  - A vote or confirmation takes place on or before the next governance meeting.
  - Sub-committee chairs will be nominated following the formal appointment and ratification of the Board Chair.

- It was discussed and agreed that a fourth independent governor should be appointed. It was confirmed that the Chair nomination process would proceed once this recruitment is complete.

The Board confirmed the Chair appointment process as outlined above. Recruitment of a fourth Independent Governor is to proceed as a priority.

6, 8 & 9. Items for Information

- Agenda Items 6, 8, and 9 were presented for information only. Members noted and agreed to read and understand the relevant papers.

7. Risk Register

- A current Risk Register, being maintained as a live document, was presented and explained to the Board.
- The Board noted that work on the Risk Register had already commenced, with the aim of ensuring alignment with OfS and QAA quality framework requirements.
- Data has been sourced from multiple departments, including Admissions, Attendance, Academics and Operations, to ensure that risks identified at the operational level are appropriately captured and integrated into the institutional Risk Register.
- The Risk Register is treated as a live document and will be updated regularly as operations evolve, enabling dynamic tracking, management, and mitigation of institutional risk.
- The Board noted that the Audit and Risk Committee (and its successor, the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee) will receive regular updates on the Risk Register.
- Dr Mark Bentley (MB) commended the practical and accessible design of the register, confirming its utility at an operational level.
- The Board confirmed that the Risk Register should be referenced at the start of every governance and relevant sub-committee meeting as a first point of consideration.

The Board noted the Risk Register and confirmed that it will be reviewed as a standing item at all future Board and sub-committee meetings.

Financial Report

- SM presented the financial report for the year ended 2023.

- Work is currently underway on the financial report for the year ending 31 December 2024, which is due by 30 September 2025.
- The Board noted that the forthcoming report will be better aligned to Higher Education provision, reflecting that HE operations commenced in January 2025.
- SM confirmed that all due processes for audit and submission will be followed.

The Board noted the financial report and confirmed that the year-end 2024 report will be prepared in line with HE requirements and submitted by 30 September 2025.

Any Other Business

- No additional items of business were raised.

Date of Next Meeting

- The Governance Officer confirmed that the date of the next Board of Governors meeting would be scheduled and circulated within the following week.

Decisions Summary

- 4.1 Standing agenda items and meeting structure (Information / Discussion / Decision) adopted.
- 5.1 Governance structure approved for implementation.
- 5.2 Chair appointment process agreed. Fourth Independent Governor recruitment confirmed as priority.
- 7.1 Risk Register noted; confirmed as standing item at all future Board and sub-committee meetings.
- 7.2 Financial report for year ended 2023 noted. Year-end 2024 report to be prepared and submitted by 30 September 2025.

Rolling Actions Table

Meeting Date	Ref	Action	Owner	Deadline
22/07/25	**24/M1/3.1**	Prepare and present a complete academic framework covering assessment, teaching practices, student support and EAP to Board members.	CEO (Dr Jatin Tekriwal)	20 August 2025

Meeting Date	Ref	Action	Owner	Deadline
22/07/25	**24/M1/5.1**	Share nominee profiles for the Chair of the Board of Governors with all Board members ahead of the next meeting.	CEO (Dr Jatin Tekriwal)	Before next meeting
22/07/25	**24/M1/5.2**	Progress recruitment of a fourth Independent Governor.	Board of Governors / Senior Executive Team	Before next meeting
22/07/25	**24/M1/5.3**	Board members to nominate and second candidates for the Chair of the Board of Governors. Vote or confirmation to take place at or before the next governance meeting.	Board Members	Next meeting
22/07/25	**24/M1/5.4**	Ratify sub-committee chairs following formal appointment and ratification of the Board Chair.	Board of Governors	After next meeting
22/07/25	**24/M1/7.1**	Continue to implement and maintain the Risk Register as a live document, updated regularly as operations evolve.	Business Development Director (Mr Mehnoor Ryhan)	Ongoing
22/07/25	**24/M1/AOB.1**	Schedule the next Board of Governors meeting and circulate the date to all members.	Governance Officer (Ms Dedeepya Galla)	Within 1 week

Minutes approved by: Mr Manoj Ponugubati, Academic Dean / Vice-Chair

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