



Board of Trustees

MINUTES

Wednesday 26th February 2025, 9am.
via Teams

Members present: Jesse Norman (JNo) Chair of the Board
Martin Hitchin (MH) Vice-Chair of the Board
James Newby (JNe) President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
David Hughes (DH) Trustee
Jon Emmet (JE) Trustee
Yasmin Ali (YA) Trustee
Chris Courtney (CC) Trustee
Aimee Clark (AC) Trustee
Marc Leppard (ML) Trustee
Timothy Bell (TB) Elected Student Trustee
Graeme Ferguson (GF) Elected Staff Trustee

In attendance: Professor David Oloke (DO) Chief Academic Officer
Robert Jenkins (RJ) Finance Director
Samantha Lewis (SL), Director of People and Operations
Anthea Parker (AP) Director of Infrastructure & Projects
Chib Alexander (CoSec) Company Secretary

Apologies:

1 Welcome

Noted:

- I. JNo welcomed members and formally introduced themselves as the Chair. Members warmly welcomed JNo to their first Board meeting.

2 Declarations of Interest

- I. There were no declarations of interest or variations to the register.
- II. There were no related party transactions declared.

3 Minutes and Action Log | Lead CoSec

- I. The minutes from 11th and 18th December 2024 meetings were deemed to be a true record and approved.

APPROVED – Minutes from Meeting held 11th and 18th December 2024



4 Chair's Business | Lead Jesse Norman

- A. Redacted [Not for Publication]

5 Executives Report | Lead James Newby

BD.24.04.02 Executive Summary report

- A. JNe informed members that the student recruitment growth remained positive, and they noted spikes in applications supported by the UCAS deadline, increased publicity from a national newspaper and following outreach efforts to level 3 providers. They confirmed that additional outreach work is planned.
- B. JNe stated, however, that NMITE would still need more applications based on calculated conversion rates to meet the student recruitment targets. Members discussed the Mech Eng course, noting that while it appeared popular with prospective students, it had unknown applicant conversion rates. It was noted that direct applications provide a longer open application timeline for prospective students, resulting in higher direct application numbers compared to other institutions.
- C. JNe informed members of the potential challenges with studio capacity and resource planning, noting the risk of an unevenly weighted distribution of students per course with increased numbers of students applying for the Foundation year and the two master's courses than the BSc and bachelor's programmes.
- D. CC asked if there was a balance between local and national engagement and how this was impacting applications. JNe stated that several local campaigns had been run including billboards within Hereford city but also outreach across the marches. They noted that the targeted local with the bursary had supported a small uplift in local applications.
- E. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- F. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- G. AC inquired why NMITE was not promoting a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. DO confirmed that the bachelor's program had undergone separate validation so could be marketed separately in future years but that it was available as an exit award. Members asked if there might be an opportunity for additional applications if this program were offered as a separate admissions stream. JNe noted that the BEng for the Integrated program was marketed separately, as it was not an accelerated option. They mentioned that recruiting students for the accelerated BEng Integrated program had been challenging, partly due to the course's length of two years and four months. Members questioned whether the duration could be reduced to under two years. JNe pointed out



that such a reduction could increase the risk to the quality of the course and NMITE's teaching.

- H. JNo questioned whether the Bachelor accelerated programmes could be extended to include an industry placement. JNe pointed out that this format is currently used in the BSc in Construction Management and agreed that it could be reviewed and potentially applied to the BEng accelerated programmes. Members requested that review an industry placement provision and provide an update to the board.
- I. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- J. Redacted [Not for Publication]

Actions:

Update on BSc Construction management recruitment

Responsible

JNe

Deadline

Mar-25

Review of potential placement to support an accelerated BEng Mechanical offer

DO

May-25

6 Academic Update | Lead Professor David Oloke

BD.25.04.03a Chief Academic Officer Report

BD.25.04.03b NMITE Programme Portfolio

BD.25.04.03c Academic Council Update report Dec 2024

CAO Report

- A. DO provided a summary of recent academic developments, including programme validations. They noted that work was ongoing to progress the IET accreditation for the BEng and MEng programmes, with the expectation that the Mechanical Engineering validation process will be more efficiently once this is completed.
- B. DO updated Members on the second-year monitoring phase of NDAPS, including the timeline for reporting and feedback. DO noted EL is co-ordinating to ensure that items run within the governance committees and staff are fully informed of deadlines and expectations. JNo asked if there was the link between NMITEs application for FDAPS and the proposed Governance effectiveness review. CoSec noted this was reported to OfS and would support the work that been undertaken to ensure meeting all compliance requirements.
- C. Members discussed the NSS running till end of April, JNo asked for insight into students being polled and feedback from 2024. JNe noted that while NSS offers a snapshot, broader student engagement remains a priority. Feedback is gathered through student representation on committees, liaison groups, and module surveys. DO added that quarterly meetings with the Academic Director, Director of Registry, and student reps were in place to monitor issues. It was acknowledged that while students value timely



resolutions, the complexity of some issues can delay responses. Members emphasised the importance of managing students' expectations around the speed of actions being taken.

- D. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- E. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- F. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- G. JNe outlined progress towards a leaner resource model while supporting distinctive teaching and unique delivery methods and quality assurance. They stated that the previous structure had not provided the appropriate balance to support building outreach and dedicated programme management. The revised structure was noted to increase teaching loads for academic staff while redistributing administrative tasks into clearly defined roles with lead responsibilities and improved accountability. JNe stated the aim of reaching a more financially sustainable staff to student ratio and that the initial feedback from had been positive. JNo emphasised the importance of maintaining academic quality and student experience as the institution grows.
- H. Redacted [Not for Publication]

Academic Council Update

- A. The report from the recent Academic Council meeting held on 17th December was taken as read. Agreements and approval of awards taken by Academic Council were noted.

Actions:

Framing report on NMITEs potential Part time Degree offer.

Responsible

DO

Deadline

May-25

Key summary of development and CPD activities against NMITE Core Aims.

JNe

Mar-25

7 Finance Report/ Budget Update | Lead Robert Jenkins

BD.25.04.04 NMITE Finance Jan 25 paper

BD.25.04.04a Plan 1.0 v2.3 Jan 25 Variance Analysis

- A. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- B. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- C. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- D. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- E. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- F. Redacted [Not for Publication]



- G. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- H. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- I. Redacted [Not for Publication]

Actions:	Responsible	Deadline
Redacted [Not for Publication]	RJ/JNe	May 25
3-year cashflow reporting	RJ	May-25
Report on key intervention dates/timeline of interventions and Scenario planning to FRC	RJ/JNe	Jun-25

8 Student Liaison Update | Lead Timothy Bell

Verbal Update

- A. TB introduced himself to the members, mentioning that he is still gaining insight into the workings and topics of key importance to the Board.
- B. TB highlighted the limited availability of housing in Hereford and informed members that the information from Student Services was helpful, but it was provided too late for students due to the restricted HMO market within Herefordshire. JNe stated that NMITE will need to review future accommodation planning as the student population grows. While NMITE does not intend to acquire additional student accommodation in the next several years, it can still review and provide support.

9 Risk Register | Lead Anthea Parker

BD.25.04.05 NMITE Risk Register

- A. AP reported that the main ongoing risks were income targets, cash flow, and student recruitment. It was noted that student recruitment showed positive signs with an increase in applications for September 2025.
- B. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- C. AP provided an update on the recent Risk Management Audit noting that it provided reasonable assurance, with a few smaller recommendations for improvement. AP confirmed that the full audit report would be scrutinised at the next ARC meeting.
- D. Members asked if a further review into emerging risks was being undertaken. JNe confirmed that an initial review of emerging risks was being prepared for ARC and that a Risk Appetite review is being conducted across different areas of risk which will be presented to the Board for discussion in due course. JNe also highlighted recent horizon scanning, which identified potential delays in the new student finance system and financial risks within the HEI sector. JNo noted that while these risks pose challenges,



they may also present opportunities for NMITE to attract more students and talent. The Board discussed the potential impact and agreed to monitor developments closely.

Actions:	Responsible	Deadline
Review of Emerging Risks	AP	May-25

10 NMITE Governance I Lead CoSec

BD.25.04.06a NMITE Governance Handbook Jan 25

BD.25.04.06b Governance Effectiveness proposal

BD.25.04.06c NMITE Award of Honorary Titles Policy

- A. The Board reviewed the Draft Governance Handbook. CC noted the ongoing review of the Board's composition, including the expertise and strengths of its members. JNo acknowledged that the Board has been effective in steering and managing NMITE's entrepreneurial growth. However, key areas for improvement were identified, including fundraising, connectivity with a focus on enhancing corporate partnerships, and support for raising key capital to ensure sustainable investment in NMITE's strategic priorities. the Board agreed to further explore opportunities to address these areas and review future Trustee recruitment.
- B. JNo noted his intention for an Away day to allow for a full day review later in the year and a more long-term strategic review. ML Committee membership raised, ARC and FRC low membership DH seconded to FRC for short term placement. JNo and CoSec to implement a Nom com to review.
- C. Members agreed to circulate minor edits to the draft handbook to CoSec via email and for a finalised version to be added to the May agenda for approval.
- D. The CoSec introduced the Governance Effectiveness Review proposal, noting that it was included in the NDAPs plan submitted to the OfS. It was highlighted as good practice for a review to take place every three to five years and that it was last completed in 2022. The CoSec noted the review is expected to support the final NDAPs submissions and provide validation for external reporting.
- E. Members requested that the CoSec review the costings attached to external agencies submitting proposals for the Governance Effectiveness Review. It was agreed that a low-cost approach should be prioritised, ensuring a targeted focus while removing any unnecessary additional costs from proposals.

Governance Effectiveness review - APPROVED.



- F. Honorary Titles Policy was introduced. Members inquired whether any remuneration or additional costs were associated with honorary title posts. SL confirmed that there were no additional HR costs, as these were subsumed under normal HR operational costs.

The NMITE Award of Honorary Titles Policy - APPROVED

- G. Members reviewed the Nomination proposal to appoint His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Herefordshire, Mr Edward Harley the title of Patron of NMITE. CC questioned whether stepping down from the Lord Lieutenant post would result in the removal of the honorary title. CoSec clarified that the policy includes a three-year renewal period and allows NMITE to withdraw the title under various circumstances.
- H. YA raised a question about formal engagement and connection monitoring with honorary members. JNo confirmed that such monitoring is not currently built into the policy.

Nomination for Patron of NMITE - APPROVED

- I. Redacted [Not for Publication]

Actions:

	Responsible	Deadline
Final version of Governance Handbook to be reviewed at May Board	CoSec	May-25
Quotes/proposals for Governance effectiveness review to be given to Board for approval.	CoSec	May-25
Redacted [Not for Publication]	AP	Mar-25

11 AOB | Lead Jesse Norman

- A. MH requested a deep dive topic at the Board regarding NMITEs estates to include the running costs of estates as well as the ensuring utilisation of limited assets. Members agreed the benefits of a review and asked for it to be added to a future Board meeting.
- B. Redacted [Not for Publication]
- C. JNo summarised the reporting actions raised during the meeting, highlighting the request for a review of placements alongside the accelerated BEng in Mechanical Engineering, other income generation reporting, and a report on part-time degrees.

The next meeting to be held In Person on 9th May 2025 11am

Actions:

	Responsible	Deadline
NMITE Estates Deep dive review	AP/JNe	June-25



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