



**CONFIRMED Minutes of the Norland Board of Directors Meeting
held on Thursday 27 June 2024, 10.30 – 13.00
(Clarke Hall, Oldfield Park)**

Present: Martin Clarke, Chair (Teams)
Rosemary Heald, Vice Chair and Director
Mike Bray, Director
Kate Dicker, Director (Teams)
Richard Maccabee, Director
Roberta Scutt, Director

In attendance:

Janet Rose, Principal
Mandy Edmond, Vice Principal, Head of Quality and Standards and Registrar
Emma Burns, Chief Financial Officer, Head of Finance and Capital Projects
Alex Fereday, Staff Member
Elsbeth Pitman, Head of Graduates: Placements, Employment and Alumni
Emma Blythe, Senior Administrator (minutes)

- BOA270624.01** ***Welcome and Apologies***
Apologies were received from David Timms, Julie Davies and Lucy Morrell. It was NOTED that Martin Clarke (Chair) and Kate Dicker were joining the meeting via MS Teams.
- BOA270624.02** ***Chair's Communications***
The Chair apologised for not being onsite in person due to there being a railway accident closing the line from Paddington.

The Chair noted that admissions will be a key discussion as will strategic challenges and economic outlook with the potential change of government depending on the outcome of the general election on 4 July 2024.
- BOA270624.03** ***New Declarations of Interest***
No new declarations of interest were made.
- BOA270624.04** ***Minutes of the previous meeting***
The Chair asked for factual observations. There were no observations or objections.

ACTION EBly – attach the Chair’s electronic signature to the minutes of the previous meeting.

BOA270624.05

Action Status Report

The Action Status Report was reviewed and it was NOTED that all actions except for one have been completed. The App project is progressing well, a number of applications have been received and will be shortlisted soon. The Board were notified that approval to proceed with the project may be required during the summer but the Board will be notified by email in this case.

BOA270624.06

Risk Register

EBu talked through the higher level risks, several have shifted from red to amber because they are well mitigated and enrolments are high for this year.

[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]

The Board was asked if they had any questions or queries but there were none.

The Risk Register was duly NOTED.

BOA270624.07

Health and Safety Dashboard

AF explained there have been more events reported this year. However, there is a more robust process in place this year and better reporting of events from students, including first aid delivered if a student is unwell – not just accidents.

There is a full Health and Safety Audit at both of Norland’s sites on 11 July.

The Chair commented that he was pleased to hear that reporting is going well and that there is good engagement with the process.

BOA270624.08

Finance Committee Executive Summary

MB (Chair of the Finance Committee) elaborated on several of the points in the summary document.

[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]

BOA270624.09

Norland College T2 Accounts (inc. FY24 forecast)

[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]

BOA270624.10

24/25 Draft Budget and Forecasts 25/26 and 26/27

[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]

There was a discussion about the number of international students per set. *[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]*

Applications are currently stable at 137 with 5 male prospective students for September 2024 entry. Norland will have a better idea what the intake will be after results day.

There was discussion about other expenses that Norland is monitoring, including the NQN year and the Teachers Pension Scheme. *[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]*

There was discussion regarding contingency plans should further savings be required. It was NOTED that further savings could be made if necessary but this would not be ideal.

The Board APPROVED the forecast, budget and forecasts.

BOA270624.11 ***Briefing on OfS annual report on the financial sustainability of higher education providers in England.***

The OfS report on financial sustainability is very grim but Norland is in a better position than most. 40% of providers are expected to be in deficit. Lots of the projections are based on international students but this is a very volatile market and the data is unpredictable. There could be a large reset in the sector if the international student targets are not met and a number of universities could close. Norland is different because it is not reliant on international students and is still in the black.

It was NOTED that RSM are not concerned about the proposal to charge VAT on private school fees because this does not apply to HEIs.

BOA270624.12 ***Annual Payroll report***
[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]

The Annual Payroll report was APPROVED.

BOA270624.13 ***Bursary Log***

This shows the number of students from very low income backgrounds and with challenging circumstances. There are a number of applications from students with families on benefits and/or parents or siblings with caring responsibilities. Approximately half of those who applied for a bursary received something.

BOA270624.14 ***Audit Committee Executive Summary***
RSM presented the audit plan for the coming year to the committee. *[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]*
Data breaches and the Health and Safety report were discussed. *[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]*

BOA270624.15 ***Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan 2023 – 2024***

It was NOTED that the HR team have been working hard to prepare for the new Freedom of Speech legislation due to begin on 1 August 2024. There is an action plan that all staff considered at the staff away day on 26 June 2024. The legislation is aimed more at student unions but could affect Norland because of the Norland Code of Professional Responsibilities. Norland is looking at how students can be better informed about how the Code does not impinge on their FoS rights as such.

The Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan 2023-2024 were APPROVED.

BOA270624.16

Nominations and Governance Committee Executive Summary

The Chair reported that the Committee consider that the internal governance effectiveness review is worth bringing to the Board. The Committee thought that the graphic representations were helpful and reflect well generally. *[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]* MC asked individuals to report to EBly in confidence if there were any concerns. There were no questions when the Chair asked.

BOA270624.17

Director Reappointments and Committee Membership 24-25

There are not many changes proposed this year and there has been no feedback received by the Chair prior to the meeting. The new directors will join the Finance Committee as part of their induction. The Chair asked for any volunteers to chair committees to put their requests to the Nominations and Governance Committee. The new directors JSi and SA will join in the autumn and the Nominations and Governance Committee have approved 2 further potential directors to begin the process.

BOA270624.18

Director Events timetable

EBly provided a verbal update to the Board that this tool was introduced for 23/24 academic year and seems to have worked well so will be updated for 24/25, and a new link circulated for Directors to sign up to attend Norland events.

BOA270624.19

Internal Governance Effectiveness Review

The Board NOTED that this item had been sufficiently discussed as part of the Nominations and Governance Committee Executive Summary BOA270624.16 above.

BOA270624.20

Enterprise Committee Executive Summary – April and May 2024 meetings

[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]

The Chair of the Enterprise Committee reassured the Board that the Agency have been busy, sending out more CVs and organising more interviews than ever before. *[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]* JR and ME are working together to manage C&T enquiries and ME is exploring with DN how better to promote C&T on a low level in social media. *[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]* Another individual has approached Norland to act as a finder for consultancy opportunities but Norland is not keen to engage with this at this time.

[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]

Norland has also won the WhatUni Award for best small or specialist provider. This is very important because a lot of students and schools use WhatUni.

[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]

BOA270624.21

Remuneration Committee Executive Summary

MB updated the Board and NOTED that JR and MC will be meeting on 10 July to discuss JR's appraisal. JR has shared her parts of the appraisal with the committee via email.

BOA270624.22***Draft Annual Statement Paragraph***

This is the standard statement that goes into the annual accounts and is required by the OfS. This document notes Norland's achievements under the Principal's leadership and therefore provides the rationale for the Principal's salary.

It was NOTED that this is a requirement of our regulators.

The Annual Statement Paragraph was APPROVED by the Board.

BOA270624.23***Principal's Appraisal***

This was discussed as part of item BOA270624.22 above.

BOA270624.24***Academic Board Executive Summary***

JR explained that this report details the March meeting of the Academic Board. The most recent meeting has only just taken place so will be included in the report for the next meeting of the Board of Directors. The new Head of Learning, Teaching and Research is doing well. There is new marking guidance, new level expectations and a new code of practice. Discussion is taking place about students wanting to do their NQN year abroad. Norland has devised some broad guidance for these situations but is handling each request on a case by case basis.

The Board NOTED the Academic Board Executive Summary.

BOA270624.25***Principal's Update***

JR noted the WhatUni Award win. Janet updated re the IDAP application which was submitted within the deadline – 3 OfS assessors have been appointed, none from early years or independent providers. Although the application was a team effort, Mandy and her team are to be commended for their work on this. Norland will hopefully receive the draft report in October, followed by a feedback process with the final decision expected in February or March. Norland's TDAPs run out in March but OfS have reassured Norland that there will be no ramifications if the decision is delayed by them. There have been 2 retirements/resignations from staff. *[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]* PAN is now live. Heritage Day was a great success with a special guest visitor – the Duchess of Somerset. Open Day in May was a brilliant day and has received much positive feedback. Norland are excited to announce that Dyson want to visit because they consider Norland to be an exemplar specialist independent institution. The Master's qualification is a little behind schedule but JR is hopeful that it will be validated by the end of the year. JR and JG have now completed their fellowship in the USA. JR can share the presentation that JR and JG made to anyone who would like to see it. Edward Tronick, an expert in Early Years, provided an interview for the Norland Educare Research Journal. *[REDACTED: Confidential and sensitive information]* Capital project proposals are progressing well but SLT want to discuss these further before making any commitments as this may not be the right time to pursue capital projects. In theory the ½ day Board Away Day on Teams will still take place in October but the Board will be updated in due course.

BOA270624.26***Strategic Plan (KPI) Dashboard & Enhancement Plans***

It was NOTED that this is the end of year summary and shows that activities are progressing well. There are no alarms and a couple of items have been put on hold.

The Board APPROVED the Strategic Plan (KPI) Dashboard & Enhancement Plans.

BOA270624.27

Strategic initiative for 24/25

JR apologised that this was a late paper but noted that this is something that has emerged from JR's self evaluation appraisal. JR does not want to get rid of the existing strategic plan but would like to do a deeper dive into several areas via Strategic Innovation Teams and a single, temporary Enhancement Plan with new KPIs creating a temporary Dashboard for the Board. JR outlined the 3 main SIT areas and their rationale. The new Enhancement Plan and SIT teams will launch this from September if the Board approve. Links are made to the existing strategic plan.

There was discussion about the time required to do this thoroughly. JR suggested that the temporary EP and dashboard would be of 1-2 years duration because it will be important to do this in a manageable, feasible way, within the existing workload for staff.

It was NOTED that resilience extends through all of this. The Board offered support from the Board, committees or even an external consultant if required.

Norland are planning for different scenarios but working on the basis of 104 students per set going forward.

JR noted that the ½ day Board Away Day on Teams may be used to discuss these plans in more detail.

BOA270624.28

Compliance Dashboard

This is the usual compliance dashboard and shows that everything is currently up to date.

BOA270624.29

Norland Foundation Insurance Update

EBu noted that Norland is in the process of renewing the insurances for next year. This has been discussed by the Finance Committee. The buildings have ben revalued and new quotes are expected soon.

BOA270624.30

Update on Freedom of Speech duty and OfS Harassment & Sexual Misconduct condition

It was NOTED that FoS had been discussed above and the OfS have yet to publish their guidance regarding the new Harassment and Sexual Misconduct condition.

BOA270624.31

Any Other Business

The Set 45 and graduation video were NOTED and the Directors were encouraged to follow the link to these and the Norland Educare Research Journal Vol. 2.

The dates of the Board and Committee meetings for 24/25 were discussed.

ACTION EBly – check all the dates and recirculate the calendar of meetings and Outlook invites as necessary.

BOA270624.32

Date of Next Meeting

It was NOTED that the ½ day Board Away Day on Teams will be on 22 October and the next Board meeting will be in early December, date TBC.