



**CONFIRMED Minutes of the Norland Board of Directors Meeting
held on Wednesday 13 March 2024, 10.30-13.00
(Room 1, York Place)**

Present: Martin Clarke, Chair
Rosemary Heald, Director (Teams)
Mike Bray, Director
Richard Maccabee, Director
Julie Davies, Director
Kate Dicker, Director
David Timms, Director
Lucy Morell, Student Member
Alex Fereday, Staff Member

Suresh Ariaratnam, shadowing
John Sichel, shadowing

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
Emma Blythe, Senior Administrator

Dee Burns, Head of Marketing, Student Recruitment and Brand (to present paper)

BOA130324.01

Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Tracey Worth and Roberta Scutt.

BOA130324.02

Chair's Communications

The Chair welcomed and introduced Suresh Ariaratnam and John Sichel to the Board, both shadowing this meeting ahead of potentially joining the Board as new directors. The away day has been postponed due to IDAP – there will be a ½ day on Teams in October to discuss capital projects and a full away day in April 2025.
[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

BOA130324.03***New declarations of interest***

There were no new declarations of interest.

BOA130324.04***Minutes of the previous meeting***

There were no comments or amendments so the Board authorised these to be signed.

ACTION EB – append the Chair’s electronic signature to the minutes.

BOA130324.05***Action Status Report***

The Action Status Report was reviewed. It was NOTED that a rotation of audit manager within RSM is not necessary at this time so Norland will continue to work with Kerry Gallagher. The Academic Report (item 30) will be confirmed by Chair’s action.

BOA130324.06***Risk Register***

This is the updated risk register requested by Audit Committee. The very low risks have been extracted onto a separate sheet. Duplications have been removed and the columns have been consolidated. The Chair of the Audit Committee is very happy with this updated risk register but EBU was keen to have feedback from the Board.

KD responded that it is clearer and helps to focus the Board on the key risks.

The Finance Committee agreed that the red risks could be consolidated and lowered because there is strong interest in Norland and because inflation is coming down.

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

Discussion ensued about the reduction of the inflation risk to 3 because the long-term trajectory is that inflation will come down. The Board AGREED that risk likelihood of 3 was appropriate.

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

BOA130324.07***Health and Safety Dashboard***

AF reported no significant changes. Cases where Norland provides treatment for injuries sustained elsewhere are being reported as standard now so the number of accidents may look as though they have increased due to more thorough reporting.

BOA130324.08***Finance Committee Executive Summary***

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

EBU noted that Norland provide projections for the OfS so this information is available.

BOA130324.09***Y/E. 31.7.24 Term 1 Management Accounts***

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

There was discussion about how the variances are shown in this document and the suggestion was made to make all the variances bracketed.

ACTION EBU – change brackets throughout the document for the next report and going forward, ensuring that variances are bracketed.

FIN130324.10

Financial Outlook

BOA130324.10a Four Year Financial Forecast.

This is the summarised version of the detailed report that went to the Finance Committee in February. The left-hand side shows what went to Finance Committee and the right hand side shows a draft for the June Board meeting. Some costs have been cut. EBU explained how Norland approached these forecasts. With this forecast Norland hopes to return to KPIs in the third year and to then exceed these KPIs thereafter. The budget for next year will be agreed at the June Board meeting.

Discussion ensued about the estimated surplus predicted and whether this would be sufficient to meet Norland's aims for the future.

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

The capacity for Norland to take on additional students was confirmed to be 128 for one set but if subsequent sets continue to be large it may be necessary to recruit more staff.

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

BOA130324.10c Annual Student Recruitment Report

Recruitment is going well and has been going up consistently since 2021 against a backdrop of university applications in decline. Norland's marketing campaigns are going well. The 2023 cohort reflects a massive change in application behaviour, students are applying later, more are going straight to clearing, some with firm offers are declining or deferring. There are many reasons for this including financial concerns and COVID. Advertising is doing very well even though Meta and Google have put rules in place to prevent direct marketing to under 18 year olds. Alternatives are being explored. Performance has massively increased but reach has dropped. The cost per click has also increased. Norland's social media on TikTok is outperforming other universities such as Bath Spa and the University of Gloucester. Norland has a new partnership with Unifrog the leading university search website that will reach UK and international schools and from year 7 (first year secondary school).

BOA130324.10d***Proposed Fees 2025-26***

Fees have to be set 18 months in advance because of CMA guidance. [REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

BOA130324.11***Norlander App (late paper)***

This app is required because the current systems in place do not integrate with each other. Development of a bespoke app for the Agency and NQN is part of a 3-5 year plan. Competitors either use the same system that Norland currently uses or have different systems that are not appropriate for Norland.

Rouge are currently finalising the document that the Board have in draft form. The current database expires in August 2025 so it is important to know if the Board support this in principle so that the next stages of the planning and tender process can begin.

The Principal NOTED that a full business proposal and cost/benefit analysis would be shared with the Board to seek approval for the tender stage of the process.

The Chair of the Enterprise Committee endorsed these developments because the Norland system is perceived to be awkward so Norlanders are going elsewhere, leading to a loss of potential revenue.

The Board approved DB to take the next steps in the process to develop this App.

ACTION DB – proceed with planning of the Norlander App.

BOA130324.12***Norland Annual Report 2022-23 (Link)***

The link to the annual report on the Norland website was NOTED.

BOA130324.13***Audit Committee Annual Report***

The Board NOTED that this was an excellent report.

BOA130324.14***Academic Board Executive Summary (November Meeting)***

The MA is progressing well. Fee cap status was discussed. Concerns were voiced about universities potentially having a legal duty of care to students following the case at Bristol University. Norland are keeping an eye on this situation.

BOA130324.15***Principal's Update***

Norland will not have final numbers for the students in the new set until September. Norland are still doing well for applications and are bucking the national trend but aware that there could be lots of last minute deferrals as happened last year. [REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

Norland have received positive news regarding the OfS investigation of the B3 condition. The OfS have resolved that Norland do have positive outcomes for students which is excellent news.

The application for IDAPs is going well – the team are putting everything together. Many thanks were extended to DT for his support. Norland is waiting to hear from the OfS about when the briefing will be. Norland will then have only a few weeks to submit the paperwork. The Board will need to read and approve the documentation before it is sent to the OfS. The Board were asked to look out for the email about this.

A Norlander has been recruited to the SLT to replace JG as Head of Graduates. Other staff movements were summarised.

The Principal noted that Norland has developed a Sustainability group.

The Board Away Days dates were shared. Directors will receive the papers in advance.

The Principal noted that there are over 150 families on the waiting list for NQN students.

BOA130324.16

Strategic Plan Dashboard March 2024 Update

This is an ongoing update of activity towards the strategic aims. The full enhancement plans will be part of the June Board meeting.

BOA130324.17

Compliance Dashboard

It was reported that progress was going well.

BOA130324.18

Register of Interests Policy

This is an update that ST has done with tracked changes. It is a standard policy for the Board to approve.

There were no questions or amendments suggested. The Register of Interests Policy was APPROVED.

ACTION ST – accept the changes and publish the policy as appropriate.

BOA130424.19

Away Day Dates, plan and focus

It was NOTED that 22 October 2024 will be on Teams and will be ½ a day to discuss capital projects. A full away day will take place on 20 April 2025 and will consider the financial outlook and KPIs, international proposal, outline of the new degree and diploma and a review of the cost of the degree and diploma.

BOA130224.20

Delegation Protocol w. Finance Protocol Appendix

This is also an update.

There was discussion about distinguishing between people who are responsible and people who advise in column 5.

ACTION JR and ME – distinguish those with responsibility and those who are advisory in column 5.

It was NOTED that the finance protocol has been approved by the Finance Committee and that the main changes are to reflect the new online Purchase Order system.

The Delegation Protocol w. Finance Protocol was APPROVED.

BOA130324.21

Outcome of B3 investigation

This was discussed as part of the Principal's Update. There were no further comments.

BOA130324.22

DfE Visit

The Principal notified the Board that the DfE accepted Norland's invitation for an immersion visit and have already had one visit which went very well. There will be another visit at the end of March with an extra representative attending. Norland intends to highlight the challenges such as the OfS conditions and the restricted access that Norland students have to student loans because Norland is not fee capped. There are several significant people attending and there will be lots of positive things for Norland to shout about such as recently being shortlisted for another award.

BOA130324.23

OfS Reportable Event

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

BOA130324.24

Student Rep Report on Student Experience

The student member reported that the feeling in college is very good, even with dissertation pressures for the third years. Third years have done their final placements. The lecturing team and student support are marvellous.

BOA130324.25

Any Other Business

The locations of the Norland Culture Statement on the Norland website were noted.

It was NOTED that several documents regarding Freedom of Speech went to the December Board meeting. The links to these documents were reshared.

[REDACTED: confidential and sensitive information]

The Board NOTED that a further brand threat regarding a past employee of Norland is being monitored.

BOA130324.26

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on **Thursday 27 June 2024, 10:30-13.00 in Clarke Hall** at Oldfield Park.