Board of Governors
Minutes

Date:	21 April 2026	**Time:**	10.30am – 12.30pm
In attendance:			
Chris McLean (Chair)		Junaid Elahi (Chief Executive Officer)	
Asim Sheikh		Yaser Khan (Director of Corporate Services)	
Haidar Kattan		Louise Winterburn (Clerk to Board)	
Additional Invited Members (could be internal members who are presenting reports/feedback)			
Raza Soomro (Head of Quality)		Maheen Javed (Head of Student Services)	
Charlotte Fletcher-Morgan (Principal)		Shah Muhammad Daniyal (Student Governor)	
Apologies:			
Luciano Barbera			

Preliminary Items	
1. Introductions and Confirmation of Quoracy	
1.1	The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. Louise Winterburn, the new Governance Professional and Clerk to the Board, was welcomed to her first formal Board of Governors. Governors and attendees introduced themselves and their roles, including the Chair, Principal, CEO and Director of Corporate Services. **Resolved**: The Chair confirmed the Board were quorate and were able to proceed.
2. Apologies for absence	
2.1	Apologies for absence were received and noted from Luciana Barbera.
3. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest	
3.1	The Chair invited declarations of interest for any items on the agenda. No declarations of interest were made by any governor present, and it was confirmed that a register of conflicts of interests had been created and will be maintained annually as part of the developing governance framework. **Resolved:** There were no conflicts of interest declared.
4. Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising	
4.1	The Chair thanked the Principal for the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 15 January 2026. No amendments were requested and governors agreed that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting. **Resolved:** That minutes of the meeting held 15 January 2026 be confirmed. The Chair also enquired whether approved minutes were to be published on the SIRM College website. The Principal confirmed that this was the case going forward now that the governance framework is actively being put in place and the Governance Professional is now in post. The Chair emphasised this was an important OfS requirement now being met. **Resolved:** Approved minutes to be published on the SIRM College website, excluding any sensitive or personal information.

	Action: Clerk to the Board to follow up.
4.2	**Matters Arising and Follow Up discussion:** GOV-A-001 The Illuminaire 14-Point Action Plan had been updated and progressed with named leads for all actions alongside realistic timelines for achievement and completion. On the agenda under item 8.
4.3	GOV-A-002 Staff Governors now appointed, one per campus, and will be invited to attend the next Board of Governors. The Chair recommended they be invited to attend the meeting in full.
4.4	GOV-A-003 Governor recruitment on the agenda Item 6. The Board are asked to consider, discuss and approve three proposed members.
4.5	GOV-A-004 Oversight of the institutional Risk Register is being transferred to the Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) Committee, with each Committee taking ownership of its own strategic area.
4.6	GOV-A-005 It was reported that a Student Governor had been invited to attend the Board at the relevant section of the agenda. For subsequent Board meetings a template form would be used to gather, discuss and record any feedback and questions.
Standing Items – For Discussion	
5. Board of Governors Terms of Reference and Membership	
5.1	The Board of Governors Terms of Reference and membership were presented, discussed and agreed. **Resolved**: Members of the Board reviewed and agreed ToR and membership.
6. Proposed Board Member CVs	
6.1	The CV, Self-Assessment form and Skills Matrix for proposed Board member, Mary Eniolu, was received and discussed. **Resolved**: Board approved.
6.2	The CV, Self-Assessment form and Skills Matrix for proposed Board member, Tony Blockley, was received and discussed. **Resolved**: Board approved.
6.3	The CV, Self-Assessment form and Skills Matrix for proposed Board member, Susan Wakefield, was received and discussed. **Resolved**: Board approved.
6.4	Board members agreed that all three proposed members would bring an appropriate balance of skills, independence and diversity to the Board. Relevant experience in Higher Education, legal and Safeguarding and Prevent were noted. The Chair noted that recruitment for additional Board members was continuing and that this would further strengthen consistency, compliance and assurance. **Resolved:** Members of the Board agreed CVs and confirmed all three proposed members be approved. **Action:** The Clerk to complete onboarding process.
7. Chief Executive Officer's Report	
7.1	The Board received the Chief Executive Officer's report, providing an overview of key operational, strategic and regulatory matters since the previous meeting. The report included updates on institutional performance, partnerships, and priority areas of activity, including the new Level 4 Diploma Data Analyst programme, awarded by NCFE. A good level of interest had been noted through successful marketing and social media. The CEO also reported on recruitment and the work being carried out around community and employer engagement and outreach. The Board discussed the information presented, discussing risks in key areas, and noting the importance of maintaining effective oversight and alignment between strategic priorities, operational delivery, and regulatory requirements. The Chair noted the highly commendable outreach work being carried out and congratulated the team for their approach. The Board agreed that improving data capability, particularly in relation to B3 continuation, completion, and progression, is a critical strategic priority.

8. Governance Action Plan	
8.1	The 14-point Action Plan was agreed as a Standing Item at the least Board of Governors to demonstrate and record progress. The Principal presented an overview and reported on the work completed, including additional columns to clearly demonstrate Board oversight and feed up to each relevant Committee, in line with updated governance framework. Each action now has clear target dates and owners enabling progress to be tracked as KPIs and reported routinely to the Board. The Principal reported that, while significant progress had been made to date, columns would remain on 'amber' until full completion allowing them to be flagged 'green'. Policies and procedures are continuing to be worked through, updated and revised where necessary, and in line with OfS conditions. It was suggested that further training sessions be offered to Board members, particularly considering new members joining. Topics suggested included Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) in Higher Education, OfS Conditions and regulations, Freedom of Speech and Access and Participation Plan (APP). **Resolved:** Members of the Board noted the Action Plan and agreed refresher/training sessions as a positive step forward. **Action:** Clerk to organise a training and development plan and circulate to the Board.
9. Finance and Recruitment Update	
9.1	The Director of Corporate Services presented an update on the institution's financial position and considered information relating to income, expenditure, and financial planning, considering Year End July 2026. The Board reviewed financial performance, noting continued growth in turnover alongside increased expenditure driven by estate expansion and new campus investment. Data on the impact of fee increases, student numbers, and recruitment versus targets, was presented to the Board. The Board welcomed the inclusion of financial projections but requested greater detail particularly in relation to budget variance, implications, income, non-pay, and evidence of budget planning for 2026-2027. Governors reiterated the need for detailed and disciplined financial planning aligned to strategic growth. **Resolved:** Updated received and noted. The Board would welcome greater detail in the next report regarding budget variance, implications, income, non-pay, and evidence of budget planning for 2026-2027. **Action:** Director of Corporate Services
	Due to time restraints, items on the agenda were re-prioritised and therefore not in Agenda order
14. Teaching Quality and Teaching & Learning Assurance	
14.1	The Head of Quality was invited to attend the Board to provide an update on internal quality assurance processes and procedures at SIRM College. The Head of Quality presented a paper outlining strategic implementation of several internal quality measures designed to strengthen the academic infrastructure of SIRM College. These measures include a new and revised Teaching and Learning Framework, a Lesson Observation Form, a Quality Assurance Handbook, and the introduction of Quarterly Academic Reviews and Forums (QARAF). These initiatives are aligned with the Office for Students (OfS) B Conditions. Key strategic developments are: • Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Framework & Lesson Observation: A revised framework has been published to ensure strict adherence to OfS B Conditions. The updated lesson observation templates now integrate essential elements of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), developed with expert input from the academic leadership team. • Institutional QA Handbooks: A comprehensive internal Quality Handbook and an accompanying Interactive Digital version has been developed. This will enhance institutional transparency and reputation, and available on the website for external stakeholders. • Quarterly Academic Review and Assurance Forum (QARAF): This replaces the previous Quality Performance Meetings and has been introduced as a more robust mechanism for quality oversight. Programme Leads will present quarterly updates to the Principal and the

	Head of HE and QA to ensure internal quality assurance compliance, with critical risks escalated to the Teaching Learning Committee (TLC). • Standardised Programme Action Logs: Implemented to ensure consistency and mirror the quality assurance mechanisms used by the University of Salford across all internal programmes. Asim enquired how observation would work and how often observation would be carried out. It was clarified that observation would be at least once a semester using the same teams, which would be trained. The Head of Quality confirmed that he had met with Programme Teams/Leads and discussed how observation should become embedded within lessons. The use of open questions, aligned with TEF Gold standard, and recognising the process as a two-way communication, supportive to tutors is crucial. Haidar enquired whether the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in students' work had been considered. The Head of Quality explained there were different approaches across partnerships. Students may be permitted to use AI in a supportive way, for example, to correct grammar, spelling, etc. The Chair of the Board enquired about the percentage of Academic Misconduct cases where AI was identified at SIRM College. It was confirmed that this was 0%, although there had been a very low number of collusion cases. The Chair would find it useful to have a deeper data dive into this area to identify any risks in this area. **Resolved:** The paper was received and noted by members of the Board. **Action:** Head of Quality The Board thanked the Head of Quality for their engagement and attendance.
15. Student Voice Strategy	
15.1	The Head of Student Services was invited to attend the Board to provide an update on the Student Voice Strategy and new reporting arrangements. The Head of Student Services presented a paper outlining the development of a new Student Voice Strategy to strengthen how student feedback is gathered, considered and acted upon across the institution. The strategy will provide a more structured and consistent approach to student engagement and academic enhancement, in line with the College's wider governance and quality framework. The draft strategy will be presented to the Student Voice Working Group (SVWG) for consultation before presentation at Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) as the appropriate governance route for future consideration and reporting. This will ensure that student representatives can contribute to the development of the final approach before it is presented to the Board of Governors. It was also noted that the College is working with student representatives to develop a more structured reporting format for Board of Governors papers, so that student voice matters can be presented in a clearer and more consistent way. This will support stronger oversight of student feedback, clearer reporting on themes and actions, and a more visible link between student voice activity and institutional decision-making. A draft template for the structured report template was circulated as an appendix to the paper for Governor's information. It was noted that the College utilises multiple methods for capturing the student voice, feedback collection and analysis including, Student Representatives feedback, Module and Programme Evaluations, internal surveys, National Student Survey (NSS) and other informal feedback mechanisms. Students are engaged through representation roles, Student Voice meetings, workshops including APP and through participation in Committees and Working Groups. **Resolved:** The paper was received and noted by members of the Board. The Board thanked the Head of Student Services for their engagement and attendance.
16. Student Governor Matters	

16.1	The Board welcomed the Student Governor to their first meeting of Board of Governors and introductions were made. The Chair invited the Student Governor to talk openly about their experiences to date with SIRM College. The Student Governor reported that so far, they had had the opportunity to meet with other Student Representatives and had attended an APP Workshop. They recognised that they could raise any issues that may occur through the Student Voice Working Group. The Student Governor gave a positive report on their progress within their chosen programme so far and welcomed the opportunities in place for bridging the gap between learning and employment. It was highlighted that, moving forward, they would be able to make use of the template for structuring their report to Board of Governors, as discussed under item 15 above. The Board thanked the Student Governor for their engagement and attendance.
10. Management Information Systems to Support Board Oversight	
10.1	Item deferred to next Board of Governors.
11. Update on Staff Development	
11.1	The Principal presented a paper to inform the Board that SIRM College has adopted Advance HE Fellowship as its primary institutional CPD pathway for teaching staff. The programme commences in May 2026 with a cohort of 11 Fellows and 3 Senior Fellows. The paper sets out the strategic rationale for this approach, its benefits for staff, and the assurance it provides to validating partners and regulators in evidencing the quality of SIRM's teaching workforce. **Resolved:** The paper was received and noted by members of the Board.
12. Health & Safety, Safeguarding and PREVENT	
12.1	The Principal gave a verbal update on Health & Safety, Safeguarding and PREVENT. No issues were raised in the governance discussion. There were no health and safety events to report. The Principal reported she would be attending a national Higher Education PREVENT Conference in June 2026 and had completed Emergency First Aid at Work. Two staff members had also completed their Designated Safeguarding Lead Prevent Training and other staff are currently engaged in completing this. Mental Health First Aid leads are still to be appointed. Asim enquired whether Fire Wardens and fire drills were in place at Ilford and Leicester Campuses. It was confirmed that staff are trained across both campuses and that fire drills are routinely carried out. Fire risk and Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) is up to date. **Action**: The Principal to take forward the appointment of Mental First Aid Leads. **Resolved:** The update was received and noted by members of the Board.
13. Risk Register and Reportable Events	
13.1	The Principal presented a paper on Reportable Events: Board Oversight and Update. The paper provided a formal update to Governors on two reportable events notified to the OfS since the last Board meeting in January 2026. The paper summarised each event, the actions that were taken, current status, and the outcomes including lessons identified and implemented. The introduction of a Reportable Events Register to support ongoing Board oversight has now been put into place to ensure statutory and regulatory compliance moving forward. The College has also implemented a Risk Assessment and Decision Template to ensure a consistent, evidenced approach to identifying, assessing, and escalating potential reportable events. The Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) Committee will maintain oversight of the Reportable Events and Risk Register and report to the Board. Each appropriate Committee and Working Group will take responsibility for their own relevant section of the Risk Register and report to FAR Committee. **Action**: Reportable Events Register to form part of the Board of Governors' standing agenda items, to ensure the Board has a structured and evidence basis for oversight of its responsibilities under OfS Condition E2. Clerk to the Board to action. **Resolved:** The update was received and noted by members of the Board.
Standing Items – For Consent/To Note **In order that the Board may focus its time on items requiring a discussion, items listed on the Consent agenda are not discussed at meetings**	
17. Governance Structure Framework Updated - March 2026	

17.1	The Board had previously viewed and discussed the Framework document. Amendments and updates made: 'Academic Board' replaced with 'Senate' Compliance & Quality Committee (CQC) reports to Finance, Audit & Risk Committee (FAR) Removal of Principal's Group. Board of Governors and Senate review and take decisions on matters, reporting actions taken to other relevant governing body as applicable The Board to note for information.
18. Updated Policies and Procedures	
18.1	Approval of key institutional updated/revised Policies and Procedures: Value for Money Statement Prevent Policy and Procedure Reportable Events Policy Harassment & Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure Student Complaints Policy and Procedure Refunds and Compensation Policy Freedom of Speech Policy Multi Faith Prayer and Contemplation Space Policy Admissions, Appeals and Complaints Policy Retention of Assessed Work Policy Public Complaints Policy Information, Guidance and Advice Policy Non-Academic Misconduct Policy IT Acceptable Use and Social Media Policy Risk Management Policy Annual Programme Review **Action:** Board Approval sought – To be confirmed at the next Board of Governors
19. Any Other Business	
19.1	The Board discussed and agreed priority areas for inclusion on the agenda at the next meeting. The following were identified: Teaching, Learning and Quality Management information systems to support Board oversight Annual strategic planning/review/metrics data
19.2	The next Board of Governors will be held on 16 July 2026 at 10.30am via Teams. Link previously provided within calendar invitation.

This section records new decisions/actions agreed in this meeting

Ref	Decision / Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
4.1	Approved minutes to be published on the SIRM College website, excluding any sensitive or personal information	Clerk to Board	By next BoG	Pending
6.4	To complete onboarding process for 3 proposed new Board members	Clerk to Board	By next BoG	In Progress
8.1	To organise and implement a training and development plan for Governors and circulate to the Board	Clerk to Board	Before start of next academic year	In Progress
9.1	To provide in the Financial Update budget variance, implications, income, non-pay, and evidence of budget planning for 2026-2027	Director of Corporate Services	By next BoG	Pending

12.1	Appointment of Mental Health First Aid Leads	Principal	Start of next academic year	Pending
13.1	Reportable Events Register to form part of the Board of Governors' standing agenda items	Clerk to Board	By next BoG	In Progress
14.1	Deeper data dive into Teaching, Learning and Quality	Clerk / Head of Quality	By next BoG	Pending
18.1	Approval of updated Policy and Procedures	Governors / Clerk	Next BoG	Pending