

# Board of Directors 29.03.2023



## Board of Directors

Minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Point Blank Music School – Hybrid

### **In attendance**

Rob Cowan – Director, CEO

Jules Brookes – Director, Head of Provider

Anwar Hamad – Director, General Manager, Clerk

Keith Harris – Non-Executive Director

Peter Black – Non-Executive Finance Director, Chair

Andrew Gower – Non-Executive Director

Mulika Sannie – Non-Executive Director

### **Matters arising and adoption of previous meeting minutes**

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- i There were no matters arising and the previous minutes were adopted.

### **Items for report and discussion**

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#### **Review Head of Provider's report**

- i The Head of Provider's report was included in the Q4 management accounts pack. No comments were raised on the report itself.
- ii The Directors discussed updates on the degree awarding powers (DAPs) process and the Head of Provider discussed the benefits of achieving DAPs. The initial plan had been to apply for DAPs by September 2021, however the School was focused on the challenges brought by the pandemic and Senior Management did not feel it was the appropriate time to undergo the process. The School is now in a strong position to apply for DAPs with a view that the application will be submitted before the end of the calendar year. The School is currently undergoing its own internal audit which will result in an update to the academic governance structure. It is anticipated the entire process could take up to three years to complete.

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- iii A Non-Executive Director queried the implications of achieving DAPs with the current validating partner and what the School's contractual obligations are. The CEO noted that the Memorandum of Cooperation will expire next year and the School is looking to renew the agreement. If DAPs is achieved during the next agreement then it is likely the School would offer the students to continue their degree under the validation agreement, or switch to the Point Blank degree award.
- iv A Non-Executive Director advised that the School should start thinking about the Point Blank brand and how this will change for the clarity and benefit of students when DAPs is achieved.

### **Premises expansion update**

- i The CEO provided an update on the Penn Street expansion project. The School has signed an agreement for the lease and expects to sign the lease in the coming weeks once the landlord has completed the remaining works, which are minor. Despite the possibility of either party opting out of proceeding, the likelihood of such an occurrence is low, given the substantial investment made by both parties.
- ii It was noted that the project management team is in place and there is a transparent process where the School can analyse and scrutinise all the costs relating to the project.
- iii A cost plan is in place and the project is likely to cost approximately £4.2m which includes expenditure on equipment. It is possible this cost will increase due to additional indirect costs, such as increased security of the premises. The Finance Director advised the School should investigate whether support funds are available from the local council to cover security costs.
- iv The launch party of the new site was discussed and tying in the opening of the new building with a PR campaign. The School will set up a working group which will look into a PR strategy to maximise the positive impact of launching the new premises.

### **Adopt the Annual accounts for the year ended 31/12/22**

- i No further queries were raised outside of the Audit and Value for Money Committee and the annual accounts were adopted.

### **Adopt the Management accounts for the quarter ended 31/12/22**

- i No further queries were raised outside of the Audit and Value for Money Committee and the management accounts were adopted.

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### **Adopt the revised budget**

- i No further queries were raised outside of the Audit and Value for Money Committee and the revised budget was adopted.

### **External audit update**

- i It was noted that the external audit is running two weeks behind schedule but it should be completed by the end of April, and the School is expecting a clean audit report.

### **DAPs – update on DAPs: readiness and strategy**

- i A Non-Executive Director queried whether the responsibility of the DAPs process lies with the Registrar or if multiple employees are involved. The Head of Provider noted that this is a company-wide project with multiple stakeholders involved, and the Registrar is facilitating the process rather than being solely responsible.

### **Review report from the Academic Board**

- i The Head of Provider noted that as part of the academic governance review, the Committee known as APRAC (Admissions, Progression, Retention and Attainment Committee) is being renamed to the Student Experience Committee.
- ii The Directors noted that they would like to see more narrative regarding the actions that are being taken on the issues that have been raised as part of the Academic Board report to provide assurance of quality enhancement. The General Manager will discuss this with the Chair of the Academic Board.
- iii The Directors discussed the proposal to the change of delivery for the Foundation Year, which involves more contact time with students and lecturers. It was noted that there should be defined progression points throughout the course which prepare the students for studying on the degree without requiring additional support. The Head of Provider will share the full proposal with the Directors for further feedback.

### **Review the report from the Executive committee**

- i The Directors discussed graduate outcomes and the percentage rate of employment. It was noted that many of the School's graduates will have successful careers in the music industry as freelancers and be classified as self-employed, which may not be considered within the current criteria as 'a highly skilled profession'.

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### Discuss any recommendations resulting from the Audit Committee Meeting

- i The Finance Director will provide further information in the accounts pack with regards to US dollar income, and to provide more clarity on how this income is generated.
- ii The Finance Director will share the five year forecast with the Directors.

### Discuss any recommendations resulting from the Nomination and Remuneration Committee

- i No actions were raised from the Nomination and Remuneration Committee.

### Approve Director's remuneration

- i This was approved at the Audit and Value for Money Committee and dividends to the holding company were approved for payment as per the budget

### A.O.B.

- i No other business was raised.

### Actions Table

No.	Action	Deadline	Assigned to
1	Investigate whether there are funds available from the local council for covering security costs.	ASAP	JB
2	Set up a working group which will look into a PR strategy to maximise the positive effect of having the new premises.	ASAP	RC
3	Discuss feedback on the Academic Board report with the Chair of the Academic Board.	Before next Academic Board	AH
4	Share Foundation Year proposal with the Directors.	ASAP	JB



Jules Brookes, Director, Head of Provider, Chair