

Witness Name: David Hann

Statement No: WITN0045001

Dated: 22 September 2025

THE NOTTINGHAM INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF DAVID HANN

I, David Hann, of the University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD (the “**University**”) will say as follows: -

INTRODUCTION

1. This witness statement is made to assist the Nottingham Inquiry (the “**Inquiry**”) with the matters set out in the Rule 9 Request dated 26 June 2025.
2. I joined the University in 2005 as a lecturer and am currently an Associate Professor, working across the Mechanical Engineering and Aerospace Engineering areas in the Faculty of Engineering.
3. The role of Associate Professor includes teaching and research and most of us who undertake that role also have administrative duties. The role of Associate Professor does not involve pastoral or student wellbeing responsibilities, we act as signposts to support for student wellbeing and course related issues.
4. I was a Year 3 lead for BEng students for around five years, starting in 2018 and finishing in September 2023. This role involves providing pastoral support to students, giving guidance and support to individual tutors, troubleshooting, organising and planning the course.
5. I was also a module convenor for the final year project on the MEng programme. The role of a module convenor is to herd all the academics

involved in the teaching of the module to ensure that there is consistent working together across the board. This role does not involve pastoral or student wellbeing responsibilities, but students can ask for directions to where support can be found.

CHRONOLOGY

6. I have been asked to set out a chronological account of my contact with Valdo Calocane, who I will refer to as Valdo throughout this statement. I interacted with Valdo via email, and liaised with colleagues about him, but I do not recall ever meeting him. Given my role, I would not expect to have met him. I did not meet or have contact with any member of Valdo's family. In general, I would not expect to meet or have contact with a student's family.
7. I do not recall Valdo at all and have no recollection of meeting him – I know he was in my classes, but my contact with or about Valdo was relatively limited and it mainly came about as a result of me being the module convenor for the final year project on the MEng. Valdo did not make an impression on me, perhaps because the only contact I had with him was via email (it is unusual for project module convenors to meet students directly unless they request a meeting).
8. The only concern I remember having in relation to Valdo was in relation to academic matters, when he did not submit a progress report for the final year individual project and missed examinations, but it is not unusual for students to do this. During his time at the University, I did not observe or hear of any other behaviour which gave me cause for concern.
9. On 2 June 2020, Dr Kishen Rengaraj, who was then the Chairperson of the Extenuating Circumstances Committee for undergraduate Mechanical Engineering students, e-mailed me to say that there were a few extenuating circumstances claims to go through and listed the affected students, one of whom was Valdo, and what the next steps were [UNIN0000692]. In relation

to Valdo, he had written '*More complex case – Forwarding this to Paige*' (by which he meant Paige Smith, who worked in the Faculty's Support and Wellbeing team). I do not recall being given further information about Valdo's extenuating circumstances application, but I cannot be sure. However, I would not necessarily expect to have been given further information. Kishen likely e-mailed me about this as I was sometimes involved in deciding the outcomes of extenuating circumstances claims. I may have been part of the team that dealt with Valdo's extenuating circumstances claim, but I cannot recollect this for sure.

10. On 15 June 2020, after I had become aware in my capacity as module convenor that Valdo had submitted coursework, but not sat his exam for the module, I sent an e-mail to Dr Emma Barney as Senior Tutor to ask if she was aware of any extenuating circumstances claims for Valdo that I'd perhaps missed [UNIN0001130]. On 16 June 2020, Emma replied to let me know that Valdo's mother had reported that he was very unwell and so Valdo had been suspended pending the receipt of further information from Valdo. Emma explained that Valdo was in touch with student welfare [UNIN0000227]. I do not recall being provided with any further information about Valdo's illness. If I had been provided with any information, it would only have related to whether the illness was long term or short term. It would not have been appropriate for me to ask for any other details as that was not information I needed, particularly as I was told student welfare were in touch with Valdo.

11. On 15 July 2020 I was copied into an e-mail from Jon McKechnie to Valdo about his academic progression [UNIN0001749].

12. My next contact in relation to Valdo happened around the start of the academic year (September 2020). Students select the final year project they would like to undertake using an online sign-up tool on Moodle. I believe Valdo completed this exercise on or around 25 September 2020, selecting a project for which Professor Atanas Popov was the supervisor. The reason I think this is because I sent an e-mail to colleagues attaching the MEng

project selection list on 25 September 2020 which showed Valdo had selected a project with Professor Atanas Popov [UNIN0001429].

13. On 11 November 2020, Emma Barney (Senior Tutor) e-mailed me and other colleagues and asked how we were getting on and to give her a feel for how our students were doing [UNIN0000046].

14. I responded the same day, on 11 November 2020, and mentioned that six students had not submitted their proposal review and said that Valdo was of the most concern [UNIN0000046]. I said this because I recognised Valdo's name from the interactions I had had in relation to him in June 2020 and it was my recollection that Valdo had submitted a number of extenuating circumstances claims in Year 3 of his course.

15. I was subsequently informed that Valdo was taking the year out and so didn't engage with him directly after this.

16. The next interaction I had with Valdo was on 26 September 2021. Valdo e-mailed me to say that he was having difficulty signing up on Moodle for a final year project and that he was interested in the project of Professor Atanas Popov [UNIN0001522]. I responded the same day to let Valdo know that Professor Popov had no available slots and then Valdo and I exchanged further e-mails over the next day regarding which supervisor still had slots available to undertake their project. After a few days' silence, Valdo contacted me again on 11 October 2021 to carry on the discussion around which final year project he could undertake. He finally confirmed on 12 October 2021 that he would like to undertake a project with Dr James Rouse [UNIN0000365].

17. Valdo submitted his project proposal review on 8 November 2021 on Moodle, about 21 minutes late. The project proposal review is a pass/fail assessment; if there is nothing of concern in it, it passes, but if there is anything untoward in it, I e-mail students about this. As Valdo's proposal raised nothing of concern, there was no need to contact him and he was

awarded a pass. This was informed to the students by putting the grade on Moodle.

18. The next substantive contact I had regarding Valdo was when Dr Rouse e-mailed me on 17 January 2022 to let me know that Valdo had not submitted his progress report [UNIN0001541]. I sent Dr Donald Giddings and Dr Tao Yang an e-mail about this on 18 January 2022, copied to Emma Barney, to ask if they had any idea about why he had not submitted his progress report [UNIN0000263]. I sent this e-mail to both Donald and Tao as Tao was Year 4 lead for Aerospace Engineering and Donald was Year 4 lead for the Department of Mechanical, Materials and Manufacturing Engineering (“**Department**”) and the e-mail contained requests in relation to a number of students across both their areas. I copied the e-mail to Emma in her capacity as Senior Tutor to ensure she was in the loop, but she would not have needed to have done anything in response given the Year leads had been sent the e-mail. I don’t think I got a response to this e-mail, but I have a vague recollection of following up on this with Dr Giddings a few weeks later verbally and getting a reassurance that Dr Giddings was still attempting to get a response from Valdo. I have nothing in writing about this, but it is my usual practice to follow up on issues one way or another.
19. After this, I did not hear anything about Valdo until 3 March 2022, when Dr Giddings asked for a breakdown of marks for Valdo, stating that there was a meeting happening on Friday to help Valdo decide what to do [UNIN0001011]. I told Donald that Valdo had failed to submit his progress report and had not yet booked a slot for the presentation that he had to do for the project [UNIN0000407].
20. In the evening on 3 March 2022, Valdo e-mailed me to tell me that he was just getting back to his studies due to personal reasons and asking me to arrange for him a slot in which he could do his presentation [UNIN0000959]. Valdo e-mailed me about this again on 5 March 2022 and I responded to let

him know that he was on my list for a catch-up session and I would schedule him in once I knew the numbers [UNIN0000099].

21. On 6 March 2022, I e-mailed a number of students, including Valdo, to let them know that I would be putting on a special session for the project presentation and poster to take place on either 14 or 15 March 2022 and asking them to let me know their preference. Valdo responded the next day saying that his preference was for 15 March 2022, but by then I could no longer do 15 March 2022 so I told him that his choice was now between 14 March 2022 and 18 March 2022 – he plumped for the latter [UNIN0001453].

22. A couple of days before he was due to do his presentation, Valdo e-mailed me on 16 March 2022 to let me know that he was unable to continue studying that year, would be taking a voluntary interruption of study and, as such, it did not make sense to go ahead with the presentation [UNIN0000195]. I replied asking him to contact me directly when he returned to his studies so that I could make sure that he got started quickly [UNIN0000988]. Valdo did not give me any further details and so I was not aware of the reasons for his interruption. I did not think it was appropriate to ask as Valdo did not volunteer this information and it was not something I needed to know.

23. I was later informed that I would not need to consider Valdo for a project the following academic year as he had already graduated. After our e-mail exchange on 16 March 2022, I did not have any further direct contact with Valdo and I do not recall hearing about him again except as just mentioned.

24. At the time Valdo was a student, I was aware that he was unwell, but I did not know the details. I was not aware that Valdo had any interactions with the police or the University Security team. I am not aware of any complaints made to the University about Valdo's behaviour, or any Fitness to Study assessment of Valdo whilst at the University. Given my limited involvement in Valdo's academic studies, I would not expect to be made aware of these types of issues.

THE UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT WELLBEING SERVICES AND MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY SERVICE

25. I have been asked what training I received. I regularly attend the biannual staff away days at which training is provided on various aspects of teaching and teaching support. At these, the Department's Senior Tutor usually does a session on student support and provides a summary of the guidance on 'Identifying and Responding to Students in Difficulty' [UNIN0001806]. At these staff away days, we were also shown where in the student handbook the contact details were for the Student Wellbeing services [UNIN0001836, UNIN0001837, UNIN0001838, UNIN0001839]. Colleagues from the Support and Wellbeing service and Mental Health Advisory Service ("MHAS") regularly make an appearance at staff away days to remind academics what they should do if they are worried about a student. For example, they made a short appearance at our last away day in April 2025. There are also regular e-mail reminders from the Department's Senior Tutor throughout the year regarding meeting with tutees, especially during "Wobble week" (halfway through the first semester) and both exam periods (in January and May/June).
26. At the time (2017-2022), I was aware that I could locate information on student wellbeing, such as policies, procedures and guidance, on staff facing Moodle pages [UNIN0001840] and on the University's website. I did find them useful.
27. At the time (2017 – 2022), my understanding of the role of the Support and Wellbeing service was that I could contact them for advice in relation to students who were having difficulties and signpost students to them. The Support and Wellbeing service can themselves signpost students to other services. I had good links and a good working relationship with Paige Smith and another member of the Faculty Support and Wellbeing team and I found them useful and competent.
28. The circumstances in which I might seek the advice of, or refer a student to, Student Wellbeing services, would be if students had come to me about

mental health difficulties or other difficulties, such as those relating to finance or accommodation. To provide an example, a couple of years ago, a student came to me and told me they were intending to end their life. I walked the student down to the Faculty Support and Wellbeing team's office and they took over from there. I interacted with the Support and Wellbeing service several times at the time and I found the service to be very helpful.

29. My understanding of the role of the MHAS is that it is a service available both to students and staff. I have not interacted with MHAS directly, but I know how to contact them.

30. If I had concerns about the mental health of a student, the actions which I would or could take in 2017-2022 would be to make a judgment call as to whether to contact Support and Wellbeing, the personal tutor of the student, the senior tutor or the year lead – or a combination of these.

31. If I had concerns about the risk a student posed to the safety of others, the actions which I would or could take in 2017-2022 would depend on the level of risk. If the risk did not seem to be high, I would contact the Support and Wellbeing service and MHAS. However, if I thought there was an imminent threat, I would call the University Security team knowing that they can call the police if required.

OBSERVATIONS

32. I have been asked to comment on whether I think I should have been told more about Valdo's behaviour while at the University, his mental illness and/or his interactions with the police, and if so what I should have been told and by who. It is difficult for me to answer this question as I do not have the full picture, but I think I should have been told that Valdo might have been a danger to University staff and students. I would expect the police to pass information like that on to the University.

33. I have been asked to comment on whether I consider there are additional

actions that I or the University could have taken in respect of Valdo. Considering the information we had available at that time, I do not think that I or the University could have taken any additional action.

34. I have been asked to comment on whether I consider there are any structural issues (such as guidelines/policies, training, organisational structure, communication with others in or outside the University) which contributed to any issues I have identified. I think the issue of information sharing needs to be looked at so that the University can appropriately manage risk and use its processes as necessary in relation to students.

35. I have been asked to comment on what recommendations I think the Chair of this Inquiry should make to ensure lessons are learned and to prevent similar attacks in the future. A recommendation that I have relates to what I said above regarding information sharing - the University should be made aware by the police and others of any relevant issues in relation to students, so that it can properly assess and manage risk.

36. I have been asked what improvements I think could be made to the University or to the higher education sector generally in how they deal with acutely mentally ill students and / or students who pose a risk of safety to others. I do think that after the financing of education changed and tuition fees were imposed, meaning most students had to get loans, the pressure on students has increased as a result – there is pressure on them, from parents or themselves, to complete the degree and this can have an impact on their mental health. A different funding system may reduce the pressure on students and contribute to better mental health in the student population.

Statement of Truth

I believe the content of this statement to be true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a

document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

Signed: _____

GRO-B

Dated: 22/9/2025 _____

Index to First Witness Statement of David Hann

No.	Inquiry URN	Document Description
1.	UNIN0000692	Email from Kishen Rengaraj (UON) to David Hann (UON), re: Y3 ECs
2.	UNIN0001130	Email from David Hann to Emma Barney, re: Missing students
3.	UNIN0000227	Email from Emma Barney [UoN] to David Hann [UoN] Re: missing students
4.	UNIN0001749	Email from Jon Mckechnie to Valdo Mendes Calocane, David Hann, Donald Giddings and others, re: Your progression
5.	UNIN0001429	Email from David Hann to EZ Eng Teaching Support Team, Samantha Woodhams, Emma Barney and others, re: Project Section 25-9
6.	UNIN0000046	Email from David Hann to Emma Barney, Benjamin Rothwell, Chantal Cappelletti and others, re: RE: Touching base and a request for information
7.	UNIN0001522	Email from Valdo Calocane to David Hann, re: Project Sign up
8.	UNIN0000365	Email from David Hann [UNIN] to Valdo Mendes Calocane and James Rouse [UNIN] Re: Project Sign Up
9.	UNIN0001541	Email from James Rouse to David Hann, re: MMME4086 Project Marks - James Rouse
10.	UNIN0000263	Email from David Hann [UON] to Tao Yang [UON], Donald Giddings [UON], Emma Barney [UON] and others Re: not submitted project
11.	UNIN0001011	Email form Donald Giddings [UoN] to David Hann [UoN], re: Valdo Calocane marks breakdown for mmme4086

12.	UNIN0000407	Email from David Hann (UoN) to Donald Giddings (UoN) Re: Valdo Calocane marks breakdown for mmme4086
13.	UNIN0000959	Email from Valdo Mendes Calocane to David Hann, re: Presentation sign-up sheet
14.	UNIN0000099	Email from David Hann (staff) to Valdo Mendes Calocane RE: Presentation sign-up sheet
15.	UNIN0001453	Email from Valdo Mendes Calocane to David Hann, re: Re: Presentation Session
16.	UNIN0000195	Email from Valdo Mendes Calocane to David Hann [UoN] Re: Presentation Session
17.	UNIN0000988	Email from David Hann to Valdo Mendes Calocane re: Re: Presentation Session
18.	UNIN0001806	Policy document, re: Identifying and responding to students in difficulty - A guide for staff, University of Nottingham
19.	UNIN0001836	M3 Handbook 2021v2
20.	UNIN0001837	M3 Handbook 2122_v1
21.	UNIN0001838	M3 Handbook1718v1
22.	UNIN0001839	M3 Handbook1920v1
23.	UNIN0001840	Module M3 Personal Tutors (UK) moodle Nottingham