

Witness Name: Stewart McWilliam

Statement No: WITN0053001

Dated: 22 September 2025

THE NOTTINGHAM INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF STEWART MCWILLIAM

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

INTRODUCTION

1. I have worked at the University since 1993 and am currently an Associate Professor. This role includes teaching students and conducting research within the Faculty of Engineering (“**Faculty**”) and also some administrative duties, but does not include pastoral or wellbeing responsibilities.
2. 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.
3. I worked at the University of Nottingham Malaysia (2008-2010 and 2013-2017).
4. I was Senior Tutor for the Department of Mechanical, Materials and Manufacturing (“**M3**”) (“**Department**”) for one year during the academic year 2018 / 2019. My role as Senior Tutor involved providing oversight and organisation of the personal tutoring system, for example allocating tutees to personal tutors and organising training to ensure new personal tutors were aware of their responsibilities. This role does include some pastoral and

wellbeing responsibilities, for example a personal tutor might raise concerns about tutees to me as the Senior Tutor to ask for support and advice. The role also included identifying students who were not engaging in their academic studies and escalating those to the Department's Support and Wellbeing team, as often lack of engagement can be a sign that pastoral or wellbeing support is required, and also to keep them informed if they were already aware of a student having difficulties.

5. From 2019 until 2022, I was the Director for Student Journey for the Faculty – this role involved understanding and supporting departments in the Faculty to enhance the student experience. This was not a student-facing role, but rather a high-level strategic role looking at the student's entire experience with the University and improving that. This role did not include pastoral or wellbeing responsibilities.
6. I am also a personal tutor and have been since 1993. I understand the role of personal tutor to be a first port of call for students, to discuss academic progress and for signposting to support services, including to the Department Senior Tutor, the local Support and Wellbeing team and central support services, if they require pastoral assistance.
7. The key functions of a personal tutor were set out as follows in correspondence to students [UNIN0000466]:
 - to establish personal rapport between tutor and tutee
 - to monitor academic progress
 - to encourage learning and organisational skills
 - to maintain motivation of the student
 - to develop teamwork and communication skills
 - to identify course problems
8. As a personal tutor, your aim is to get to know your tutees and I do this by trying to meet with them regularly, whether to discuss academic performance

or otherwise. This would generally be fortnightly during a student's first semester in their first year, and then monthly for the rest of their first and second years, though the frequency depends on the student as some very much enjoy the relationship whereas others do not. During the third and fourth years, when group projects or individual projects are completed, it would not be unusual to not meet with a tutee, or to do so rarely. As a personal tutor, you are at the mercy of student engagement and some students engage better than others (this could be for a variety of reasons).

TRAINING AND POLICIES

9. I have been asked what training I have received on student wellbeing and dealing with mentally ill students. When I became a personal tutor, I received training from the Department Senior Tutor about how and where to signpost students who required wellbeing support. This training was focused on giving personal tutors an understanding of what University services were available, how to access them, and how to signpost students to them. When I became Senior Tutor, I received training from the University's Senior Tutor in November 2018. This again reiterated information about the various University services and how to signpost students to those services if they were struggling. I have also received safeguarding training, but I am not sure when this was.

10. I was aware of the guidance document 'Identifying and Responding to Students in Difficulty: A guide for staff' [UNIN0001628]. This document includes a section on personal tutors and sets out that a personal tutor has a responsibility to respond to students who ask for help, which "*may include offering direct support (particularly if the problem is a course-related issue) or helping the student to obtain appropriate support elsewhere.*" I found that a useful reference.

11. I had a reminder of relevant policies and guidance at the start of academic years. For example, at the start of the academic year 2017/2018, the then Senior Tutor for M3, Dr Carol Eastwick, e-mailed me and all other colleagues who would be acting as personal tutor for students starting that academic year

to provide us with relevant information [UNIN0000555, UNIN0000143, UNIN0000855, UNIN0000863, UNIN0000466, UNIN0001563, UNIN0001628, UNIN0000066, UNIN0000860, UNIN0000735]. That material included:

- information about the Faculty's Student Welfare Team, and explaining they had appointments and drop-in sessions, as well as support offered at the Student Service Centre. A link to further information was included.
- the 'Identifying and Responding to Students in Difficulty: A guide for staff' [UNIN0001628].
- slides from a training session [UNIN0000735]. I think I would have attended this training session in person, or a similar one in previous years. This set out who was responsible for what type of support and where to signpost students to. A helpful diagram shows academic development queries were to be dealt with by personal tutors, with personal support queries having an overlap between personal tutors, the senior tutor team and the Faculty welfare team (depending on the issue), who may then refer out to other services. There were also links to further guidance documents, details on welfare referrals and the Counselling Service.

12. Further weekly information was sent by the Senior Tutor for M3 to personal tutors [UNIN0001688]. For example, on 1 October 2017 information was sent about the policy on circumstances affecting students' ability to study and complete assessments, such as extenuating circumstances and the Quality manual [UNIN0001285].

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

13. At the time (2017 – 2022), my understanding of the role of the Support and Wellbeing service was that they could discuss and understand issues students were having and signpost them to further services within the

University. My understanding is the Support and Wellbeing staff are not trained counsellors, but they are much better informed than academic staff about what services are available to students in difficulty. I would seek the advice of or refer a student to Support and Wellbeing if a student had any type of worries, such as financial or health, or if a student was not engaging in their studies as this can be an indication of a wider issue they may need support with (such as family issues). My usual interaction with Support and Wellbeing would be in person as the team are physically in the same building, although sometimes I would escalate an issue to the M3 Senior Tutor who would then raise the issue with Support and Wellbeing themselves. I find having Support and Wellbeing physically located in the building very useful as I can go and speak to them directly. Whenever I have interacted with Support and Wellbeing, I have found them to be very helpful, very responsive and they have always given the support required.

14. My understanding of the role of the Mental Health Advisory Service (“MHAS”) is limited. I understand they are a more specialist service than the Support and Wellbeing team, but I have no detailed knowledge of how they operate. I would always refer a student to Support and Wellbeing first, as they have the experience to triage the issue and the knowledge of which is the most appropriate service to refer that student on to.

15. If I had concerns about the risk a student posed to the safety of others, my actions would be situation dependent. If there was an immediate risk, I would call the police or the University Security team, but if the risk was not immediate I would escalate the concern to the most appropriate person, which could be the Senior Tutor, Support and Wellbeing or Claire Thompson who was Head of Student Welfare (and is now the Associate Director (Student Wellbeing)).

CHRONOLOGY

16. 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 as that is how

I would refer to him when I saw him. I was Valdo's personal tutor whilst he was a student at the University from September 2017 to July 2022 and so my interactions with him were in this capacity.

17. I had no contact with any member of Valdo's family.

Academic year 2017 – 2018

18. I first came across Valdo when I was allocated to be his Personal Tutor in September 2017. Within the Department, students usually retain the same personal tutor throughout their time at the University and I remained Valdo's Personal Tutor throughout his time at the University (from September 2017 until July 2022).

19. On 20 September 2017, the then Senior Tutor for M3, wrote to me and all other colleagues who would be acting as personal tutors. This included an initial spreadsheet with tutees' names. Four students were allocated as my personal tutees.

20. I was told on 24 September 2017 that Valdo would be assigned to me and Valdo was notified on 28 September 2017 that I would be his Personal Tutor [UNIN0000483]. Following this, on 29 September 2017, I wrote to all my personal tutees and asked to meet with them individually on 3 October 2017 [UNIN0000695].

21. I am unable to find all records of my meetings with Valdo, but my recollection is that I met with him more than once in the initial few weeks of the first term.

22. I have located one e-mail I sent him and my other tutees on 10 October 2017 in which I said "*Find attached notes about plagiarism from today's personal tutorial*" so I know when this one took place [UNIN0000541]. A report from Lancet also shows that I met with Valdo on 10 October 2017 to discuss plagiarism (this was general information for all students to be aware of)

[UNIN0001835]. Lancet was a system we used within the Department where you could record meetings with tutees, whether as group or individual meetings, and whether as a personal tutor or as an academic tutor.

23. The Lancet report [UNIN0001835] also notes:

- 10 October 2017: I met individually with Valdo. I recorded as follows: *“Met Valdo individually to get to know him and discuss entry qualifications. Valdo is a mature student (age ~26) and studies an Access course prior to entry. He is enjoying the course currently.”*
- 9 January 2018: I emailed all my tutees to let them know I had moved office and the location of my office. I said they could e-mail me if they wished to meet but otherwise I would e-mail them at the beginning of the Spring semester to arrange meetings.

24. My first perception of Valdo was that he was mature, quite quiet and didn't associate closely with my other tutees (he was quite a bit older than them), keeping himself to himself. I would occasionally bump into him in the corridor – he would say hi and might ask a question. It seemed to me that he was always very serious and focused on his studies.

25. As far as I can recall, Valdo's attendance in his first year was patchy but not in an unusual way (this is the case for many students), but he did not struggle academically and nobody raised any concerns about him with me, either from an academic or pastoral perspective. Valdo did not raise any concerns with me and I had no concerns at all about him; he was generally doing well academically.

Academic year 2018 – 2019

26. Valdo's second year was similarly unremarkable to the first year of his studies. I know that I would have invited him at the beginning of the year to meet with myself individually and with my other tutees in a group, but I do not have a

record of these meetings and cannot confirm whether Valdo attended. I did e-mail Valdo and my other tutees on 25 September 2018 and 26 September 2018 about a meeting with me [UNIN0001575, UNIN0000601].

27. I further e-mailed Valdo and my other tutees on 1 October 2018 and invited them to meet me on 2 October 2018 and said I would like to arrange individual meetings which we could discuss on 2 October 2018 [UNIN0001217]. I have made a note on Lancet that shows I met Valdo individually on 2 October 2018 and recorded as follows "*Met Valdo individually - progress during Year 1 was quite good (62%) and forms a good grounding for Year 2. He wants a first class degree and intends to work a bit harder this year to improve on last. He is starting to think about internships and future careers but is at an early stage*" [UNIN0001835].

28. I then e-mailed all my tutees on 8 October 2018 and invited them to come for individual meetings with me – Valdo's was set for 11.30 on 11 October 2018 [UNIN0000079].

29. I have found an e-mail to all my tutees dated 11 February 2019 in which I explained results would be available that week and that I would be available to discuss their results on the day they were released [UNIN0000791, UNIN0001524].

30. On 19 March 2019, I also received an e-mail that had been sent to Valdo that said he had missed a laboratory session for Dynamics Control [UNIN0000743].

31. On 19 June 2019, the Lancet report shows I e-mailed all my tutees about the release of marks as follows: "*I will be available in my office on Friday 9-10 and 11:30-1 to release the marks to you. I am not operating an appointment system and will deal with student on a first come first served basis*" [UNIN0001835].

32. Nobody raised any concerns about Valdo with me either from an academic or a health perspective, nor did he raise any concerns or behave in a way that caused me any concerns.
33. The first e-mail that I have located that I received from Valdo came to me on 24 June 2019; in this, he queried a grade that he had received, but he very quickly contacted me again to let me know that the mark had been incorrectly uploaded [UNIN0000131].
34. In order to progress to the MEng at the end of Year 2, Valdo needed to achieve a year average mark of 55% in Year 2. I would have been at the Exam Board at which Year 2 marks would have been reviewed and a decision made as to which students should progress to Year 3 of the MEng. Valdo progressed to the MEng because he had achieved the required mark. (I have been shown an e-mail from Valdo to Dr Donald Giddings in which he requested to transfer from the BEng to the MEng which was then processed.) He went into his third year starting in September 2019.

Academic year 2019 – 2020

35. In the third year, Valdo undertook a group project with four other students from his cohort. I remained his Personal Tutor, but he would have had closer contact with the supervisor of his group project as there tend to be weekly meetings to keep the project on track.
36. Part of this academic year was disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which would have affected, amongst other things, the group project that Valdo was undertaking.
37. As far as I am aware, I did not receive any direct contact from Valdo at any point during the whole of this academic year and no concerns about Valdo were raised with me by others, nor did he raise any concerns with me. As explained above, in the third and fourth year the role of personal tutor

becomes less significant and more responsive for most students as the supervisor of their group project is generally the person they will go to as the first port of call, and students are more assured by this time, having already completed two years at university. Rather than scheduling meetings, personal tutors often only see tutees if they get in touch.

38. I have been asked whether I was made aware of Valdo's arrests and detention in hospital in May 2020, and his detention in hospital in July 2020. I was not aware of these. I have never received this type of information about any student.

Academic year 2020 – 2021

39. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, teaching for the 2020-21 academic year took place predominantly online. I invited all my personal tutees to an online meeting on 25 September 2020, but I cannot recall whether Valdo attended this [UNIN0000378]. In this year, Valdo would have undertaken, amongst other things, an individual project which was supervised by Professor Atanas Popov.

40. A month or so later, on 26 October 2020, I received an e-mail from Valdo at around 9pm in which he requested a Teams meeting with me to discuss what he described as a 'serious issue' (although he did not provide any detail of the issue in his e-mail) [UNIN0000887]. I responded almost immediately and told Valdo that I was available to speak right then [UNIN0000834].

41. My recollection is that we had a Teams conversation that evening and Valdo informed me that he was struggling with his studies. I do not recall Valdo providing a specific reason, but I remember that Valdo seemed quiet and withdrawn during our conversation and the impression I got was that he was lonely. Valdo seldom came onto camera during Teams meetings and I don't believe that he put the camera on during this meeting. I do not recall exactly what I said to Valdo, but I would have advised him to contact Support and

Wellbeing services, the Year Lead and Senior Tutor. This was the first time I had any type of concern about Valdo.

42. I made a note on Lancet on 28 October 2020 that reads: "*Met Valdo to discuss his welfare. He is finding studying difficult and does not feel prepared for Year 4 - in particular he mentioned he found Turbulence and Turbulent Flows and Internal Combustion Engines modules difficult. We agreed to meet next week on 4 Nov.*" [UNIN0001835] To the best of my recollection, this is a note of the conversation that happened late on 26 October 2020. I also sent Valdo a teams meeting request on 26 October at 21.36 (for a meeting on 4 November 2020), which leads me to believe we had just spoken and agreed to meet on 4 November 2020.

43. On 2 November 2020, Professor Atanas Popov, Valdo's individual project supervisor, alerted me by e-mail to serious difficulties he was having organising meetings with Valdo [UNIN0000521]. As I had already arranged to meet with Valdo on 4 November 2020, I decided to wait until then to discuss this with him.

44. On 4 November 2020, I had a further meeting with Valdo to unpick whether this struggle with his studies was a short-term or long-term issue [UNIN0001767]. I don't recall exactly Valdo's behaviour or presentation during this meeting, but I thought he might be struggling because of the pandemic – I had never seen him with a group of friends so I thought he was already a bit isolated and I wondered whether Valdo was even more isolated now than he had been before, although he did not tell me that. At this point, I had no idea Valdo had been suffering from serious mental health illness or that he had previously been sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

45. In the meeting, I discussed with Valdo whether he wanted to transfer to the BEng rather than continue with the MEng. Valdo did not want to take this route and seemed set on interrupting his studies. Given this, I sent him a link via Teams to the Voluntary Interruption of Studies ("**VIS**") process

[UNIN0001586]. My note of the meeting on Lancet was as follows:

"I met Valdo today to discuss his welfare. He is still struggling and really struggled with the recent turbulence and turbulent flows test. He has been in contact with student health and wellbeing and we discussed his options: i) voluntary interruption of studies, ii) graduate with BEng. He decided he wants to proceed with VIS and was provided with the QM links and directed to Emma Barney (Senior Tutor)" [UNIN0001835].

46. My reference to 'QM links' is to the Quality Manual which details University policies and regulations including VIS [WITN0066029].

47. During our 4 November 2020 meeting, I also signposted Valdo to Dr Emma Barney (Senior Tutor for M3) and Ben Perrett (a member of the Faculty's Support and Wellbeing team) and I followed up by sending Valdo these names via Teams [UNIN0001586]. I escalated this to Emma myself on 4 November 2020 by e-mail and Teams to advise her of Valdo's situation. I informed Emma that Valdo had told me that he was finding study difficult, felt unprepared for it and was struggling. I also let her know that Valdo had been in contact with the Support and Wellbeing team and now wanted to interrupt his studies so I had told him to contact her [UNIN0001286, UNIN0001579]. Emma replied to me on Teams to let me know that she was off work until Monday, but that if I thought a quick response to Valdo was needed, she could ask either her deputy as Senior Tutor or the Year Lead to assist in her absence [UNIN0001579]. I replied saying it would be helpful to respond quickly if possible and asked Emma to ask the Deputy Senior Tutor, Dr Samanta Piano, to contact Valdo [UNIN0000492].

48. I then immediately e-mailed Valdo to let him know that Emma was off work at that time, but that she would be asking Samanta to contact him [UNIN0001306]. That evening (4 November 2020), Samanta e-mailed me and Emma to say that she was happy to discuss the situation with Valdo and pointing out that, as a Year 4 student, he had the option to graduate with a

BEng instead of an MEng by converting his group project into an individual one. Samanta asked if she should discuss this with Valdo [UNIN0001685]. I replied to Samanta's e-mail later that evening, informing her that I had already discussed the BEng option with Valdo and he was interested in interrupting instead [UNIN0000816]. The next day, 5 November 2020, Samanta confirmed to Emma and me that she would contact Valdo [UNIN0000504].

49. I checked in with Valdo via Teams on 7 November 2020 to say I understood Samanta had been in touch with him and to let him know he could contact me if he wanted to talk anything through, but I did not get a response to my message [UNIN0001586].

50. On 9 November 2020, Professor Popov raised a further concern about Valdo's attendance and I informed him that Valdo was going through the VIS process [UNIN0000257, UNIN0000454].

51. I am aware that Samanta signed off the VIS form on 10 November 2020 and Valdo's interruption would have been ratified soon afterwards [UNIN0000908, UNIN0000772]. That day, I messaged Valdo on Teams to let him know that he could contact me if he needed help with anything and he responded within a couple of minutes to thank me for my support [UNIN0001586]. I also e-mailed Professor Popov to let him know that Valdo had interrupted his studies [UNIN0000342].

52. After I had escalated Valdo to the Senior Tutor and Support and Wellbeing team and sent him the follow up Teams messages, I did not have any further active involvement with Valdo's interruption. I also had no involvement or contact with Valdo during the interruption period – usually with interruptions, the next contact we on the academic side have with a student is at the point of return. What happened with Valdo is therefore what I would expect to happen. I do not know whether there was any contact between Valdo and the Support and Wellbeing services during the interruption period and I did not hear from anyone about Valdo for the rest of the academic year.

Academic year 2021 – 2022

53. On 19 August 2021, I received what seemed to be a pocket call from Valdo on Teams. I sent Valdo a message via Teams to advise him that I had picked up his call, but could not hear him and that I would call back. I did not get a response [UNIN0001586].
54. I have been asked whether I was made aware of Valdo's detention in hospital in September 2021. I was not made aware of this. I do not recall that I have ever received this type of information about any student.
55. On 13 September 2021, Dr Emma Barney copied me and other colleagues into an e-mail to Valdo in which she answered some queries that he had put to her [UNIN0001357]. She explained to Valdo in this e-mail that she was copying me into it so that I was aware that he was planning to return to his studies. It was through this e-mail that it was confirmed to me that Valdo was coming back to his studies. As Valdo had essentially interrupted for the whole of the 2020/21 academic year, he remained in Year 4 of his studies and started the year afresh. I contacted Valdo on 23 September 2021 to suggest meeting [UNIN0000204] and we arranged to meet online via Teams on Monday 27 September 2021 [UNIN0000596].
56. At this stage, Valdo was considering the option to transfer to the BEng. We exchanged some Teams messages about this on 27 September 2021 after our meeting and after I had had the chance to find out a bit more information. I told Valdo that I had checked with the Senior Tutor, Dr Emma Barney and Emma had confirmed that Valdo could transfer to the BEng based on the marks he had achieved in Years 1 to 3 of the MEng. I reminded Valdo that transferring programmes would mean him having to write an individual report based on the group project he undertook in Year 3 (this was the project supervised by Dr Rothwell) and Valdo asked how long the report should be and how he should complete it. I advised him that the best person to speak to

about this all would be the person who would supervise the report and said that I would check if this was Dr Alastair Campbell-Ritchie [UNIN0001586].

57. Valdo also asked me if he had to register for the new academic year – I was not sure of the answer and said that I didn't think so, but that I could be wrong. After this exchange of messages, I did not hear from Valdo and so I contacted him on 2 October 2021 via Teams again to ask him to keep me informed as to his health and intentions. Essentially, I was looking for a status update from him as I wasn't sure if Valdo had registered as a student and whether he was going to transfer to the BEng [UNIN0001586].

58. I didn't get a response to my message of 2 October 2021 so I followed it up with another one a week or so later, on 11 October 2021. I asked him for an update as to his status and this time he responded to let me know that he had decided to continue on the MEng and had now registered. I responded and said we should meet in person soon [UNIN0001586].

59. On 19 October 2021, Valdo messaged me asking if it was possible to meet that week. It was unusual for Valdo to initiate meetings and I responded saying we could meet the next day in my office, which Valdo agreed to [UNIN0001586]. I can see I sent a Teams meeting to Valdo for 9.30am on 20 October [UNIN0001321] and he accepted [UNIN0000623]. As far as I can recollect, this meeting did not go ahead either face-to-face or on Teams.

60. On 26 October 2021, I messaged Valdo via Teams to check that everything was ok with him and he responded within a few hours to say that everything was fine [UNIN0001586].

61. Then, on 2 November 2021, Valdo sent me a Teams message to ask if he could come in to see me for 'a quick word'. I responded to say I was working from home but could meet on Teams instead, but he didn't reply [UNIN0001586]. I messaged Valdo again on 3 November 2021 to say I was on campus and asked what time would be good to meet. We subsequently

managed to arrange a meeting for 5 November 2021, in person at my office [UNIN0001586]. I can also see I sent a Teams meeting invite to Valdo which he accepted [UNIN0000982, UNIN0000627]. Valdo's main reason for wanting to meet was that he had applied for a job at DHL and was seeking a reference from me. It isn't unusual for undergraduate students to work and I filled out a form to provide Valdo with a reference (this was not a character-based reference, but more like an identity check to confirm he was a student and it was a form rather than something I had to write) and I was telephoned by DHL days later. I think that the role was at the sorting office. Valdo seemed similar to how he usually did in this meeting but perhaps less confident. I recall that he seemed down but not worryingly so. I still did not know at this stage that Valdo had been detained in hospital at any stage and I had no concerns giving him a reference.

62. On 29 November 2021, I contacted Valdo and said that I hoped everything had worked out with DHL, but I did not get a response [UNIN0001586].

63. On 1 December 2021, I was contacted by Dr James Rouse, Valdo's final year project supervisor, who advised me that Valdo had not been attending his supervision meetings the last couple of weeks and wanted to make me aware of this [UNIN0001660]. I told James that I would follow up on this [UNIN0001079] and to this end I messaged Valdo on Teams on 1 December 2021 to ask for a catch up. Valdo replied a couple of days later and we arranged to meet on 8 December 2021 [UNIN0001586].

64. I updated Dr Rouse on 3 December 2021 [UNIN0001059]. On 6 December 2021, Dr Rouse responded to let me know that he had met Valdo online and Valdo seemed to be making some progress with his project [UNIN0000902].

65. On 8 December 2021, Valdo turned up to my office, thinking our meeting was happening in person, but I had arranged for the meeting to take place on Teams and Valdo had accepted the invite [UNIN0001214, UNIN0001093]. When Valdo messaged me to let me know about the mix up, I asked if he

could speak to me on Teams, but I am not sure if this happened [UNIN0001586]. As I was aware that Dr Rouse had met with Valdo on 6 December 2021 and this was an indicator that Valdo was back on track, I did not follow up further with Valdo at this point.

66. Things then went a little quiet and this was not unusual as it was coming up to the end of term and the Christmas break. I messaged Valdo on Teams on 12 January 2022 to say that I hoped he had had a good break and to remind him he could contact me if he wanted to discuss anything, but Valdo did not respond.

67. I am now aware that an allegation of assault was made against Valdo by another student on or around 17 January 2022. I was not told this at the time it happened.

68. On the morning of 20 January 2022, I received an e-mail from Paige Smith, the Faculty's Support & Wellbeing Manager, asking me and Emma Barney (Senior Tutor) if Valdo was engaging with his studies and whether there were any concerns [UNIN0000351]. I could see this was off the back of a request from Claire Thompson, the Associate Director (Student and Wellbeing). After I received this e-mail, I e-mailed Valdo and asked him if he was available to talk [UNIN0000386]. He was and we spoke later that day. Valdo told me that he was ok and he had taken the Internal Combustion Engines take home exam and had another exam to prepare for. He did not sound on top of things to me, he sounded aloof and did not seem to have any sense of urgency about his exams. However, students are often stressed at this time of year around the exam period and the fact he was engaging in his exams suggested to me he was ok. There were no signs that he was struggling or that I needed to take any action.

69. After I had spoken to Valdo, I replied to Paige on 20 January 2022 [UNIN0000712], filling her in on what had happened before Christmas, including that Valdo had failed to submit a progress report (I believe I would

have found out about this through a conversation with Dr Rouse, but cannot recall exactly how I came to know it) and had not filed an extenuating circumstances claim in this regard, and my conversation that day with Valdo. It seemed to me that there was some evidence that Valdo was engaging in his studies and I wrote as much to Paige, telling her that I was going to try and meet with Valdo after his exams were over and would discuss with him then his engagement with his studies. It wasn't very common to be asked for this sort of information, but I wasn't given any context for the request and I didn't have any reason to have any concerns about Valdo.

70. Dr Antonino La Rocca, who I had copied into my e-mail to Paige, followed up the same day to let us know that Valdo had not submitted his coursework for a module and had submitted the exam for it eight minutes and 43 seconds late [UNIN0000385]. This was not unusual, students do from time to time submit exams late – with these exams in particular, they were happening online and some students forgot there was an upload time – so I was not overly concerned to hear about Valdo's late exam submission.

71. On 24 January 2022, I received a Teams message from Eleanor (Ellie) Turner, Head of MHAS, asking me to call her about one of my tutees [UNIN0001610]. I rang Ellie, I think on the same day. I did not make a record of this conversation so cannot be sure of the information, but my recollection is that she informed me that the University had been investigating Valdo's library access as he had been going there late at night. That didn't appear to me to be unusual as students do often access the library at night. Ellie also, I recollect, told me that Valdo had been involved in some sort of incident. It was described to me that Valdo was in some sort of shared accommodation and that he had had some sort of interaction with somebody in the household or a neighbour and that individual had jumped out of a window and sustained serious injury. I now understand the incident Ellie told me about happened two years earlier, but I recollect that my understanding at the time was it had just happened. I did not relay this conversation to anybody else and did not consider that it was appropriate for me, as his Personal Tutor, to document

this in his personal record (I did not receive any paperwork about it). My understanding was that I was given this background as information only. My expectation was that this incident was being managed through other channels such as Support and Wellbeing and MHAS. I do not recall being asked to do anything by Ellie. This was the first time I knew Valdo was engaged with MHAS.

72. I messaged Valdo on Teams a few days later, on 27 January 2022, asking him if we could meet up now that his exams were over, but I did not receive a response [UNIN0001586].

73. On 30 January 2022, I asked Dr James Rouse to let me know when he next saw Valdo [UNIN0001514]. James was Valdo's project supervisor and had regular contact with him so I asked him this because I was trying to find out what contact Valdo had had with the Department given he hadn't responded to my message of 27 January 2022. James replied the same day to say that he would, letting me also know that Valdo had turned up out of the blue at his office last week and had seemed fine [UNIN0000806].

74. On 31 January 2022, Paige Smith relayed to me and other colleagues, including James, the sad news from Ellie Turner that Valdo was in hospital under the Mental Health Act [UNIN0001745]. The information provided was limited and I was not aware of the circumstances that led to it. I would not expect to be given the details of the circumstances, but I might expect to be told the severity of what led to the detention. The e-mail from Paige read as follows:

"I have received the following news from Ellie Turner (Head of Student Wellbeing – Mental Health). Unfortunately, Valdo is currently in hospital on s.2 Mental Health Act.

If I receive any more information, I will pass it onto you."

75. Later that day, I e-mailed Dr Donald Giddings to let him know about Valdo

[UNIN0000525]. I did this because Donald is the Year Lead for Year 4 and he would monitor engagement so I thought it would help him to know Valdo would not be attending.

76. On 3 February 2022, Dr James Rouse asked me if there was any news on Valdo as he was wondering if Valdo would be able to participate in project work that semester, but did not want to pressure him if he was not in a good place [UNIN0001195]. I told James that I had not received an update and would chase this up with MHAS, but that he should assume that Valdo would not be participating in project work until he (James) was told otherwise [UNIN0000452].

77. Later on 3 February 2022, I messaged Ellie on Teams to ask her whether there was any update on Valdo's situation. Ellie confirmed that Valdo was still on the ward and asked me whether there were any academic issues that needed to be resolved to enable Valdo to complete his programme that year. I replied to Ellie advising her that we would have a better perspective on this once the Exam Board had met a few weeks later. I advised that Valdo would have a strong case for an extenuating circumstances claim, but the longer he was away from his studies, the worse the situation became [UNIN0001610].

78. On 13 February 2022, Professor Popov e-mailed me asking what Valdo's student status was as he was registered for the MMME4079 module, but was not participating [UNIN0001473]. I immediately contacted Ellie Turner on Teams for an update on Valdo as I had not heard anything since Ellie and I last exchanged messages on 3 February 2022 and module convenors were noticing Valdo's absence. Ellie replied later that evening, advising me that Valdo was still in hospital and asking me for recommendations on the academic front, given that Valdo had now missed a few weeks of study [UNIN0001610]. I e-mailed Professor Popov to let him know that Valdo was unwell, unlikely to attend the next week and that I would have a chat with the Senior Tutor, Dr Emma Barney, to discuss what was best for Valdo to do [UNIN0001094].

79. I have seen a Teams message exchange with Emma Barney on 13 February 2022 in which I said Valdo was still in hospital and asked her to discuss the next steps. I can see Emma replied on 14 February 2022 and said I could call her. I responded to say I would call but I don't recall if she answered and we had a conversation or not [UNIN0001579].
80. Ellie then prompted me about the matter via e-mail on 22 February 2022 as she was hoping to speak to Valdo that day or the next [UNIN0000926]. I messaged Emma Barney on Teams and said Ellie had asked for academic recommendations [UNIN0001579]. Emma responded [UNIN0001579] and I summarised her response to Ellie – that missing too many weeks of study would have a detrimental effect on Valdo's degree outcome as he would struggle to catch up and recommended that he interrupt his studies, the earlier the better. I said that if Valdo was reluctant to interrupt, then we could consider supporting him through a support plan and extenuating circumstances claims [UNIN0000796]. Ellie e-mailed me on 24 February 2022 and told me Valdo was not keen on engaging with her so she asked me to communicate the academic recommendations to Valdo at our next meeting [UNIN0000404].
81. I can't recall how or when I was told Valdo had been discharged (I now know he was discharged on 24 February 2022) but I must have been told something about that on the same day as I am reminded that I contacted James Rouse by Teams on 24 February 2022 saying that I was 'under the impression' that Valdo had left hospital [UNIN0001805]. On 27 February I sent Valdo a Teams message asking him to meet [UNIN0001586] and followed this up with an e-mail the next day asking the same thing [UNIN0000388]. I do not recall being told anything about Valdo's time at hospital, his condition or the circumstances of his discharge.
82. Valdo replied to my Teams message on 2 March 2022 and we arranged a meeting on Teams for 4 March 2022. I said I had sent a Teams invite but would also be in my office if he wanted to meet face to face [UNIN0001586].

83. On 2 March 2022, I messaged Dr Donald Giddings on Teams to let him know that I had a meeting scheduled with Valdo on Friday, that I had discussed Valdo with Emma Barney and we thought it was in the best interests of the student that he interrupt his studies, but that if Valdo did not want to then we needed to work out what he needed to do and how to support him. I asked Donald to look into Valdo's situation sometime soon and that I would update him as to how the meeting with Valdo went [UNIN0000449].
84. On 3 March 2022, Donald sent me an e-mail in response to the queries I had put to him on Teams regarding Valdo's academic record and options going forward. Donald set out Valdo's recent results and said he thought that Valdo should be able to put in retrospective extenuating circumstances claims and perhaps an interruption of studies would be useful [UNIN0001583]. Donald sent me further updates later that day [UNIN0000129].
85. On 4 March 2022, I met with Valdo on Teams as arranged [UNIN0001411, UNIN0001179]. We discussed Valdo's academic situation, with Valdo acknowledging his recent issues (including that his January exam results were lower than expected) and indicating that he wanted to see his studies through to completion. I outlined to Valdo the three options I believed were open to him at that point: submitting extenuating circumstances in the hope of being awarded first sits of exams and completing Year 4; voluntarily interrupting his studies; or transferring to the BEng, which involved writing up an individual project report. Valdo was not keen on an interruption and seemed to prefer the option of submitting an extenuating circumstances claim, so I sent him information on this [UNIN0001586] and advised he contact Dr Giddings about next steps if he took that option. I hoped that Valdo would choose the option to transfer to the BEng rather than continue on the MEng as his assessment performance in January 2022 was significantly worse than his previous performance and he would have found it difficult to complete all his modules and therefore successfully complete the MEng. Valdo agreed to meet me a few days later in person (on Wednesday 9 March 2022) to let me

know which way he had decided to go.

86. After this meeting, I e-mailed Emma Barney, Donald Giddings and James Rouse and let them know the options I had discussed with Valdo and the advice I had given him, as follows:

"Dear All,

I met with Valdo via Teams at lunchtime today - I had hoped we would meet in-person but this wasn't possible.

Valdo acknowledged his recent issues and indicated he wants to continue his studies to completion. However, he is also concerned about his Jan assessment marks which are much lower than expected.

We discussed the 3 options he has going forward:

1) Submit ECs with the intention of being awarded first sits and completing Year 4

2) Voluntarily Interrupt Studies - he is not keen.

3) Convert his GDM to an individual project and graduate with a Beng

On the assumption that he chooses 1) he has been advised to submit EC's, contact Don about next steps and contact James to get his project back on track. I made it clear that the time he has had away from his studies makes this route both challenging and difficult to navigate.

I am hopeful that he will change his mind and choose 3), and he agreed to meet me in-person next Wed to discuss his decision.

I will keep you posted" [UNIN0001449].

87. Donald replied to say he would message Valdo about putting an extenuating circumstances claim in [UNIN0000969] and Emma said she did not think it would be an issue that it was out of time as MHAS and I could provide letters of support to mitigate that [UNIN0000367]. James thanked me for the update and let me know he had reached out to Valdo about his project, but hadn't heard back [UNIN0000905].

88. On 8 March 2022, the day before we were scheduled to meet, Valdo

messaging me on Teams to ask for further information about the extenuating circumstances process. I replied saying that we could discuss the issue in more detail when we met on 9 March 2022 [UNIN0001586], which we did. When I met with Valdo on 9 March 2022 [UNIN0001586], he was still keen to submit extenuating circumstances claims and continue on the MEng so I contacted Donald after the meeting and asked him to write to Valdo setting out what was required when it came to extenuating circumstances and re-sits. I think I asked Donald this in person. I am not sure if Donald sent this e-mail to Valdo.

89. I am aware that Valdo then met with James Rouse to discuss his individual project. I am not sure if this meeting took place on 10 or 11 March 2022.

90. On 11 March 2022, Valdo messaging me on Teams and asked to speak to me [UNIN0001586] and told me that he had decided that the most logical decision was to transfer to the BEng and complete the required individual project report. I updated colleagues (Emma Barney, Ellie Turner, Donald and James) as to this and asked Donald if he would complete the course transfer form and liaise with Dr Campbell-Ritchie about the individual project report [UNIN0000377]. My update read as follows:

“All,

I spoke to Valdo on Wednesday 9 March 2022. At that stage Valdo was keen to go ahead with submitting EC’s and continue on MEng to completion.

On Thursday 10 March 2022 Don sent Valdo an email detailing the extent of the required resits, encouraging Valdo to submit an EC, and outlining the options available to him. Valdo also met with James to discuss his individual project.

Today Friday 11 March Valdo contacted me to say that he had decided that the most logical decision is to graduate with a BEng degree, based on his Year 2 and Year 3 marks. He is aware that he needs to successfully complete a zero credit project module to satisfy the accreditation requirement.

I am meeting Valdo again on Monday 14 March to finalise arrangements e.g.

sign off the course transfer form.

Who signs Valdo's course transfer form? Is it you Don? If so, do you alert Alastair Campbell Ritchie that Valdo needs to complete the zero credit project?".

91. James responded on 11 March 2020 and let me know he had also spoken to Valdo and suggested they suspend project meetings, but that Valdo was more than welcome to contact him if things changed [UNIN0000387].
92. I also messaged Ellie Turner on Teams to let her know Valdo had decided to graduate with a BEng based on his second and third year marks [UNIN0001610].
93. Donald responded on 14 March 2022 to say he would arrange the transfer from the MEng to the BEng to ensure continuity of contact for Valdo and that he would contact Valdo if I thought that was best [UNIN0001637] – I responded to agree he should contact Valdo and asked he kept us all (me, Emma Barney and James Rouse) informed on progress with the transfer and individual project [UNIN0001676].
94. Valdo and I were due to meet again on Teams 14 March 2022, but were unable to speak due to a technological issue [UNIN0000702, UNIN0000061, UNIN0001586]. I messaged Valdo on Teams to let him know to contact Simon Lawes (Programme Director) to get his course transfer signed off and asked him to let me know when that had happened.
95. I am aware that Donald then contacted Valdo on 16 March 2022 to arrange the course transfer and to give Valdo further information about the individual report as he copied me into this e-mail [UNIN0000616]. Donald copied me into the e-mail filing the form effecting the course transfer on 21 March 2022 [UNIN0000305, UNIN0000084].
96. After this, Valdo e-mailed me on 29 June 2022 to let me know that he thought

that everything (academically) had been completed at his end and asking me to provide him with a reference regarding his academic performance on his degree programme and suitability for academic study in the future [UNIN0000936].

97. After checking with colleagues, it became clear that Valdo had not yet completed all the requirements in order to graduate as his individual report was not at a satisfactory level [UNIN0000976, UNIN0000297]. I told Valdo this by e-mail [UNIN0001188] and he responded that he had resubmitted his report and asked if I could make the reference available to him tomorrow (30 June 2022) [UNIN0000110]. I wrote to Valdo that I did not see the need to rush with the reference and should he not wait until his degree outcome had been announced [UNIN0000989]. Valdo responded that he happened to have an immediate need for it and so it would be more suitable for him to have it sooner rather than later [UNIN0001194]. I told Valdo that I could write him a reference, but that I would not be able to comment on his degree outcome as he had not yet completed the requirements and the results had not been published [UNIN0001573]. Valdo said that he understood this [UNIN0000078].

98. After a day of being copied into some exchanges of e-mails between Valdo and Dr Alastair Campbell-Ritchie, who was marking Valdo's individual project report, I e-mailed Valdo on 30 June 2022 to tell him that I was concerned about his lack of progress with his report submission and that if it was not completed to the satisfaction of Dr Campbell-Ritchie, he would not be able to graduate with a BEng and would instead have to be considered for a BSc [UNIN0000277]. Notwithstanding this, I sent Valdo, a few minutes later, the academic reference that he had requested as the reference was not about the outcome of his degree [UNIN0001497]. In it, I said that I had been Valdo's Personal Tutor throughout his time at the University and believed him to be a hard-working student capable of achieving good grades [UNIN0000985]. I felt I could honestly say that about him as it was an academic reference. I didn't think it was appropriate to use the reference to flag issues about his mental

health.

99. It then went quiet for a few days and so I e-mailed Valdo twice on 5 July 2022 to check how he was getting on with his individual report, but I did not get a response to either e-mail [UNIN0000136, UNIN0000415]. However, the next day, on 6 July 2022, Dr Campbell-Ritchie copied me into an e-mail to Valdo in which he confirmed that Valdo's report was now at pass level [UNIN0000048]. I immediately e-mailed colleagues to ensure that Valdo's degree outcome was decided as quickly as possible [UNIN0000077] and within a couple of days it was confirmed that Valdo had achieved a 2:1, with an average mark of 67 [UNIN0000497]. I e-mailed Valdo on 7 July 2022 and asked him to look on Bluecastle (the University's system for publishing marks, progression decisions and degree outcomes) to confirm that he could see his results and degree outcome, but I did not get a response to this e-mail [UNIN0000748].

100. After this point, I did not hear from Valdo again, nor did any other colleagues contact me about him.

101. Aside from the details set out above, at the time Valdo was a student, I was not aware of any other occasions he was detained at or admitted to hospital because of mental illness, any other interactions with the police or University security team, or any complaints made about his behaviour. As far as I am aware, Valdo was not asked to undertake a fitness to study assessment whilst he was a student.

OBSERVATIONS

102. 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. This is a complex issue as there are concerns about data protection, privacy and not stigmatising people, and the purpose of sharing

the information must be considered. It is a fine line, but I do think I should have been given more information. I still do not know all of the details of Valdo's case and so I can't identify which specific pieces of information I think I should have been told, but in general I think I should have known about the severity of the situation. The reason I think I should have been given this information is so that I could have supported Valdo in the best way possible. I do not think I should have been told all of the details about Valdo's mental health or behaviour or the circumstances of his detentions.

103. 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. Given the information I had, I do not identify any additional actions I could have taken. In terms of the University, I think high level information about Valdo's mental health difficulties should have been shared with me and the Department, by one person who had oversight of the entire situation.

104. 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 of the issues I have identified. I do not identify any structural issues, but I am conscious that I don't have knowledge of what was shared with the University by the police and NHS, or what information was shared between other people within the University.

105. 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. I don't know all the details about what happened with Valdo and so I don't feel I am in a position to make recommendations.

106. 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. Within the higher education sector, I think it would be helpful to have

national clarity and clear policies in relation to information sharing within universities about people who have serious mental health problems.

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 September 2025 _____

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| No. | Inquiry URN | Document Description |
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| 1. | UNIN0000466 | Policy Document Re: M3 Undergraduate Personal Tutorials 2017-18, University of Nottingham [Date from Parent Date] |
| 2. | UNIN0001628 | Guidance, re: Identifying and Responding to Students in Difficulty, University of Nottingham |
| 3. | UNIN0000555 | Email from Carol Eastwick [UoN] to Christopher Bradnum [UoN], Sue Cobb [UoN], Simon Harrison [UoN] and others, re: mailshot for 1st year tutors |
| 4. | UNIN0000143 | Notes on student records and their tutors, University of Nottingham |
| 5. | UNIN0000855 | Report dated 29/09/2017, compiled by University of Nottingham, re: Welcome timetable of activities |
| 6. | UNIN0000863 | M3 Undergraduate Personal Tutorial Programme Outline - (Academic Year 2017-18) |
| 7. | UNIN0001563 | Briefing pack for M3 1 st Year Personal Tutor Briefing Pack 2017-18 except Aerospace held on 29/09/2017 |
| 8. | UNIN0000066 | Logging student attendance – Group Tutorials, University of Nottingham |
| 9. | UNIN0000860 | Notes re: M3 First Year First Tutorial |
| 10. | UNIN0000735 | Notes, re: M3 Tutor Training Session 201718 |
| 11. | UNIN0001688 | Email from Carol Eastwick [UoN] to lfty Ahmed [UoN], Ruth Anderson [UoN], Ian Ashcroft [UoN] and others, re: Tutoring email (except Aerospace) week 2 w/b 2nd October |
| 12. | UNIN0001285 | Policy document, Re: Policy on Circumstances Affecting Students' Ability to Study and Complete Assessments, notes for personal tutors - not a handout for students |

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| 13. | UNIN0000483 | Email from EZ-Do-NotReply (UoN) to Stewart Mcwilliam (UoN) Re: Tutor Assignment |
| 14. | UNIN0000695 | Email from Dr Stewart McWilliam to Valdo Calocane and other students, re: Personal Tutorial meeting |
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| 24. | UNIN0000131 | Email from Valdo Mendes Calocane to Stewart McWilliam (UON), re: Urgent grade query |
| 25. | UNIN0000378 | Email from Stewart Mcwilliam [University of Nottingham] to Valdo Calocane and others Re: Year 4 Tutorials |
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| 89. | UNIN0000061 | Email from Valdo Mendes Calocane to Stewart Mcwilliam, re: Valdo/Stewart |
| 90. | UNIN0000616 | Email from Donald Giddings to Valdo Mendes Calocane and Stewart Mcwilliam re: transferring to BEng and completing the programme |
| 91. | UNIN0000305 | Email from Donald Giddings [UNIN] to SSProgrammes-Eng [UNIN], Valdo Mendes Calocane, Stewart Mcwilliam [UNIN] and others Re: change of Taught course for Valdo Mendes Calocane |
| 92. | UNIN0000084 | REQUEST TO TRANSFER TAUGHT COURSE form by University of Nottingham undated |
| 93. | UNIN0000 936 | Email from Valdo Mendes Calocane to Stewart Mcwilliam, re: Final Bits |
| 94. | UNIN0000976 | Email from Alastair Campbell Ritchie [UNIN] to Stewart Mcwilliam [UNIN], re: RE: Final Bits |
| 95. | UNIN0000297 | Email from Alastair Campbell Ritchie [UNIN] to Stewart Mcwilliam [UNIN] Re: Final bits |
| 96. | UNIN0001188 | Email from Stewart Mcwilliam [UoN] to Valdo Mendes Calocane, re: Re: Final bits |
| 97. | UNIN0000110 | Email from Valdo Mendes Calocane to Stewart Mcwilliam, re: Final Bits |
| 98. | UNIN0000989 | Email from Stewart Mcwilliam to Valdo Mendes Calocane, re: Final Bits |
| 99. | UNIN0001194 | Email from Valdo Mendes Calocane to Stewart Mcwilliam [UINN], re: Re: Final bits |
| 100. | UNIN0001573 | Email from Stewart Mcwilliam to Valdo Mendes Calocane, re: Final bits |
| 101. | UNIN0000078 | Email from Valdo Calocane to Stewart Mcwilliam RE: Final Bits |
| 102. | UNIN0000277 | Email from Stewart Mcwilliam (UoN) to Valdo Mendes Calocane (UoN) Re: MMME3073 / Project progress |

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| 103. | UNIN0001497 | Email from Stewart McWilliam to Valdo Mendes Calocane, re: RE: Final Bits |
| 104. | UNIN0000985 | Letter from Stewart McWilliam to Whom it may concern, re: Valdo Mendes Calocane |
| 105. | UNIN0000136 | Email from Stewart McWilliam (UON) to Valdo Mendes Calocane, re: Project report |
| 106. | UNIN0000415 | Email from Stewart McWilliam (UoN) to Valdo Mendes Calocane (UoN) Re: Project report |
| 107. | UNIN0000048 | Email from Alastair Campbell Ritchie to Valdo Mendes Calocane, Stewart McWilliam, Chantal Cappelletti and others, re: Re: MMME3073 |
| 108. | UNIN0000077 | Email from Stewart McWilliam to Jon Mckechnie, Alastair Campbell Ritchie, and EZ-Assess, re: FW: MMME3073 |
| 109. | UNIN0000497 | Email from EZ Assess to Jon Mckechnie, Stewart McWilliam and Alastair Campbell Ritchie Re: MMME3073 |
| 110. | UNIN0000748 | Email from Stewart McWilliam (UON) to Valdo Mendes Calocane, re: Bluecastle |