

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2025 IN ROOMN MG14, MARYLEBONE BUILDING**

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PRESENT:	Professor Peter Bonfield (Chair) Divanshu Airan Professor Dibyesh Anand David Burt (Clerk) Professor Catherine Dormor Amber Ella Dr Sal Jarvis (Deputy Chair) Professor Christos Kalantaridis Dr Paul Kendall Frantzeska Kolyda	Professor Andrew Linn Caroline Lloyd Jeanette Nicholas Dr Pinar Uysal Onganer Dr Andy Pitchford Henryetta Simpson Emma Standen Dr Natasha Whiteman Ian Wilmot
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mandy Chan (Secretary) Linsey Cole Monica Deshpande Richard Fenn (Observer) Roshan Panditharathna (Observer)	Trishna Patki (Observer) Tom Toumazis (Observer) Mei Xin Wang (Observer) Daphne Vallas (Observer)
APOLOGIES:	Dr Felicity Hardley Kaushika Patel	Dr Margherita Sprio Ben Stringer

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**24.15 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 24.15.1 The Chair noted that this was an intensive meeting, to be followed by the joint meeting with the Court of Governors and the Academic Council Open Meeting.
- 24.15.2 The Chair welcomed all members and attendees, in particular the following observers:
- Mei Xin Wang and Tom Toumazis – independent governors
  - Roshan Panditharathna and Daphne Vallas – Academic Council shadowing scheme members
  - Richard Fenn – new Director of College Operations (Westminster Business School)
- 24.15.3 All members and attendees introduced themselves.
- 24.15.4 Members noted apologies as detailed above.
- 24.15.5 The Chair noted that this was Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) Emma Standen's final meeting and thanked her for her contributions to Council over the past years.
- 24.15.6 The Chair reminded all participants of the terms of reference of Academic Council and the expected behaviour at the meeting.
- 24.15.7 Members did not declare any conflicts of interest for the business on the agenda.
- 24.15.8 The Chair confirmed there were no requests to discuss starred agenda items or raise other matters not on the agenda.

## Chair's report

24.15.9 The Chair briefed members on sector and institutional issues and developments since the last meeting, including:

- General financial and workforce situation across the sector.
- January student recruitment of the University.
- Universities UK (UUK) workshops for senior leaders in the sector and students' unions.

## 24.16 DELIVERING EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT FOR ALL

24.16.1 Dibyesh Anand - Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Global Engagement and Employability, Linsey Cole – Director of Business Engagement (BE), and Monica Deshpande – Head of Employability and Graduate Success (EGS), presented on Employability for all: Improving our Graduate Outcomes performance (Document AC 250219A), highlighting the successful employability initiatives and shared lessons learned from these initiatives.

24.16.2 The DVC (Global Engagement and Employability) clarified that the focus of discussion encompasses both employability and employment for all students across all course levels and modes of attendance.

24.16.3 Members divided into groups for in-depth discussion on work-based and placement learning (WBPL), and technical and transferable skills of students. After the group work, members shared and reported the following discussion points:

### Work-based placement learning

- A College has implemented all employability activities for all students; these are generally meaningful to students but create significant workload for academic colleagues and students sometimes disregard feedback from colleagues.
- The importance of sharing of good practices across the University.
- Employers' recognition of authentic assessments and engaging employers in discussions about student skill expectations.
- Ensuring project ownership to drive success.
- Forums like Centre for Education and Technology Innovation, the employability task force and other working groups are in place to support WBPL.

### Transferable Skills

- The importance of group work and teamwork, and the development of a university-wide module on transferable skills.
- Building on existing good practices in Schools and providing support to colleagues.
- Engaging alumni to help identify gaps and involving employers in sharing perspectives.
- Students may struggle at times to demonstrate learned skills to employers.
- Positive student experience in a School but inconsistencies across campus.

24.16.4 The team acknowledged the importance of celebrating ongoing great work, enhancing the sharing of good practices and developing an interdisciplinary approach to strengthen students' transferable skills.

24.16.5 The Chair thanked the team for leading the discussion.

## 24.17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

24.17.1 **AGREED** Members confirmed the minutes of Academic Council meeting held on 4 December 2024 (Document AC 250219B) were an accurate record of the meeting.

24.17.2 Members noted the Actions and Matters Arising report (Document AC 250219C) including confirmation that the implementation report for the new Academic Calendar model is due in December 2025.

## **24.18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

24.18.1 Members did not raise any other matters for discussion.

## **24.19 MEETING EVALUATION**

24.19.1 An observer noted that the meeting was concise but effective. Another observer commended the excellent work on employability shared during the small group discussions, noting that the University has consistently performed well across all areas.

## **24.20 ANNUAL REPORTS CONSIDERED BY THE TEACHING COMMITTEE**

24.20.1 Members noted the following reports and accepted the recommendations made by the Teaching Committee:

- Annual external examiners report 2023/24 (Document AC 250219Di)
- Annual academic integrity report 2023/24 (Document AC 250219Dii)
- Annual academic appeals report 2023/24 (Document AC 250219Diii)

24.20.2 **AGREED** Members recommend the annual student disciplinary report 2023/24 (Document AC 250219Div) to the Court of Governors.

## **24.21 APPRENTICESHIP OFSTED REPORT**

24.21.1 Members received the inspection report from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) on the apprenticeship provision of the University (Document AC 250219E).

## **24.22 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

All meetings start at 1.45pm and take place onsite (rooms to be confirmed).

Wednesday 2 April 2025

Wednesday 25 June 2025

Wednesday 15 October 2025

Wednesday 3 December 2025

Wednesday 25 February 2026

Wednesday 15 April 2026

Wednesday 24 June 2026