

# Academic Board

## 8th December 2023

### Minutes

#### 1 Welcome and Apologies

##### 1.1 Present

Scott Wildman (SW)	Dean (Chair)
Rebecca Harrison (RH)	Academic Registrar (Secretary)
	Bex Morrison (BM) Associate Vice President for Academic Services and Student Engagement, Registrar.
Naomi Goulder (NG)	Deputy Dean for Academic Development and Innovation
Diana Bozhilova (DB)	Associate Dean of Global Impact and Sustainability
Carolyn Barker (CB)	Associate Dean for Research and Knowledge Exchange
Kasim Randeree (KR)	Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs
Alexandros Koliouisis (AK)	Faculty Director for Computing, Mathematics, Engineering & Natural Sciences
Marianna Koli (MK)	Faculty Director of Social Sciences
Sara Raimondi (SR)	Faculty Director of Humanities
Sarah McAdam (SMA)	External Board Member
Petar Petrov (PP)	Student Union, Academic Officer
Sandy Morrissey (SM)	Executive Assistant Academic (Minute Secretary)

## 1.2 Apologies

Niamh Bhalla (NB)	Assistant Dean, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Chiara Alfano (CA)	Associate Dean Teaching and Learning (Faculty)
Alison Statham (AS)	Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning (Students)

## 1.3 In Attendance

Michele Longhurst (ML)	Head of Quality Assurance
Alice Caryer (AC)	Director of Research Services
Emma Kelly (EK)	Director of Business and Partnership Development & Apprenticeships
Helen Brooks (HB)	Interim Director of Graduate School
Natalie Mitchell (NM)	Policy Manager
Simon King (SK)	Quality Manager
Andrea Ann Larsen (AAL)	Student Union President
Asyirah Sofia Hisham (ASH)	Student Union Global Campus

## 1.4 Welcome

The Chair welcomed the members.

## 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the previous meetings on 6th October were reviewed and approved

## 3. Matter Arising

The matters arising were reviewed and all actions were updated.

#### 4. Chair Update including Actions

The following items were approved by chair action since the last meeting:

- Amendment to Disciplinary Procedure for Students to remove reference to Title IX due to change in US law.
- Modification to the BSc (Hons) Bioscience with Digital Technologies Programme Specification. The national apprenticeship standard for technician scientists has been updated.
- Revision of UG entrance requirements - Offer conditions, . English language proficiency
- Revision of PG entrance requirements -Entry requirements published; Grade requirements to make an offer; Offer conditions English language proficiency, Study gap.
- Terms of Reference TLEC - The last meeting of the Academic Board asked for it to be reviewed by Dr Carolyn Barker for its content regarding postgraduate research. The document was then reviewed on 20th November 2023 by TLEC and requested confirmed by Chair's Action.
- Reserved Minutes Academic Board 6 October 2023 to confirm final closure of reserved items

DB enquired if there was a Chair action for the annual program review for Politics and International Relations, and was advised that if appropriate this and the paper for Philosophy would be completed by a Chair's action by the next Board meeting.

**ACTION: SW to review the outstanding annual programme reviews.**

#### 5. Research

##### 5.1 Research and Enterprise Report

CB summarized the research and enterprise report highlighting that the REF presentation to Boston was well-received and that a deep dive into the REF2021 data is currently underway.

CB advised on the 30 PhD projects that have recently been approved and confirmed that an enhanced budget had been agreed upon by the Provost Office.

CB updated the Board on research funding, the status of the new repository, and the current position of the outstanding vacancies.

CB also confirmed that the REF 2028 is now REF 2029 and that the University will be submitting to the REF by the end of 2028.

CB advised the Board that Helen Brooks the Interim Director of Graduate School, who is currently on secondment from Kent University will be leaving NU London soon, CB wanted to thank HB for all her hard work The Chair extended his thanks and gratitude to HB for the huge impact her work has had on the programme, wishing her all the best for the future.

## 5.2 Code of Practice for Quality Assurance of Research Courses of Study.

The Chair advised that this Code of Practice will bring us in line with the University of Kent which we have partnered with to deliver our PhD programmes until we achieve our own degree-awarding powers. The Chair confirmed that the University agreed with Kent that it would mirror their processes as much as possible.

The Chair thanked HB for the excellent job she had done in helping to put these documents together and that once approved they would be known as an AQF chapter to be in line with the University's existing Academic Quality Framework.

HB advised that these documents which have already been through the Kent Programme Board will essentially update the governance process that NU London needs to follow to fulfil the requirements of this shared PhD programme.

Each of the documents was summarised by HB.

### 5.2.1 COP A A Introduction

This document was **Approved**

### 5.2.2 COP C Approval of Research Candidates and Projects

This document was **Approved**

### 5.2.3 COP D Information to Students

This document was **Approved**

### 5.2.4 E. Annual Monitoring

This document was **Approved**

5.2.5 E. Course Monitoring Template

This document was **Approved**

5.2.6 G. Personal Academic Support

This document was **Approved**

5.2.7 H. Supervision

This document was **Approved**

5.2.8 J. Progression and Examination

This document was **Approved**

5.2.9 J Appendix 2 Termination Letter Templates

This document was **Approved**

5.2.10 J Appendix Template Warning Letter

This document was **Approved**

5.2.11 K Appendix Appointment Form

This document was **Approved**

5.2.12 K Internal and External Examiner

This document was **Approved**

5.2.13 L Student Evaluation

This document was **Approved**

5.2.14 NA I Directors of Grad Studies

This document was **Approved**

5.2.15 O Researcher Development Programme

This document was **Approved**

5.2.16 P Teachers Demonstrators

This document was **Approved**

5.2.17 Q Student Engagement in QAE

This document was **Approved**

5.3 Working During Study Policy for Postgraduate Research Students

CB confirmed that this Policy had been reviewed by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

This Policy was **Approved**

5.4 Terms and Conditions Postgraduate Research

This Policy was **Approved**

5.5 Research Misconduct Policy

This Policy was **Approved**

In conclusion, HB thanked NM for all her incredibly efficient hard work in preparing these policies for the Board.

## 6. Faculty Matters

### 6.1 Faculty Recruitment

KR updated the Board on the current recruitment status for the years 2023 to 2024, confirming the total number of new hires and the level of outstanding roles still to be filled. KR confirmed that the two biggest challenges were the uncertainty of the teaching portfolio and the fluctuation of the student numbers.

KR confirmed that eligible faculty members will be receiving their affiliate letters from the Boston Colleges shortly.

KR advised that overall this had been a positive year with attrition of permanent faculty being less than 1%, with 100% of courses resourced and no course cancellations or deferrals due to faculty resourcing.

The Chair thanked KR and the recruitment team for the larger number of completed appointments needed for January ensuring a smooth operation.

### 6.2 HEA Qualification Update

MK updated the Board on the number of faculty members who have recently completed their teaching qualification. MK was able to confirm that we now had 51% of our faculty who are now qualified, with 5% who are still awaiting results.

SM advised that these qualifications are normally tied to promotions across the sector, and embedded in recruitment and career progression for her institution as well.

The Chair suggested that the Board look at a paper on a strategy for higher qualifications going forward.

## 7. Student Numbers

### 7.1 Student Number Autumn 23/24

BM advised the Board of the current student figures with the updated information from the intake data. BM was able to confirm that there were very few students who had dropped out, and the figures were staying pretty level for this academic year.

The Chair summarised that the figures showed nothing of concern and asked the new Student Union President to comment.

AAL advised that many students were feeling the pressure of exams and that they were concerned about upcoming assessments. She confirmed that she had spoken to Student Support who have been offering help to any student in need.

### 7.2 Student Number Spring 23/24

BM summarised the student numbers for Spring 2023, confirming that there had been a slight increase in the number of Global Scholars and the numbers for London Scholars has settled at 450, and the intake for postgraduates is 257 across the year.

The Chair asked DB to comment on the mobility student numbers.

DB commented that faculty inductions are now better planned and structured which offers a great deal of support for faculty members, and that there are now monthly HR induction calls for faculty who start at different times during the year. DB advised that she was looking forward to getting confirmation on the timeline for peers' observations as this will help faculty support students as part of the action plan for students following the student survey.

## 8. Student Voice

### 8.1 Student Satisfaction Report 2022/23

In place of AS the Chair introduced SK. SK advised that after the report was presented at the previous board meeting there was some feedback around the inclusion of PPE and PPH data. SK advised that the data presented is slightly different to how HESA may present.

The Board discussed the data presented in the Student Satisfaction Report, and NG commented that the data held by NU London may be more precise, and some data may be misinterpreted.

DB agreed and raised a concern that the extraction and distribution may not have been presented clearly.

The Chair summarised the discussion and advised that he would take an action to discuss this further with AS and report at the next meeting.

BM suggested that the Quality Team be included in this discussion.

**ACTION: SW to speak with AS and the Quality Team about data management for reporting student satisfaction.**

## 9. TLEC

### 9.1 TLEC Report and Draft Minutes

In place of AS the Chair introduced ML who summarised the TLEC report, clarifying the slight language changes proposed in the sustainability paper submitted to TLEC which will eventually be submitted to the Board.

The Chair advised that he will review the paper once it is submitted and if appropriate it will be approved by Chair action.

ML informed the Board that TLEC will be establishing some new task forces in the following areas

Assessment and Artificial Intelligence. Faculty Training: Learning Outcomes, Feedback, and Rubrics (as directed by the Academic Board).

Presentations. Multiple Choice Questions. Group Work. Continuous Formative Feedback. Peer Tutoring. Late Penalties.

ML advised that the Student Satisfaction Action Plan will review the effective communications, survey response rates, faculty enhancements and learning resources, which are considered to be the 4 key areas also discussed at TLEC.

AAL commented that she felt that attending the TLEC meeting as a student representative gave her a broader perspective of how things work in the University and it was very informative.

### 9.2 Affiliation and Guest Speaker Proposal

NG summarised the tabled paper which had previously been reviewed by TLEC advising that this paper seeks to update historic practices with a more strategic, coordinated, and transparent approach to speaker affiliations and payments which aligns with our DEI, experiential & impact priorities.

SMA commented that the paper was very thorough and mirrored the practices at her institution as well.



The Chair confirmed that he was happy with the direction of travel of this paper and enquired what the next step would be.

NG suggested that she will work with the policy team to update the relevant policies.

**ACTION: NG to undertake a detailed action plan with support from the Quality team and KR to identify all of the policies which will need review and updating with a timeline.**

### 9.3 NSS Action Faculty Enhancement.

This paper was noted.

### 9.4 NSS Action Learning Resources

This paper was noted.

### 9.5 EE Nominations

9.5.1 Dr Jonathon Rees as an External Examiner for the BA (Hons) Psychology Programme.

This Nomination was **Approved**

9.5.2 Dr Matteo Toscani as an External Examiner for the BA (Hons) Psychology Programme

This Nomination was **Approved**

9.5.3 Dr Jamie Twycross as External Examiner for Computer Science and Data Science degrees

This Nomination was **Approved**

## 10 Academic Governance

### 10.1 Academic Calendar 2024-2025

BM advised the Board that the date for Easter in 2025 fell awkwardly within the semester. She presented 4 possible options for the Spring Semester 2024.

The Board discussed the pros and the cons for each of the options laid out in the paper reviewing all the challenges for the students and faculty members..

The Chair requested that the document be shared with the Timetabling team.

There was a general consensus that option C was the most desirable from the student's perspective.

Concerns were raised that Option A would be very demanding for both faculty and students and that Option D would require significant extra work for faculty to revise the delivery of courses.

PP agreed that option C seemed the better option.

SMA suggested that faculty availability could be an issue over the Easter week and that all options must consider this.

DB raised concerns about the timeline for marking if Option C was adopted and how this might impact students wishing to undertake Summer courses.

**ACTION: BM to speak to Boston Registry/GEO to clarify if there is a requirement for students to have passed the Spring Semester to be permitted to take Summer courses.**

The Chair summarised and advised that a meeting must be arranged to discuss this further with him and the timetabling team before a final decision was taken which would be by Chair's action, taking in the views expressed by the Board

**ACTION: SW to meet with timetabling, Registrar and Registry to review the options and confirm the final option to be implemented.**

## 10.2 Committee Terms of Reference

### 10.2.1 TOR Academic Board

This document was **Approved**

### 10.2.2 TOR Progression and Award Boards

The question was raised whether the Director of UG Studies was still a position. It was confirmed that this role has been subsumed into CF's role and therefore the TOR should use the Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning (Faculty)

This document was **Approved** with amendment

### 10.2.3 TOR Faculty Directors Meeting

This document was **Approved**

### 10.2.4 TOR Joint Management Board

This document was **Approved**

#### 10.2.5 TOR Panel to Evaluate a Partner Institution

This document was **Approved**

### 10.3 External Examiner Annual Reports

#### 10.3.1 Award External Examiner Report 22/23 and Response

RH summarised the report and response and gave a detailed comment on the work undertaken to rectify the situation highlighted in the June PAB. She confirmed that no students were disadvantaged as no student decisions were made at that first June PAB when the data issues came to light. The external examiner reported that he was satisfied with the changes that were made before the next PAB and the approval of the final marks and classifications.

#### CoMENS

#### 10.3.2 Subject External Examiner Report Biology 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

#### 10.3.3 Subject External Examiner Report Chemistry 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

#### 10.3.4 Subject External Examiner Report Data Science (UG) 22/23

This document was noted

#### 10.3.5 Subject External Examiner Report Data Science (PG)

This document was noted

#### 10.3.6 Subject External Examiner Report Engineering and Physics 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

#### 10.3.7 Subject External Examiner Report Mathematics 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

#### 10.3.8 Subject External Examiners Report Digital and Technology Solutions (Data Analytics) Multiverse 22/23

This document was noted

10.3.9 External Examiner Annual Report MSc Artificial Intelligence and Data Science (DA) 22/23

This document was noted

10.3.10 External Examiner Annual Report MSc Digital and Technology Solutions (DA) 22/23

This document was noted

AK needed to leave the meeting. The chair asked if the Board had read the papers and if there were any comments. The Board had no comments.

Humanities

10.3.11 Subject External Examiner Report Art History 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

10.3.12 Subject External Examiner Report Criminal Justice 22/23

This document was noted

10.3.13 Subject External Examiner Report English 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

10.3.14 Subject External Examiner Report History 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

10.3.15 Subject External Examiner Report Law 22/23

This document was noted

10.3.16 Subject External Examiner Report Philosophy 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

10.3.17 Subject External Examiners Report Spanish and French 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

SR summarised the general key points from the reports and that comments from the EEs were generally positive and there were no concerns about the quality of assessments.

Some EEs flagged the importance of embedding employability and about ease of access to samples.

SR advised that there was a quality action tracker that would monitor progress on the points raised.

#### Social Sciences

##### 10.3.18 Subject External Examiner Report Communications 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

##### 10.3.19 Subject External Examiner Report Economics and Business 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

##### 10.3.20 Subject External Examiner Report Politics and IR (UG) 22/23

This document was noted

##### 10.3.21 Subject External Examiner Report Politics and IR (PG and Mobility) 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

##### 10.3.22 Subject External Examiner Report Psychology 22/23 and Response

This document was noted

MK summarised the feedback for the external examiners' reports.

EEs were positive about the range of types of assessment used, the feedback provided to students and the embedding of employability.

The Chair thanked the 3 Faculty Directors for their leadership of the 3 newly formed faculties.

#### 10.4 Academic Quality Framework

##### 10.4.1 AQF 12 Assessment Boards

BM summarised the document.

It was noted that there was an error in some job titles

This document was **Approved** with amendment.

#### 10.4.2 AQF 15 Collaborative Provision

This document was **Approved**

#### 10.4.3 SQF 16 Glossary of Terms

BM summarised the document and thanked NM for all her hard work in preparing them.

This document was **Approved**

### **11 Policies, Procedures and Strategies**

#### 11.1 Internal Interview Policy

BM summarised the minor amendment.

This document was **Approved**

#### 11.2 Student Route Visa and International Student Admissions Policy

BM advised that this document was updating the title and making sure that the policy was in line with the current regulations.

NM advised that further development would be needed for PGR regarding admissions and that this sponsor policy needs to be published in time for the January 24/25 offers.

The Board discussed the document and decided that this document would be reviewed by a Chair action after he discussed it with NM.

**ACTION: SW to review revised Policy following further revision which should be made to reflect PGR admissions.**

### **12 Course and Programme Modifications and Approvals**

#### 12.1 Course Modifications

RH summarised the document needing endorsement

##### 12.1.1 NCHHI672 History Dissertation

This document was endorsed

##### 12.1.2 LMATH4201 Calculus for Business

This document was endorsed

##### 12.1.3 LENG4142 Global Writer's Studio

This document was endorsed

12.1.4 LENG5252 Criticism

This document was endorsed

12.2 Course Approval

12.2.1 LPHEA4147 Community and Public Health Global

This document was endorsed

### 13 Dates for Postgraduate Graduation Ceremonies

The Board noted the following PG graduation dates:

6 March 2024 (completing Oct 2023)

13 November 2024 (completing Oct 2024)

### 14 Any Other Business

SR Requested that consideration be given to 4 students currently on the Global Investment Banking course to join a Level 4 language course.

This was approved by the Board members.

AKH advised that the process of auditing classes was not clear.

The Chair will follow this up with AS to ensure information on auditing classes is made clearer for students.

**ACTION: SW to work with AS, Registry and Academic Support to ensure information on auditing classes is clear and available to students.**

The Chair thanked the Board and closed the meeting.