

Academic Board

23rd February 2024

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
Alison Statham (AS)	Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning (Student)
Chiara Alfano (CA)	Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning (Faculty)
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

1.3 Welcome

The Chair welcomed the members.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the previous meetings were reviewed and approved

3. Matter Arising

The matters arising were reviewed and all actions were updated.

4. Chair Update including Actions

Portsoken Planning

The Chair advised that the consultations for the work on the first floor of the new site in Portsoken would begin on 1st March. He encouraged as many people as possible to join the meeting on 12th March as they will be looking for feedback to ensure the space is maximised as an effective teaching space.

The Chair advised that the floor plans for Portsoken have classrooms that are bigger than the classrooms in Devon House. This may mean that the class size for the Autumn of 2024 may be bigger, approximately 35 students per class.

NU London Website

The Chair was pleased to announce that there will be a new NU London website which hopefully will be up and ready by summertime 2024.

Graduation

The Chair reminded the Board about the 6th March graduation ceremony. This graduation ceremony will have graduating candidates from our first apprenticeship degree, and some of their employers have also been invited to

the ceremony. We will also have our first graduates in MSc in Computer Science graduating as well.

Optimisation Project

The Chair updated everyone on the new optimisation project from Boston. The main implication is to decrease expenditure in the second half of this financial year campus-wide. This will mean a halt to non-essential recruitment and non-essential travel. This is to maintain the current credit rating for Northeastern.

BM advised the Board that some existing professional service support roles have been suspended because of the optimisation project.

Chair's Actions

These are the items that were approved by Chair's Action since the last meeting:

Approval Politics and International Relations Annual Review 2022/23 Action from 8/12/23 AcB.

Approval Philosophy Annual Review 2022/23 Action from 8/12/23 AcB

Approval Law Annual Review 2022/23 Action from 8/12/23 AcB

Approval COP AA: Introduction Action - DRAFT 04 was approved on 8 December 2023, but DRAFT 04 did not contain the updates and feedback from RKEC and PhD PMB as recorded in this file. Chair's Actions were then requested and received for COP AA: Introduction 23.1.0 DRAFT 05.

Approval TOR Teaching and Learning Enhancement Committee - TOR TLEC Removal of Director of Undergraduate Studies as discussed at Academic Board on 08 December 2023. Chair's Actions taken to approve the change.

Approval TOR Progression and Award Board - TOR PAB approved the removal of the 'Director of Undergraduate Programmes' from the membership. This role has been incorporated into the Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning (Faculty) and is therefore no longer needed in membership.

Approval TOR Programme Management Board Kent and NU London - A Chair's Actions have been taken to approve this new Terms of Reference - Programme Management Board, Kent and NU London. The Programme Management Board (PhD PMB) oversees the research programmes at Northeastern University London and must be reflected in the University's governance structure. The ToR has been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Chair of the PhD PMB.

Approval Defining Sustainability Paper - Item 9.1 of 8 December 2023 Academic Board.

Approval Nomination Christopher M. R. Bax as Award EE for Apprenticeships 20 February 2024

4.1 The 4000 Challenge

The Chair explained the basis of the 4000 challenge stating that 4000 students would be needed to make Portsoken a viable investment. There have been working groups formed to discuss this to ensure that we can support these 4000 students. There are now 8 work streams that will discuss the logistics going forward.

5. Research

5.1 Research and Enterprise Report

CB summarised the research and enterprise report highlighting that they will be hiring an external consultant to conduct a DAP gap analysis and that PMO support has been paused until REF guidance has been published. REF has been moved to 2029 so we will be submitting at the end of 2028, with the data collection period being academic years 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028.

CB advised this timeline indicated that all the governance framework, policies, criteria and teaching provisions will have to be up to date and in place to support RDAP and REF submissions.

The Chair recommended a meeting be arranged with the key people so that they can feed into the aims and requirements to ensure we meet this very tight timeline.

Action: SM to schedule a meeting for CB to discuss the RDAP/REF timeline requirements with key staff.

6. Faculty Matters

6.1 Faculty Recruitment

KR updated the Board on the current recruitment status confirming that 21 essential new posts had been advertised on the Job UK website this month. All of these posts are also advertised on the Northeastern London website and interviews will be from April to May 2024. KR thanked the Faculty Directors and HR for all their hard work in getting the Job descriptions ready for advertising.

KR advised that there was an open call now for faculty promotions and that the application deadline is 1st April.

KR confirmed that the annual review period will open on 11th March and conclude on 30th May.

KR announced that the faculty affiliation letters will be going out from Boston colleges to qualifying faculty members over the next few months.

KR clarified that the current Northeastern London faculty web pages will be updated by our marketing team while the new site is being built.

7. Student Numbers

7.1 Student Number Spring 23/24

BM updated the Board on the current student numbers for 23/24.

UG 365

GS 567

LS 206

PGT 72

PGR 17

UG Apprentice 279

PG Apprentice 128

7.2 Student Number Targets 24/25

The Chair advised on all the student targets for 24/25:

UG Double degree 300

GS 400 each semester

LS 525

PGT 170 (combined fall and spring starts)

PGR (TBA)

Apprentices 145

The Chair noted that some undergraduate programmes are recruiting poorly and this was of concern.

SW confirmed a recent award from the Department of Education had been received and will be used to grow the apprenticeship programme.

8. Student Voice

8.1 NSS Response Rates

AS updated everyone on the current number of students who have already responded to the National Student Survey. The response rate is below where we were at the same time last year. Both History and Apprenticeships were below the threshold for reporting. Responses from apprentices were particularly low.

AS confirmed that reminders will be up on the website and the electronic screens across campus with an easy-access QR code for students to scan.

The Chair recommended that reminders go out to apprenticeship advisors as well.

CA commented that the University could also remind apprenticeship learners during the March Bootcamps.

SMA advised that response rates are normally low but has found that they can be higher with strategic planning around projects, and as a reminder, NSS normally ring students to increase responses.

BM reminded the Board that the NSS survey closes in April so there is still time for students to reply.

AS also gave an update on the comments and views collected from the students during the Student Voice Cafe held last week.

Positive feedback was received on the flexibility of the new programmes. Students liked the support received from the faculty and academic support team. There were also positive comments on the mental health support offered.

Students asked for more Careers support, more contact with other London Universities and PG students wanted overseas opportunities.

9. The Teaching, Learning and Enhancement Committee

CA summarised the activities of the last two TLEC meetings. TLEC has created seven new task forces to think about enhancement. Each of these task forces has both staff and student participation and is working toward a deadline to produce their reports which will then go to Academic SMT before going to TLEC and then coming to the Academic Board.

BM asked if she would see the papers before they went to TLEC. CA and AS confirmed that all members of Academic SMT including BM would see them.

PP confirmed that as a student representative, he was involved and was working on the Late Penalties Task Force.

10. Academic Governance

10.1. Apprenticeship Annual UG Programme Review 2022-23

10.2 Apprenticeship Annual PG Programme Review 2022-23

NG thanked faculty in the Apprenticeships for their work on the reports.

NG summarised both Reviews. The Reviews were considered by the WRLMB prior to coming to this Board.

NG advised that as commented by one of our external examiners on reflection some of our policies were less suited to full-time or apprentice learners. This will be addressed going forward within our Task Force working groups.

DB commented that the reports were well written and informative.

The reviews were **Approved**.

10.3 Mobility Programme Annual Review 2022-23

DB summarised the tabled report advising that it was largely positive with a few changes to the actions for years 23 /24 and that the title of this report may change as we expand the global experience programmes going forward.

This document was **Approved**

10.4 Award EE Annual Report

10.4.1 Award External Examiner Report 2022-23

This report was **Noted**

10.4.2 Response Award External Examiner Report 2022-23

This report was **Noted**

10.5 External Examiner Nomination for Physics and Engineering.

This nomination was **Approved**

11. Course and Programme Modifications and Approvals

11.1 Programme Approvals (Stage 1: In Principle)

The Chair advised that three New Programme Approval documents (NPP1) were presented and approved at the last Northeastern London Board meeting. The next stage would be NPP2, programme specification development with hopefully a launch in Autumn 2024.

The Chair advised that a further fourth MSc in Network Science was approved in principle, but is currently on hold, and may be launched as a US MSc.

The three programmes receiving stage 1 approval were:

11.1.1 MSc Project Management

This document was **Noted**

11.1.2 HECert Explore

This document was **Noted**

11.1.3 BSc Clinical Trials

It was noted that the Agenda was in error, this programme was a BSc. This would be an apprenticeship programme and would overlap with the Bioscience programme.

This document was **Noted**

12. Additional Items

12.1 Awarding of Honorary Degree

REDACTED.

12.2 Prize Giving

RH summarised the table report asking the Board to comment.

The Chair suggested that the document be circulated for comments, and a Chair's Action will be taken.

Action Prize giving document be circulated for comment.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Biz Dev Academic Board Report

This report was **Noted**

13.2 NUL Biz Dev Annual Self Assessment Report 2022-23

This report was **Noted**

The Chair opened the floor for comments encouraging the Student Union, Academic Officer to comment should he have any concerns.

PP had no concerns to report.

The Chair thanked everyone and closed the meeting.