Academic Board

3rd May 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 Koliousis (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) |

Also attending

Tobias Hartung (TH)	Associate Director of Teaching & Learning (CoMENS)
Jessica Terekhov (JT)	Assistant Professor, English
Yu-Chun Pan (YCP)	Associate Professor, Director of Experiential Learning
Michele Longhurst (ML)	Head of Quality Assurance

1.2 Apologies

There were no apologies

1.3 Welcome

The Chair welcomed the members & the non-members.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the previous meetings were reviewed.

KR noted that there was an error with his initials in parts of item 6.1, which needed correction.

The Minutes were Approved with minor amendments.

3. Matter Arising

The matters arising were reviewed and all actions were updated.

4. Chair Update including Actions

There have been two Chair's actions since the last meeting:

Dr Pamela Anne Knight was nominated as an External Examiner for the BSc (Hons) Bioscience with Digital Technologies. This was Approved on 8 April 2024, by Chairs Action.

The Prizes Proposal as discussed in the 23rd February Academic Board Meeting was held pending final suggestions from Board Members and was then approved with the amendments on 25 April 2024 by Chairs Action.

Chairs Update

The Chair updated the Board and expressed his concerns about the number of assessment irregularities that had occurred during the assessment week. He was worried about the effects these irregularities had on the students. The Chair advised that all of these irregularities will be investigated and a sound resolution found.

5. Research

5.1   Research and Enterprise Report

CB summarised the research and enterprise report. She highlighted that one of the most recent awards was the highest-ever external research funding received by NU London of £313,305. CB also highlighted that one of the NetSci researchers had reached the second round of the European external grants awards, this is a great achievement and should be recognised as such.

5.2   Proposed Change to PGR Terminology

CB summarised the tabled paper which requested the name of the Graduate Research School be changed to the 'Doctoral School', as suggested by our PhD validating institution, the University of Kent.

The Board members expressed agreement with the proposed change.

The proposal was Approved.

6. Faculty Matters

6.1 Faculty Recruitment

KR updated the Board to advise that Alistair Robinson had been promoted.

KR advised that the deadline for applications to the last panel of the year was 2 April 2024 and the promotions panels were now reviewing the last round of applications for 2023/24. Successful outcomes would be reported back to the Board in the usual way.

KR advised that there had been an appointment made for the Head of Design and Communication and he also confirmed that 40 faculty members had received affiliation letters from Boston Colleges.

KR stated that the faculty web pages had been updated and that faculty could request changes to their bio if needed. KR also updated the Board on the recruitment project confirming that we had received over 850 applications for the 21 new posts that were advertised. KR confirmed that we are currently working on interviewing for all of these roles.

KR advised that the faculty annual review process was currently taking place and will end on 31st May.

CB commented that It would be useful to have this information in a written report so that we knew whose contracts had changed and what the new appointments were.

Action: KR will produce a written report faculty update report.

7. Student Numbers

7.1 April 23/24 starters

The Chair updated the Board on the April starters for 23/24.

UG Apprentices - 9

PG Apprentices - 19

PhD Student - 13

The total number of active learners at the present time is 1642

7.2 Student Number Targets 24/25

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

LS 640 - 670

GS 350 - 370 each semester

DD 200 - 215

PGT 100 for the fall & 60 for January

Apprentices 240

BM suggested that the Registry would like to have these figures broken down by cohort entries to assist with their workload planning.

The Chair commented that the figures show a steady growth trajectory which is good news.

8. Student Voice

8.1 NSS Response Rates

AS gave a verbal update on the responses received for the National Student Survey. She confirmed that the NSS had closed at the end of April and that the response rate was below last year's rate of response.

AS advised that she would work with the students and faculty to find ways to help increase responses and improve student engagement, as she was open to suggestions.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and discussion about the NSS.

BM enquired what the sector response rate was in comparison. AS advised that we will get that data once the figures are released in a few months.

MK raised a concern that she felt that the DD students were unable to complete the survey for administrative reasons.

PP commented that some of the surveys came during exam week which was just too late.

AS confirmed that the results of the National Student Survey will be out on the 10th of July.

Action: AS to compare the dates when the students leave to the dates when the survey goes out.

Action: AS to review national participation rates against our response rate when the NSS survey results are released and report back to the Board.

8.2 Graduate Outcome Survey 2024

NG summarised the results from the Graduate Outcome Survey which related to those students who graduated from the University in the summer of 2022 and were surveyed by HESA in winter 2023.

NG thanked the careers teams for all their hard work gathering this data for this report.

NG confirmed that 18 post-graduates were eligible for the GO survey, 14 of whom completed it, and of the 44 graduates that were eligible to complete the survey, only 17 completed it.

NG would like there to be better engagement with the students allowing us to have more accurate data.

BM suggested that we have an action plan for a stronger alumni connection.

SMA congratulated the team on the report and recognised how difficult it can be to gather good data on student destinations. She commented that using LinkedIn helped them to get more information and gather more data on alumni students.

Action - NG to review and submit an action plan for better connections with alumni.

9. The Teaching, Learning and Enhancement Committee

The draft minutes from TLEC were noted.

The Chair thanked TLEC for the 6 task force documents presented and he stressed the importance of bringing these proposals to Academic Board for discussion.

9.2.1 TLEC Taskforce AI and Assessment Proposal.

CA shared her screen and summarised the Assessment and AI report. This report was a deep dive into the main problem which is the sharp increase in Academic Misconduct cases.

CA explained that the University's AI Strategy holds us to integrate responsible use of AI, but unfortunately, this has not yet happened. CA confirmed that students were demanding clarity on what is "irresponsible and responsible" use of AI.

CA clarified that the first proposal is to create assessments and learning experiences that discourage the irresponsible use of AI. The second proposal is to create assessments and learning experiences that encourage students to use AI responsibly.

RH said that in her view aspects of the proposal, particularly around significant changes to the standard use of anonymous marking, needed further work and consideration.

Action: The Chair will review this proposal with a small group.

9.2.2 TLEC Taskforce Group Work Proposal

Tobias Hartung (TH) summarised the Group Work proposal which looked at 2 issues. TH confirmed that there were many courses and programs with teamwork and leadership Learning Outcomes, but the issue is the confusion about how to assess group work within current regulations. The other issue was the requests from other programmes to include group work in their assessment strategy.

TH confirmed that the paper proposes to review assessment regulations and group work guidance for consistency with the discipline requirements. The paper recognises that group work needs to be appropriately structured and proposes 6 standardised models ranging from formative group work with individualised assessment elements, summative group work and pure group work with peer evaluation.

AK highlighted the suggestion from the external examiner for group work to be included more in our assessment strategy.

RH advised that our current regulations do permit group work, but our regulations require that within the group work, there must be a way to identify the individual contribution of the students so as to award individual marks.

RH was concerned that the proposal would require extensive planning and resources, which would be hard to manage and would need a complex marking formula.

BM suggested that the proposal needed more work as the marking formulas were complex and needed streamlining.

Action: The Chair will review this proposal with a small group.

9.2.3 TLEC Taskforce Late Submission Penalty Proposal

AS summarised the tabled proposal paper that covered 2 issues of late submissions. One issue from student feedback stated that the late penalty is excessively punitive; however, the previous penalty allowed for gamification. The proposal is to move to a new middle-ground penalty.

AS confirmed that the second issue was the unclear wording of paragraph 147 of AQF 7 Part C around the number of late submissions & which submission is

marked, this was confusing for students and faculty. The proposal is to rephrase paragraph 147 to ensure clarity - final submissions are the ones marked.

This proposal was APPROVED.

ACTION: RH to ensure that the changes are made during the upcoming review of AQF7 Part C.

9.2.4   TLEC Taskforce MCQ Proposal

CA summarised the Multiple Choice Questions paper.

SMA commented that other institutions do have caps for MCQ.

The Chair suggested that this paper would need work with a smaller focus group.

Action: The Chair will review this proposal with a small group.

9.2.5   TLEC Taskforce Presentation Proposal

Jessica Terekhov (JT) summarised the TLEC Taskforce Presentation Proposal

She highlighted the suggested clarifications to regulations on Double marking and Oral Presentations.

JT confirmed that the recommendations would impact assessment delivery with a suggestion of live presentations: streamlined scheduling; clarified marking and moderation timelines. Supplementary materials such as slides and handouts with penalties for late and non-submissions could align with AQF7 Part C paragraph 131.

RH expressed concerns about how the multi-part submission structure would be tracked.

Action: The Chair will meet with RH and CA to continue discussions of the proposal.

9.2.6   TLEC Taskforce Rubric, Learning Outcomes and Feedback Proposal.

CA summarised the paper advising that the mission was to standardise and elevate feedback and assessment processes across our institution. The paper proposed more visible learning outcomes for the students via Canvas and a when to give feedback table (AQF7c 20) with expectations set on Canvas and

AB, with bookable exam feedback slots as a pilot. There will also be full support for all Faculty members.

DB commented that this may be a big change to the Work Allocation Model, the length of time that questions can be recycled also needs to be reviewed.

CA thanked everyone for all their hard work on these TLEC taskforces.

Action: The Chair to review the proposal with a smaller focus group which should include KR.

10. Academic Governance

10.1 External Examiner Reports and Responses

10.1.1 Philosophy (PG) EE Annual Report 22/23 and Response

This paper was **Noted.**

10.1.2 BSc Project Management and Digital Transformation EE Annual Report 22/23 and Response.

This paper was **Noted.**

10.1.3 BSc Digital and Technology Solutions and BSc Data Science EE Annual Report 22/23 and Response

This paper was **Noted**.

10.1.4 BSc Politics and International Relations EE Annual Report 22/23 Response

This paper was **Noted.**

10.2 External Examiner Nominations

10.2.1 External Examiner Nomination BSc (Hons) Economics

RH summarised the recommendation.

The nomination was Approved

10.2.2 External Examiner Nomination BSc (Hons) Project Management with Digital Technologies

RH summarised the recommendation.

The nomination was Approved

10.3   External Panel Member Appointments

10.3.1 BSc (Hons) Data Science Apprenticeship External Panel Member Nomination Form.

This appointment was **Noted**

10.3.2 MA Philosophy and AI External Panel Member Nomination Form.

This document was **Noted.**

10.3.3 External Panel Member for the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Sciences/Clinical Trials Degree Apprenticeship programme.

This document was **Noted.**

10.3.4 External Panel Member for the MSc Project Management

This document was **Noted.**

10.3.5 External Panel Member for the CertHE Discover London

This document was **Noted**.

10.3.6 External Panel Member for the MSc Digital Politics and Sustainable Development

This document was **Noted.**

10.4   End Point Assessor Nominations

The chair invited YCP to explain what the terminology "End Point Assessment" means as it relates to apprenticeships.

YCP explained that the End-Point Assessment (EPA) is an independent assessment that takes place at the end of the apprenticeship training. This assessment is to test whether the apprentice is competent in their occupation. All apprentices must complete an EPA. There are a variety of assessment methods to test apprentices' competency.

10.4.1 Nomination Fehmida Mohamedali End Point Assessor for BSc Digital and Technology Solutions

KR advised that there was an error in the paperwork presented to the Board which resulted in a lack of clarity about the nomination.

The Chair considered that the nomination could not be approved until the paperwork issue was resolved.

Action: RH to clarify paperwork with the Quality Team and provide corrected paperwork to the Chair for approval by Chair's Action.

10.4.2 Nomination Dr Antonios Kaniadakis End Point Assessor for BSc Digital and Technology Solutions and MSc Digital and Technology Solutions.

The nomination was Approved

10.4.3 Nomination Dr Colette Mazzola-Randle End Point Assessor for BSc Digital and Technology Solutions and MSc Digital and Technology Solutions.

The nomination was Approved

10.4.4 Nomination Dr Theodora (Lela) Koulouri has been nominated as an independent end-point assessor for BSc Digital and Technology Solutions, BSc Data Science, MSc Digital and Technology Solutions

The nomination was Approved

10.5 Annual Programme Review-Validated Partner

10.5.1 Multiverse Annual Review 2022-23

The Chair invited YCP to comment on the Annual Programme Review.

YCP summarised the Annual Review highlighting that all the actions on the action plan had been completed. YCP advised the Board that the partnership with Multiverse is coming to and end and that these are the final cohorts to be completing NU London validated degrees. The Business Development team will continue to monitor the apprentices on the programme to ensure that they are fully supported.

10.6 Semester Dates 25/26, 26/27 and 27/28

RH spoke to the proposed semester dates for the 2025 to 2027 academic years. She advised that the semester dates were selected to align as closely as possible with the NU Boston dates to aid ease of student movement between network campuses.

The semester dates were Approved

10.7 Revision of Qualitative Assessment Rubric for 2023/24

CA discussed the proposed changes to the Qualitative Assessment Rubric aimed to rectify several critical issues identified within the existing framework.

BM expressed concerns about making in-year changes and questioned how, if this was a critical issue, marking had been undertaken since the start of the year.

The Chair considered that there were outstanding concerns about the proposal and it was not appropriate to approve it at this time. He proposed that he meet with key stakeholders to try and find a way to resolve the concerns.

This document was Not Approved

ACTION: The Chair will review the proposal and meet with key stakeholders to identify a way forward to resolve the issues raised.

10.8   Prevent Duty Review Group Terms of Reference

This document was **Noted**.

11 Course and Programme Modifications and Approvals

11.1   Course Modifications

11.1.1 Modification of Psychology courses:

LPSYC5242 Cognitive Psychology

LPSYC5245 Social Psychology

LPSYC5243 Experimental Psychology

LPSYC6252 Final Project (Psychology)

LPSYC6250 Clinical Psychology

All of these documents were approved

12. Regulations, Policies and Procedures

12.1 AQF 17 Part M Quality Assurance of Research Courses of Study

DB noted that terminology in this document would need to be amended to reflect the change in name of the Doctoral School approved earlier in the meeting.

This document was Approved with amendments.

12.2   AQF 5 Annual Monitoring and Reporting.

DB raised that some of the titles in the document had not been updated. In Appendix 1, the mobility report was missing, and she believed that pathway programmes should be removed from paragraph 25.

The Chair considered that the Board was happy with the document as drafted but a few minor amendments were needed.

This document was Approved subject to minor corrections

ACTION: RH to ask the Quality team to liaise with DB and KR about the minor corrections required before preparing the document for publication.

12.3   Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure

BM advised the Board that the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education)OIA) has just provided more detailed guidance on the management of extenuating circumstances. She proposed that the Policy be held back from consideration by the Board so that it could be reviewed in light of this new guidance.

The Chair concurred that this would be sensible. The Policy could come back to the Board once the review was complete.

This document was not approved and was returned for review.

12.4   Academic Engagement Policy

CA asked whether recent changes to UKVI guidance might mean that examinations and presentations might no longer be considered points of engagement.

The Chair suggested that this could be explored with the visa compliance team.

This paper was Approved

12.5   Support to Study Policy and Procedure

There were no comments from the Board.

This paper was Approved

12.6 Undergraduate Student Attendance Policy

There were no comments from the Board.

This paper was Approved

12.7 Student Confidentiality Statement

BM summarised the tabled paper, confirming that a statement had been reviewed and amended primarily to include the University's new policy on mandatory reporting for alleged cases of sexual misconduct.

This paper was Approved

12.8 Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

RH summarised the tabled paper highlighting that the paper had been updated to reflect the creation of the Student Complaint, Appeals & Conduct team, with the Head of the team replacing the Head of Registry in managing the procedure.

RH advised that on the basis of a recent case further minor change was recommended to the wording of the Policy.

This paper was Approved with minor amendments.

12.9 Change in Circumstances Policy and Procedure

CB recommended a change to paragraph 8 to refer PGR student to the Terms and Conditions for PGR programmes

This paper was Approved with minor amendments.

13   **Academic Ceremony Gowns.**

BM shared her screen and the Board viewed pictures of the new gowns for the NU London academic ceremonies.

BM advised that the new gowns would be used for the first time in November 2024 for postgraduates and apprenticeships. The September 2024 ceremony for undergraduates and apprenticeships would use the current gowns. Following that ceremony when the old gowns were retired, the hoods would be made available to alumni for sale.

BM advised that she was still awaiting approval on the design from Boston.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 Students Union Views

The Chair invited the Students' Union Board member to share with the Board anything that might be of interest or concern to students and which had not already been covered in the business of the meeting.

PP commented that it had been a quiet end of the year with no complaints from students.

PP raised that there was a concern that the students don't seem to interact with each other across the years and across programmes and that it would be beneficial to the student experience if there was better integration across the student community.

The Board agreed that integration within the student community would be beneficial.

14.2 Sunsetting Courses

The Chair advised that he had been leading a piece of work to identify efficiencies and to sunset courses which had not been run in a significant period or were otherwise identified as no longer being required.

Action: The Chair to circulate the efficiencies document and complete the sunsetting via a Chair's action.

15. Date of next Board meeting

It was suggested that the next Board meeting be moved back a week from 5 July 2024 to provide more time for preparation given the large amount of items expected.

It was noted that moving the meeting back a week would mean that the NSS results would be published prior to the meeting, which would be beneficial.

It was agreed by the Board that the next Board meeting will be moved to **Friday 12th July 2024**

The Chair thanked the Board members and attendees for their collective work and closed the meeting.