

Confirmed Minutes

Meeting:	Academic Committee
Date:	Wednesday 26 July 2023
Time:	2PM – 4PM
Venue:	Online, Ms Teams

Name	Designation
John Fairhurst	Principal and Chief Executive Officer (Chair)
Joan O'Mahony *	Deputy Principal
Slawomir Grzybek	Head of Quality
Sarah Bailey*	Director of the Centre for Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success (SEWS)
Nnamdi Obiosa	Head of the School of Accounting and Finance
Marcus MA. Astley	Head of the School of Business
Tom Ironmonger	Head of the School Foundation Year Studies
Ian Miller*	Director of Bloomsbury Law Clinic and Head of School of Law
Eleonora Affronte	Head of Academic Administration
Dr Michelle Morgan	External Academic Advisor
Professor Gwyneth Pitt	External Academic Advisor
Carol Cook*	Non-Executive Director (Chair of the Board of Directors)
Ammar Syed**	Student Representative (Student President)
Abrahan Alejandro Burgos Ayala	Student Representative (MBA)
Marcia Barrant**	Student Council Student Representation from LLB
Svetlana Zbirnea**	Student Council Student Representation from AFM Year 1 - GU
Abidur Rahman**	Student Council Student Representation from AFM
Johana Petit-Frere	Quality Executive (Secretary)

In attendance

Name	Designation
Maria Jackson	Head of Governance and Company Secretary

No.	Item
1.0	Welcome and Apologies
	<p>*Sent apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone and informed the Committee that the Head of Governance and Company Secretary would attend today's meeting to present the Corporate and Academic Governance Framework, in particular the academic arrangements, following the proposed changes agreed at the Board of Directors.</p>
2.0	Minutes for approval and Action Tracker/Matters Arising:
	2.1 <u>Minutes from the previous meeting:</u> 26 May 2023
	The minutes of the May AC meeting were agreed as a true record of the meeting and were approved by the Committee.

	2.2 <u>Matters Arising/Action Tracker</u>
	2.2.1 Minutes of May 2023
	2.2.1.1 item 4.1 refers. Update: Following the May approval of the Teach-Out Plan subject to minor amendments the amended Teach-Out plan would come back to the September AC meeting to evidence the agreed changes raised at the AC May meeting.
3.0	Chair's Action
	3.1 <u>FY Teach-Out Plan</u>
	See item 2.2.1.1.
4.0	Academic Principal's Business
	Nothing to consider.
Part 1: Academic Regulatory, Policy and Procedural Documents for Approval, and Information	
5.0	For approval by AC <i>No further approvals required</i>
	5.1 <u>LLM Course Outline Proposal</u>
	In the absence of the Head of the School of Law, the Chair presented the LLM Course Outline Proposal. He informed the committee that the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee had reviewed the proposal from an academic perspective and recommended it for approval by the Academic Committee. The business case has been considered and approved by the SLT. The Committee considered the LLM Course Proposal and agreed that the Proposal could be approved by Chair's Action pending the Head of the School of Law's (satisfactory) responses to a couple of questions raised by G Pitt. Action: J Fairhurst to relay G Pitt's questions concerning the LLM Course Proposal to the Head of the School of Law, and if the responses are satisfactory J Fairhurst is authorised to approve the Proposal by Chair's Action.
	5.2 <u>Feedback Policy and Guidelines</u>
	The Chair presented the changes made to the Feedback Policy and Guidelines. He flagged that the changes made to the documents were minor. There were minor amendments (not for discussion) that would be shared with the Deputy Principal for consideration. Subject to minor amendments (not for discussion) being considered by the Deputy Principal, the Committee approved the Feedback Policy and Guidelines.
	5.3 <u>Managed Observation of Teaching Scheme</u>
	The Chair presented the revised Managed Observation of Teaching Scheme and flagged that significant changes have been made on page 4. Previously, there were four observation outcomes: outstanding, good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory. The changes now simplify this to two outcomes: "meets

expectations” and “requires further support”. The committee welcomed the changes made and following a discussion, approved the Managed Observation of Teaching Scheme with minor changes (not for discussion).

Subject to minor amendments (not for discussion) being considered by the Deputy Principal, the Committee **approved** the Managed Observation of Teaching Scheme.

5.4 Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme

The Academic Committee noted the changes made to the Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme.

The Committee **approved** the Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme subject to minor amendments (not for discussion).

Action: The Head of Governance to share her minor amendments (not for discussion) with the Deputy Principal on the Feedback Policy and Guidelines, Managed Observation of Teaching Scheme, and Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme.

5.5 Student Complaints Policy and Procedures

The Academic Committee noted the changes made to the Student Complaints Policy and Procedures.

There were no substantial queries raised concerning the changes made.

The Committee **approved** the Student Complaints Policy and Procedures.

5.6 Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

The changes made to the Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures were noted by the Committee.

The Committee **approved** the Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

5.7 Withdrawal, Study Break and Deferral Policy

The Head of Quality presented the revised Withdrawal, Study Break and Deferral Policy, and flagged key changes in Sub-section 3.5.2, which pertains to the conditions for return (applicable solely to Wrexham University Programmes). Additionally, Section 7 has been updated to incorporate a suite of Wrexham-specific policies, and Section 3.4 now details a modified withdrawal procedures for international students.

There were no queries raised concerning the changes made.

The Committee **approved** the Withdrawal, Study Break and Deferral Policy.

5.8 Corporate and Academic Governance Framework

The Chair explained that Stage 2 of the Corporate and Academic Governance Framework (CAGF) review was conducted in early 2023. He reminded the committee that the Board of Directors is responsible for approving all amendments to the CAGF and the Academic Committee is responsible for ratifying any amendments made to the academic governance arrangements within Section 3 of the CAGF.

Corporate and Academic Governance Framework

The changes to Section 3 of the CAGF were considered in the meeting.

The Chair outlined the proposed changes, and it was noted that amendments to ToR and memberships of the Academic Committee, QAEC, Course Committees and SSCF were minor changes. In addition, because SALT is not a formal committee, although it continues to be referenced in the CAGF, its ToR and membership were removed to provide it with more agility and flexibility.

It was queried whether ACERs, AMERs and overview ACERs/AMERs that are presented to AC meetings for information should be presented to AC for approval. They are currently approved by QAEC. It was agreed that the membership of QAEC was such that it had sufficient expertise to approve these documents.

The Committee queried amending the terms of reference of Academic Committee, and the Committee agreed on amendments to Section 3.2.1.

It was proposed to incorporate an explicit reference to our APP-related KPIs to reflect commitments made within our Access and Participation Plan.

The Academic Committee **ratified** the proposed changes to Section 3 of the CAGF subject to the above amendments.

6.0	For information only <i>AC approval is not required</i>
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	6.1 <u>Student Protection Plan</u>
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The Academic Committee received and noted the Student Protection Plan.

	6.2 <u>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Update Reports</u>
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	6.2.1 EDI Update Report for June 2023 SMT
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The EDI Update Report for June 2023 SMT was received and noted by the Academic Committee.

It was noted that we had considered applying for the University Mental Health Charter but are unable to do so as we do not have degree awarding powers. M Morgan, who is a University Mental Health Charter assessor, offered to provide her expertise. She emphasised that the Charter provides a structured framework to recognise areas of excellence. She expressed willingness to assist Bloomsbury in identifying and mapping out its good practices according to the Charter's principle.

The Head of Governance and Company Secretary noted that M Morgan's expertise would be beneficial and expressed interest in discussing this further. Notwithstanding, she informed the committee that at the June SMT meeting, a letter from Lord Halfon was considered and a decision was made to create a mental health checklist to determine areas needing attention. Based on this, the SMT would determine the subsequent steps.

	6.2.2 EDI Update Report for July 2023 SMT
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The Committee received and noted the EDI Update Report for July 2023 SMT.

	6.3 <u>Accounting and Finance MSc Courses validation</u>
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The Committee noted that the Head of the School of Accounting and Finance and Deputy Principal successfully led a validation event for two new MSc programs: MSc Accounting and Finance and MSc Finance and Wealth Management. Several commendations were made. Wrexham's Academic Board has now officially approved these programmes. Recruitment for both courses has commenced, with delivery set to begin for the October 2023 intake.

The Committee took the opportunity to congratulate the Head of School of Accounting and Finance and his team for putting together the MSc programs. Additionally, appreciation was given to the Head of Quality for playing a pivotal role in the process, especially in organising documents and coordinating closely with Wrexham.

Part 2: Standing Items	
7.0	KPIs 2022-23: July 2023 Review
<p>The Chair presented the KPIs July 2023 Review. He noted that no updates were made to the Academic KPIs since their last review in May. He reported that the Audit Committee and the Board of Directors had requested a report on the Academic KPIs, that set out the data, any contextual information that would be useful to understand the data, the actions that were being taken to address the issues, and the expected impact of such actions (and the timelines for such impact to feed through).</p> <p>The Academic Committee agreed that such report should be prepared and presented to the Board of Directors.</p>	
8.0	Admissions and Recruitment
	8.1 <u>Student Recruitment and Admissions – Domestic</u>
<p>The Committee received and noted the Student Recruitment and Admissions – Domestic, and it was noted that the target for domestic students is 100 for the October 2023 intake.</p> <p>The Chair highlighted successful collaboration with the Capital City College Group (London’s largest group of FE colleges), particularly regarding students who applied to start our Foundation Year in October 2023. The Group conducted an open day on our premises and a number of applicants will be enrolling with the Group for a Level 3 qualification. We are working with the Group to deliver a transition to HE programme for these applicants with a view to them progressing to our 3-year and 2-year accelerated degrees in October 2024.</p>	
	8.2 <u>Student Recruitment and Admissions - International</u>
<p>The Chair reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant activities have been put in place to expand our market beyond the Indian subcontinent. The Head of School of Foundation Year Studies is scheduled to travel to Latin America to represent the Institution at ICEF Agent Conferences and Student Recruitment Fairs. He will also visit schools and universities. The Head of School of Accounting and Finance will be participating in a spot offer campaign in Nigeria and Ghana (probably in October 2023) specifically for the two new MSc degrees. 	
9.0	Internal Student Complaints
<p>There were no internal student complaints.</p>	
10.0	OfS Updates
	10.1 <u>OfS Condition A1 Action Plan Summary Report June 2023</u>
<p>The following was flagged from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As per SMT in July, we remain compliant with all conditions of registration. - SEER will be submitting several reports to the Access and Participation Committee at its September meeting, including a previous report on our Travel Bursary Scheme. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The adoption of a toolkit developed by SEER, intended to replace our initial OfS condition A1 action plan, has been recently approved. SEER has consulted various action leads to populate the new toolkit, which is nearing finalisation. - The Access and Participation Committee would focus on developing a new APP for submission to the OfS either in the upcoming spring or summer of 2024. The OfS has not yet provided a specific submission date. - The Deputy Principal would now be leading on the APP.
	<u>10.2 OfS Condition A1 Action Plan Summary Report July 2023</u>
The Committee received and noted the OfS Condition A1 Action Plan Summary Report July 2023.	
11.0	Wrexham University
There was nothing to report in addition to what is on the agenda.	
12.0	TDAP
We are still awaiting the final decision with regard to our TDAP application.	
13.0	Confirmed minutes from other forums or committees for information, consideration, or action.
	<u>13.1 Board of Directors – 17 March 2023</u>
There have been no matters referred for the Academic Committee to consider.	
	<u>13.2 Board of Directors – 26 May 2023</u>
There have been no matters referred for the Academic Committee to consider.	
	<u>13.3 Access and Participation Committee – 23 February 2023</u>
There have been no matters referred for the Academic Committee to consider.	
	<u>13.4 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee – 6 June 2023</u>
There have been no matters referred for the Academic Committee to consider.	
	<u>13.5 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee – 8 February 2023</u>
There have been no matters referred for the Academic Committee to consider.	
14.0	Actions referred from other forums/committees where the minutes are unconfirmed/not yet available.
There have been no matters referred for the Academic Committee to consider.	

Part 3: Any Other Business and Date/Time of Next Meeting

15.0 Any Other Business

Nothing to consider.

16.0 Date, Time, and Venue of Next Meeting: 27 September 2023, 2 PM – 4 PM, Euston Road.