

Confirmed Minutes

Name	Academic Committee
Date:	26 January 2024
Time:	2PM – 4PM
Venue:	Euston Road, Room 304

Name	Designation
John Fairhurst	Principal and Chief Executive Officer (Chair)
Joan O'Mahony	Deputy Principal (Acting Chair)
Slawomir Grzybek	Head of Quality
Sarah Bailey	Director of the Centre for Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success (SEWS)
Sunmi Ayorinde	Deputy Chief Operating Officer (Deputy COO)
Nnamdi Obiosa	Head of the School of Accounting and Finance
Marcus MA. Astley	Head of the School of Business
Ian Miller	Director of Bloomsbury Law Clinic and Head of School of Law
Maria Jackson	Head of Governance and Company Secretary
Dr Michelle Morgan*	External Academic Advisor
Professor Gwyneth Pitt	External Academic Advisor
Carol Cook*	Non-Executive Director (Chair of the Board of Directors)
Sayed Mustafa Sadat*	Student Representative (Student President)
Marcia Barrant	Student Council Student Representation from LLB Year 3- UoN
Svetlana Zbirnea*	Student Council Student Representation from AFM Year 1 - WU
Andrea David	Student Council Student Representation from LLB Year 2 - WU
Jason White	Student Council Student Representation from LLB Year 1 - WU
Saman Zamani**	Student Council Student Representation from FY – BABM - WU
Akram Idrissi Tote	Student Council Student Representation from BABM Year 1 - WU
Andreea-Alexandra Neacsu*	Student Council Student Representation from BABM Year 2 - WU
Harmeet Kaur Tatla**	Student Council Student Representation from MSc
Nahid Tonya Niazi**	Student Council Student Representation from LLB Year 1 - WU
Johana Petit-Frere	Quality Executive (Secretary)

No.	Item
1.0	Welcome
	The Chair welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.
	Apologies
	*Denotes apologies **Did not attend not having sent apologies The Committee received apologies from Dr M Morgan, C Cook, S Mustafa Sadat, S Zbirnea, and A-A Neacsu.
	Declarations of Interest
	There were no declarations of interest.

2.0	Minutes for approval and Action Tracker/Matters Arising:
	2.1 <u>Minutes from the previous meeting: 24 November 2023</u>
<p>The following amendments were requested to the minutes of 24 November Academic Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 1, the Deputy Principal's designation should be amended to read "Acting Chair". • Page 5, Risk 4: the entry should be amended to reflect the fact that the Board agreed that Risk 4 be removed from the Corporate Risk Register, but asked that it be included on and monitored through the Academic Division's local Risk Register. <p>The Academic Committee approved the minutes of 24 November 2023 meeting as amended.</p>	
	2.2 <u>Matters Arising/Action Tracker</u>
There were no outstanding actions.	
3.0	Chair's Action
None were taken.	
4.0	Academic Principal's Business
	4.1 <u>Principal's Report January 2024</u>
<p>The Committee noted that since circulation of the Principal's Report, the OfS has published two further Assessment Reports – one for Buckinghamshire New University and one for the University of Wolverhampton.</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Principal's Report January 2024.</p>	
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>Assessment Procedures – Validated Degrees 2023-24 (WU)</u>
<p>The Deputy COO presented the Assessment Procedures – Validated Degrees 2023-24 and outlined the changes made.</p> <p>A comment was raised regarding section 4.4 concerning the Assessment Review Team (ART) meeting and its August deadline, particularly in relation to its compatibility with three intakes. It was noted that the meeting was scheduled late in the year to allow for the full cycle of assessments to take place to inform the discussion and allow for any enhancements to be implemented before the start of the new academic year.</p> <p>Additionally, there was a suggestion to amend the reference to the SALT in section 4.10 given that SALT's status has now changed following the review of our governance arrangements. The Deputy Principal agreed to provide the Deputy COO with revised wording.</p> <p>The Assessment Procedures – Validated Degrees 2023-24 (WU) was approved by the Committee subject to the amendment agreed in relation to SALT and minor amendments (not for discussion) that the Head of Governance and Company Secretary would share with the Deputy COO outside of the meeting.</p> <p>Action: The Deputy Principal to provide the revised wording in relation to the SALT reference in section 4.10 to the Deputy COO.</p>	

	<u>5.2 Withdrawal, Study Break/Suspension of Studies, and Deferral Policy</u>
<p>The Academic Committee acknowledged the revisions made to the Withdrawal, Study Break/Suspension of Studies, and Deferral Policy. The Committee proposed amending Section 3.4.2 of the policy as it currently implies that the new 4-week withdrawal rule applies to both UoN students and Wrexham University students whereas it is only UoN students.</p> <p>The Academic Committee approved the Withdrawal, Student Break/Suspension of Studies, and Deferral Policy subject to the above minor amendment and minor amendments (not for discussion) which the Head of Governance and Company Secretary would share with the Deputy COO outside of the meeting.</p>	
6.0	For Consideration
	<u>6.1 Academic Performance</u>
<p>The Chair informed the Committee of a change in the reporting cycle for the Academic Performance and Assurance Reports. Previously, these reports were presented directly to the Board of Directors before coming to the Academic Committee. Now, both documents will be reviewed by the Academic Committee first, and then the Committee will report directly to the Board.</p> <p>The Chair further added that the Secretary to the Academic Committee provides a brief extract of the Academic Committee minutes for the Board's attention, and the Board has stated that it would expect this extract to include anything pertinent from within the Academic Performance and Assurance Reports.</p> <p>The Deputy Principal expressed gratitude for the insightful comments and recommendations made by the Academic Committee during the November 2023 meeting. She commented on the new reporting format, noting changes in data reporting from the previous Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). She mentioned the lack of updates in PG and undergraduate data since November last year due to the pending updates from the Award Board.</p> <p>In conjunction with the Academic Performance Report, the Committee discussed several KPIs, including 10a, 10b, 11, 12a, and 12b.</p> <p>The Chair addressed the Committee regarding the continuation rates of undergraduate (UG) 3-year and 2-year programmes.</p> <p>From both an academic and academic performance perspective, the Academic Performance (AP) report scrutinises performance issues in UG and PG programmes and outlines the actions taken in response. If deemed necessary, the Academic Committee has the authority to refer actions to Course Committees (CC) or Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committees (QAEC) for further investigation or clarification.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed a further breakdown of data would be provided. The Deputy Principal proposed that once this data is received, the Committee could make a decision on whether to incorporate this more granular data in the regular Academic Performance report or have it presented separately.</p> <p>The Chair mentioned that data is captured within the Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports which the Academic Committee oversees.</p> <p>Action: At the next meeting, the Deputy Principal will provide more granular performance data for UG students (excluding the FY). This data should be provided for each intake, for each course, and (if the data is readily available) split between sponsored and non-sponsored students.</p>	
	<u>6.2 Academic Assurance Report</u>
<p>The Deputy Principal presented the Academic Assurance Report and highlighted its findings. The Chair clarified to the Committee that the Academic Assurance Report now serves as a replacement for the</p>	

previously presented Annual Quality Report, offering assurance to the Board regarding the effectiveness of our Academic Governance arrangements. It was emphasised that this report is presented from the Academic Committee to the Board.

7.0 For Discussion

7.1 Turing Scheme

The Committee noted that the discussion of the Turing Scheme was requested by a Student Representative, who suggested that participating in the scheme would have a positive impact on the student experience. The scheme's potential to expand students' networks, including connections for those interested in entrepreneurial careers, was highlighted. Additionally, it was noted that funding was available until 2025, and urged Bloomsbury Institute to consider this opportunity.

The Chair welcomed the suggestion from the Student Representative and stated that we had previously considered this. The Chair noted that in order to make an application we would have to establish agreements with overseas universities and/or employers. The Chair asked that further discussions be held in the Senior Management Team (SMT) to explore the implementation of the Turing Scheme.

The Chair provided the Committee with a brief summary of the Turing Scheme, explaining that it was initiated post-Brexit when universities could no longer participate in the Erasmus scheme. Unlike the Erasmus scheme, the Turing Scheme is open to both UK citizens and international students, covering opportunities worldwide beyond the European Union. Institutions have the flexibility to establish agreements with entities anywhere globally, offering educational or work exchange programmes.

Action: The SMT to further discuss the proposition in regard to the Turing scheme.

8.0 For information only
AC approval is not required

8.1 Transition Experience Survey Report

The Head of Quality provided an update on the inaugural Transition Experience Survey, replacing the previous Welcome Back Survey, aligning with OfS Conditions B1 and B2. The survey was redesigned to encompass various aspects of the Bloomsbury Institute student journey during the transition between academic years.

Of the eligible student population of 196, 59 students participated in the survey, constituting approximately 30% of respondents. Overall, the results were positive.

The Head of Quality emphasised the collaborative nature of this activity and the leading role that HoDs have in shaping the questions to inform any enhancement activities that may be identified.

The Committee received and noted the Transition Experience Survey Report.

8.2 Corporate Risk Register – January 2024 Update

It was reported that all risks were due for review at this point.

The Committee received and noted the Corporate Risk Register – January 2024 Update.

8.3 Annual Monitoring Evaluation Reports

8.3.1 Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 - FY (UoN)

The Committee received and noted Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 - FY (UoN).	
	8.3.2 Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – FY (WU)
The Committee received and noted Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – FY (WU).	
	8.3.3 Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – LLB (UoN)
The Committee received and noted Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – LLB (UoN).	
	8.3.4 Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – LLB (WU)
The Committee received and noted Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – LLB (WU).	
	8.3.5 Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – AFM (UoN)
The Committee received and noted Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – AFM (UoN).	
	8.3.6 Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – BM (UoN)
The Committee received and noted Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – BM (UoN).	
	8.3.7 Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – BM (WU)
The Committee received and noted Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – BM (WU).	
	8.3.8 Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – BM MBA/MSc (GU)
The Committee received and noted Annual Monitoring Evaluation Report 2022-23 – BM MBA/MSc (GU).	
	8.4 <u>Redeveloped UK Quality Code</u>
<p>The Committee was informed that the UK Quality Code was undergoing redevelopment and that the revised version will be published early in the year.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that following the QAA's removal as the OfS DQB last year in March, we would have to stop using the QAA Quality Assured logo by 21 February 2024.</p> <p>The Head of Quality informed the Committee that we now have the option to display the QAA member logo or opt for a voluntary quality review that would allow us to display the QAA Quality Assured logo. The Head of Quality has already liaised with the SMT with regards to removal of the logo.</p> <p>It was decided that this would not be the right time to proceed with a voluntary quality review.</p>	
	8.5 <u>Ethics Policy 2024-25</u>
The Committee received and noted the revised Ethics Policy 2024-25 as approved by the Board of Directors.	
	8.6 <u>Access and Participation KPIs</u>
The Committee received and noted the Access and Participation KPIs that the SMT had approved upon the recommendation of the Access and Participation Committee.	
Part 2: Standing Items	

9.0	KPIs 2023-24
	9.1 <u>KPIs December 2023 Update</u>
<p>The following KPIs were considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KPIs 10a and 10b: The continuation rates are below the target. Two actions were determined by SMT: To assess and break down all the October 2022 student numbers. A report has been produced by the COO and CFO. The Deputy COO and Head of Compliance will examine our internal data to ensure continuation rate compliance. The report has been shared with SMT. The information will help to analyse trends across different intakes. - KPI 11: The Postgraduate continuation rate is above target at 91.3%. - KPI 12a: The Undergraduate Standard UG course completion rate for the 2018-2019 cohort is just above the target at 75.5%. - KPI 12b: The Undergraduate UG FY Courses (FY and FY Accelerated) Completion Rate is below the target at 52.6%. <p>The External Academic Advisor sought clarification of the [redacted] academic appeals that have been reported in relation to KPI 17. The Deputy COO explained that the appeals had been in relation to Wrexham University Regulations.</p>	
10.0	Equality Diversity and Inclusion
	10.1 <u>EDI Update Report: January 2024</u>
<p>The EDI Update Report: January 2024 was received and noted by the Committee with the Head of Governance and Company Secretary highlighting the fact that in the wake of the Abrahart v University of Bristol student suicide case, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is going to provide authoritative guidance on higher education providers' obligations under the Equality Act, and competence standards in assessment.</p>	
11.0	Student Complaints
	11.1 <u>Complaint Report December 2023</u>
<p>The Deputy COO provided an update on formal complaints, indicating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 informal student complaints were received. • Out of these, 3 formal complaints were submitted. • Among the formal complaints, 2 were upheld and 1 was not upheld. • There were no complaints submitted to the OIA (Office of the Independent Adjudicator). 	
12.0	OfS Updates
	12.1 <u>APP Updates</u>

The Committee noted that the Institute has been selected to submit our new APP in October 2024.	
13.0	Wrexham University
There were no updates on our partnership with Wrexham University.	
14.0	TDAP
There were no updates on TDAP.	
15.0	Confirmed minutes from other forums or committees for information, consideration, or action.
	15.1 <u>Board of Directors – 24 November 2023</u>
There have been no matters referred for Academic Committee to consider.	
	15.2 <u>Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee – 15 November 2023</u>
There have been no matters referred for Academic Committee to consider.	
	15.3 <u>Course Committee: Semester 2 2022-23</u>
	15.3.1 <u>LLB Semester 2 (UoN) Course Committee</u> 15.3.2 <u>FY Semester 2 (UoN), T1 and T2 (GU) Course Committee</u> 15.3.3 <u>BM Course Committee</u> 15.3.4 <u>AFM Course Committee</u>
There have been no matters referred for Academic Committee to consider.	
	15.4 <u>Student Staff Consultative Forum – 10 March 2023</u>
There have been no matters referred for Academic Committee to consider.	
16.0	Actions referred from other forums/committees where the minutes are unconfirmed/not yet available.
	16.1 <u>Board of Directors – 22 January 2024</u>
There were no matters referred to Academic Committee to consider.	
	16.2 <u>Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee – 17 January 2024</u>
There were no matters referred to Academic Committee to consider.	
	16.3 <u>Course Committee: T1 and Semester 1 2023-24</u>
	16.3.1 <u>LLB (UoN) Semester 1 (UoN), Course Committee</u> 16.3.2 <u>FY (UoN) Semester 1 Course Committee</u> 16.3.3 <u>BM Course Committee</u> 16.3.4 <u>AFM Course Committee</u>
There were no matters referred to Academic Committee to consider.	
	16.4 <u>Student Staff Consultative Forum – 08 December 2023</u>

There were no matters referred to Academic Committee to consider.

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

17.0 Any Other Business

Nothing to consider.

18.0 Date, Time, and Venue of Next Meeting: Wednesday 27 March 2024, Venue, TBC.