

Faculty of Engineering & Design Board of Studies Unreserved (Confirmed)

Wednesday, 26th February 2025 2:15 pm

2 East 3.4 | Faculty of Engineering & Design Board of Studies

Attended

Kamal Asadi

Jos Darling (on TEAMS)

Tina Düren

Adrian Evans

Sabina Gheduzzi

Jonathan Graham-Harper-Cater (on TEAMS)

Marion Harney

Andrew Heath

Carmelo Herdes Moreno

Tim Ibell

Patrick Keogh

Omid Maghazei

Francesca Marchetti

Benjamin Metcalfe

Despina Moschou

Emma Emanuelsson Patterson

David Stacey

Fionna Uppilirajan

Apologies

John Chew

Ricardo Codinhoto

Elise Courbon

Mirella Di Lorenzo

Jeffrey Gavin

Tristan Kershaw

2536 Welcome and Quorum

The Chair welcomed members and apologies were noted.

2537 Declarations of Interest

The Chair asked for any declarations of potential conflicts of interest which were not going to be declared during subsequent discussions - there were none.

2538 Minutes of the Previous meeting - ED2024-25/062

The unreserved minutes of the meeting of the Board of Studies held on 15 January 2025 (ED2024-25/062) were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

2539 Actions and Matters Arising

The Board noted the following actions,

Minute 2515 Exam Paper Errors (Semester 2, 2023/24). ADE to pass on Board's thanks to colleagues. Action complete.

Minute 2516 Scaling. Depts asked to complete annual monitoring for specified units. Action complete.

Minute 2517 Boards of Examiners. Depts informed of Board decision for BEC reports to be presented anonymised to BECs. Action complete.

Minute 2518 Stage One Strategic Approval of Articulation Agreement with Thammasat University, Thailand- submitted to 19 Feb meeting of APC. Action complete.

2540 Chairs Business

The Chair noted the launch of the Integrated Faculty Working Group (IFWG) and associated task and finish sub -groups. The working group has been established to investigate, suggest, lead consultation of, communicate about and launch beneficial interventions to improve effectiveness and efficiency within the Faculty.

The Board's attention was drawn to the drive for 'quality, quality, quality' in research with University support shifting to prioritising high quality 4* research, with the associated withdrawal of funding support for lower quality research. This message to be cascaded onwards and outwards by members of the Board.

2541 Research Activity Report ED2024-25/063

The Board received the second quarter Research Activity report for 2024-25. The Faculty has had some recent research award successes (not yet reflected in the data) but achieving the year-end target

remains a concern as at the mid-year point income is nowhere near 50% of the full year target.

A Board member suggested that it would be useful to receive periodic reports on PGR numbers alongside the quarterly research reports. The Board agreed that PGR data would be helpful.

Action: Secretary to contact the Doctoral College regarding the provision of standard report(s).

2542 Reports from Ex Officio members ED2024-25/064

The Board received the update reports from ex officio and academic leadership members of the Board as detailed in paper ED2024-25/064 (noting the late addition of the Associate Dean International's update).

A Board member requested additional detail regarding the PGT Strategic Review Phase 3 referenced in the Associate Dean Education's report. The ADE explained that the review group, chaired by the PVC Education & Global has carried out a root and branch review of PGT provision across the University with the aim of identifying which activities & MSc courses should stop, start or continue in line with the University's Education Strategy.

The Board noted the range of vacancies in academic leadership roles across the Faculty and the challenge in recruiting to them. The Board discussed whether there were any incentives or support that might be offered to colleagues taking on these roles. The Chair advised that discussions were ongoing with Heads of Department regarding enhanced or additional positions within the Faculty's MSA team to support Directors of Study and Directors of Teaching; any positions will need to be funded by Departments out of their academic pay budgets.

2543 Report from Student representatives and/or Students' Union Officer ED2024-25/079

The Board received the Students' Union's update report and agreed that it provided an interesting and informative overview of the SU's ongoing projects and priorities (Paper ED2024-25/079).

Student representatives provided updates on the following matters,

i) The SU has agreed to amend the UG student reps on the Mech Eng SSLC by combining the mech and aero rep roles.

ii) The National Student Survey is currently in full swing (live until 30 April) and departments are actively encouraging completion of the survey by final year undergraduates. Faculty reps commented that students had reported having already been contacted by IPSOS by phone to complete the survey. Students report feeling pressured to respond but aren't able to provide full comments when completing the survey by phone which was a concern. Members of the Board expressed surprise that students were already being called given that the NSS was live for a further 2 months. Dr Gheduzzi commented that she had reached out to the Dept.'s student reps to ask for their support in promoting the survey and it was clear that their pro-active input had driven increased response rates in the Dept. of Mechanical Engineering.

2544 Library Matters

Mr Stacey provided an update on library matters,

- i) International Women's Day 8 March- the Library will be promoting the event with an Interactive Installation in the Library foyer where staff and students can recognise and celebrate the amazing women in the University of Bath community on a 'wall of women'.
- ii) A new noticeboard has been installed on level 2 of the library where students can ask for research participants (this was an idea from the Library Spark competition).
- iii) Reading for Pleasure - work is ongoing to expand the resource of popular non-fiction based in the Library Nook situated on level 2 of the Library.
- iv) Plans for a comfortable zone within the Library are being developed.
- v) Thanks were passed to the Faculty's Placement team for their support in promoting the Library design competition held over the summer for ACE placement students to re-design the library's 2D floorplans.

2545 Sub-Committee Minutes ED2024-25/065-067

The Board received the minutes of the following Committee meetings:

1. Faculty Executive meeting 2 December 2024 ED2024-25/065
2. Faculty Learning Teaching & Quality Committee meeting 23 January 2025 ED2024-25/066
3. Faculty Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee meetings of 27 November 2024 ED2024-25/067

2546 Committee Minutes (SSLC, DBoS, FDSC) ED2024-25/068-072

The Board received and noted the minutes (& decision logs) of the following Committees:

- 1) Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering - UG Civil SSLC meeting of 11 December 2024 ED2024-25/068
- 2) Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering - UG Architecture SSLC meeting of 11 December 2024 ED2024-25/069
- 3) Dept. of Chemical Engineering - SSLC meeting of 26 November 2024 ED2024-25/070
- 4) Dept. of Mechanical Engineering - SSLC meetings of 12 November & 10 December 2024 ED2024-25/071
- 5) Faculty Doctoral Studies Committee - meeting of 21 January 2025 ED2024-25/072

2547 Any Other Business

Semester One Assessments (Inspera exams) A Board member reported that some students had experienced technical issues during exams held in Inspera in semester one (e.g submission and uploading errors). Taken alongside concerns regarding the potential for misuse of AI in online non-invigilated exams as well as accreditation requirements those departments still holding online exams are planning to move away from Inspera and return to fully in-person exams. Student reps commented that the exam helpline which is available during the exam period and more critically when problems arise during an Inspera exam was poor. An example was cited of a student asking for advice prior to an exam about using their iPad to upload their exam to which they did not receive a response. A Board member commented that there was a lack of transparency in the late submission penalties applicable to Inspera exams. The ADE pointed out that the University's late submission panel and processes were still operating. The Board noted that the Depts of Electronic & Electrical and Chemical Engineering have stopped using Inspera entirely. There were clear benefits for students in having only one set of exam rules and processes to follow. The Board noted that the School of Management has also moved away from Inspera for its exams.

Student reps were asked for their views and they commented that i) some students still preferred to sit exams online but that most preferred them in-person primarily because the potential for cheating was much greater in online exams, ii) whatever the format of exams students quickly get used to and become comfortable with it and iii) in-person exams are felt to be more equitable than online as not all students have access to iPads or other equivalent devices on which they can write online exams.

2548 Date of next meeting

The Board noted the date of the next meeting: 2 April 2025 at 10.15 a.m.