

Faculty of Engineering & Design Board of Studies

Unreserved - Confirmed

Wednesday, 12th November 2025 2:15 pm 4 East 2.16

Attended

Tareq Assaf

Ricardo Codinhoto

Jos Darling (via TEAMS)

Mirella Di Lorenzo

Tina Düren (*left at 3.25 p.m.*)

Adrian Evans (*from 3.15 p.m.*)

Jonathan Graham-Harper-Cater

Rob Grover (*for agenda item 2664*)

Marion Harney (CHAIR)

Tristan Kershaw (via TEAMS)

Benjamin Metcalfe

Emma Emanuelsson Patterson (*from 3.10 p.m.*)

Will Roberts

David Stacey

Zach Yebuah

Did Not Attend

Kamal Asadi

Florin Bisset

Chris Bowen

John Chew

Jeffrey Gavin

David Hassell

Andrew Heath

Tim Ibell

Patrick Keogh

Omid Maghazei

Despina Moschou

Eleni Sikou

2659 Welcome and Quorum

The Chair welcomed members including the new undergraduate student rep, Zach Yebuah (BEng Aerospace Eng) and apologies were noted.

2660 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.

2661 Minutes of the Previous meeting - ED2025-26/029

The unreserved minutes of the meeting of the Board of Studies held on 8 October 2025 (ED2025-26/029) were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

2662 Actions and Matters Arising

The Board noted actions completed since the previous meeting,

Minute 2637 Board of Studies membership. Secretary to make arrangements for Board of Studies elections. **Action complete**

Minute 2641 Research Activity. Doctoral College to provide updated reports on PGR registration and submission rates. **Action complete.**

Minute 2642 Consultation on University Rule 2. Board's comments to be shared with the Head of Registry Services. **Action complete.**

Note: the Head of Registry Services has subsequently confirmed that there will be no substantive changes for 2025/26. In the two key areas considered by Boards of Studies:

Calculators: We will continue with University calculators at this stage and a calculator amnesty has been announced for the return of University calculators. We will continue to monitor the situation and update if any in-year contingency measures are required.

Invigilation: The current expectations/requirements for Chief Invigilators will remain. An additional statement will be added to enable external recruitment of Chief Invigilators where all other options have been exhausted.

There were no matters arising.

2663 Chairs Business & Actions

The Chair reported that the Dean had recently attended the UEB Strategy Development two-day workshop at which the University's Strategy 2026 to 2036 was discussed and developed. International

excellence with impact, foundations for the future and building from our strengths will form the basis of our new strategy which will be launched eventually next summer when the goals, targets and milestones have all been agreed.

2664 New Course Proposals (Stage One Strategic consideration)

ED2025-26/030

The Board considered the Stage 1 approval for a new suite of undergraduate Architecture courses:

- BSc Architecture
- MArch Architecture
- MArch Architecture with Placement

The Chair welcomed Dr Rob Grover (Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering), who introduced paper ED2025-26/030.

The proposed courses will replace the Department's existing undergraduate architecture courses to comply with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) reformed competency-based accreditation framework. Current courses, accredited under an attributes-based structure, will no longer meet ARB requirements.

The restructuring also addresses long-standing issues with the thin-sandwich placement model, particularly the challenges students face in securing short-term accommodation. Under the new proposals, the BSc Architecture and MArch Architecture will not include placement periods.

Course Structure and Market Positioning

- Integrated MArch: Designed for UK students seeking professional qualification, combining three years of BSc study, a placement year, and one year of MArch.
- Standalone BSc Architecture: Expected to attract international students who may then complete a master's qualification in their home country.

Dr Grover noted that the Integrated MArch offers a faster route to qualification (four years at Bath versus five years elsewhere), which is anticipated to be a competitive advantage

Board Feedback and Discussion

- Placement Opportunities: Members expressed concern that the new BSc Architecture excludes placements, given Bath's strong tradition of sandwich courses. Dr Grover explained that students with only two years of study are often disadvantaged in practice settings; three years better prepares them for professional work. ARB is also expected to remove the mandatory placement requirement, provided students meet professional competencies (although ARB's decision is not yet finalised).
- Degree Weighting: The Integrated MArch proposal bases final awards solely on the final year, raising concerns about student workload and mental health. Dr Grover explained that this approach aligns with RIBA validation, which emphasises final-year outputs (RIBA is not comfortable with students potentially being awarded a higher degree class (based on strong performances in earlier years of the course) if they do not achieve the higher class in their final project. Earlier years are de-weighted to encourage risk-taking and creative development. The Dept will consider the Board's concerns regarding the impact on student mental health at Stage 2.

- Sector Comparison: The Board noted that degree weighting varies across HE institutions within the sector although the Bath model is not unusual in this respect. Dr Grover confirmed that ARB competencies are not linked to the Engineering Council AHEP levels.
- Transition Arrangements: These are currently not addressed in the proposal but will be developed during Stage 2, with appropriate student consultation.
- Marketing Considerations: The Department must clearly communicate the structure and realistic timelines for qualification as although it is theoretically possible for students to complete the Integrated MArch in 5 years it is unlikely that they will do so. Dr Grover noted that ARB reforms aim to accelerate qualification and professional registration.

Further considerations to be addressed during Stage 2

- Consultation with students and transition arrangements for current students
- Further reflection on the proposed degree weighting (based entirely on the final year) and the removal of the placement from the BSc Arch. Designated Alternative Courses (DACs) and potential early exit awards should also be developed
- Market positioning and communication strategy for applicants
- Alignment of the Part 3 PG Certificate in Professional Practice with the new suite of courses.

The Board recommended the Stage 1 proposal to Academic Programmes Committee (APC).

2665 Postgraduate Research Students Reports ED2025-26/031

The Board received and considered the update reports provided by the Doctoral College,

- 1) Doctoral student registration status (snapshot data as at 31 October 25)
- 2) Doctoral student (FT) submission rates (snapshot data as at 2 June 25)

Members of the Board expressed their concern at the completion/ submission data for full time PhD students who commenced their PhD between 2016/17 & 2020/21 (3 out of 4 departments had submission rates within 4 years of less than 50%).

The Board noted with concern the current number of PhD registrations in the Faculty (323) which members felt was lower than previous levels. Dr Kershaw commented that at one point the Faculty had in the region of 450 PhD students. Members felt that PGR numbers were declining year on year and asked whether the data could be provided. The Faculty did not receive any new CDT funding in the most recent round which had had an impact on PhD recruitment.

Action: Doctoral College to be asked to provide data on PhD numbers over time.

2666 Staff Student Liaison Committees (SSLC) 2025-26 ED2025-26/032

The Board of Studies approved the membership for the following Staff-Student Liaison Committees in

2025/26.

a) Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering

- Arch SSLC membership, minutes (unconfirmed) & action log of first meeting held on 15 October 25
- Civil SSLC membership, minutes (unconfirmed) & action log of first meeting held on 22 October 25

b) Department of Chemical Engineering

- SSLC Membership, minutes (unconfirmed) & action log of first meeting held on 28 October 25

c) Department of Electronic & Electrical Engineering

- Department of Electronic & Electrical Engineering, membership & action log of first meeting held on 22 October 25

d) Department of Mechanical Engineering, membership

A Board member requested that the SSLC Action Logs be made available to Department Learning Teaching & Quality Committees (DLTQC).

Action: DLTQCs to receive SSLC Action logs.

2667 Graduate / Student Teaching Assistants Annual Report 2024-25 ED2025-26/033

The Board received the annual report from academic departments on the involvement of students (Graduate Teaching Assistants, GTA) in teaching during the 2024/25 academic year. Positive feedback from staff on the use of GTAs was reported by all departments. The Board noted however the difficulty in recruiting PGR students to GTA roles and the challenge this presented to departments, particularly in light of the Board's earlier discussion regarding the decline in the number of PGR students in the Faculty. The total number of GTAs involved in teaching support has remained broadly consistent with previous years (141 students in 23/24, 132 in 22/23) although with fluctuations across departments. The Chair noted that the Associate Dean (Education) in the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences had led a TDF project in relation to GTA, the outputs from which had been considered by EAB. The H&SS Faculty are moving forward with some of the TDF report's recommendations (notably setting up GTA Leads in each department, establishing training workshops for GTA Leads, providing networking opportunities and core training for GTA to include Student Support & Safeguarding, Pastoral Support Training). The Board noted that the Dept. of Electronic & Electrical Engineering is introducing a dedicated academic role as the lead for GTA Coordination (Professor Peter Wilson) along with an automated tracking system of GTA time, which the other Depts may also wish to adopt. The report presented to the Board drew attention to the lack of formalised mechanisms for GTA's to give and receive feedback on their input to teaching and the lack of transparency in terms of the training provided to them. The Board agreed that no action in terms of the development of feedback mechanisms or enhanced training was required at this stage pending the outcome of University level discussions.

Action: Professor Wilson to be asked to share the Dept. of Electronic & Electrical Engineering's tracking system and any other elements of good practice with the other Depts.

Action: Departments to consider a dedicated GTA lead.

2668 Boards of Examiners 2025-26 ED2025-26/034

The Board approved the membership of Boards of Examiners for Units and Courses (BEUs/ BECs) for 2025/26 as detailed in Paper ED2025-26/034 and listed below.

- i. Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering
- ii. Dept. of Chemical Engineering
- iii. Dept. of Electronic & Electrical Engineering
- iv. Dept. of Mechanical Engineering
- v. Dept of Mechanical Engineering / Learning Partnerships office (for the online MSc EBM).

The Board noted the small core membership of the Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering's UG board of Examiners for Courses (BEC) comprising the Head of Dept (Chair), the Director of Teaching & the Director of Studies which made it potentially vulnerable were one member to be unavailable. The Board suggested the Dept. review the membership.

Action: Dept of Arch & Civil to be asked to look again at its UG BEC core membership.

2669 Faculty Individual Mitigating Circumstances (IMC) Panel 2025-26 ED2025-26/035

The Board noted the membership and terms of reference of the Faculty IMC Panel for 2025/26. Confirmation of a nominee from the Dept of Architecture & Civil was awaited (to replace Dr Juliana Holley-Calabria). The Board noted that the Chair of the IMC Panel had been called on for input to the many academic appeals received over the summer and supplementary period in respect of not previously disclosed circumstances which would normally be considered via an IMC submission. The Board suggested that the load might be shared although the Chair noted the importance of consistency of approach. The Faculty IMC Panel would however consider this at its first meeting. The Board noted that Directors of Studies were no longer automatically a party to their students' IMC claims and may not know that a student had submitted a claim until or unless the student contacted them after the Panel has met (e.g. where their appeal declined). Clear mechanisms for communicating with Directors of Studies after the Panel has met should be shared with Depts. The Board queried whether the IMC data held in SAMIS could be interrogated e.g. using Power BI with a view to evaluating emerging trends etc.

Action: Secretary to investigate capabilities for reporting on the IMC data held in SAMIS.

2670 Reports from Ex Officio members ED2025-26/036

The Board received the update reports from ex officio and academic leadership members of the Board as detailed in paper ED2025-26/036 .

Dr Codinhoto (Director of PGT Studies) was pleased to report that the University had been awarded three Commonwealth Scholarships.

2671 Report from Student representatives and/or Students' Union Officer

Student representatives reported that they had attended the first meeting of the Students' Union's academic executive. The new Department Rep roles had been advertised and some positions filled by election however there were still a number of vacant positions in the Faculty (e.g. none of the Dept roles in Chemical Engineering had yet been filled). The Dept Rep position has been introduced to improve the flow of information between Academic reps Depts reps and Faculty reps. The student reps suggested that the Students' Union system for electing reps could be supplemented by Dept's taking the lead and actively promoting the Dept rep positions to academic reps (Dr Codinhoto agreed to share the comms used in Arch & Civil Engineering with colleagues).

Student reps noted that an issue had already been raised regarding the slow provision of feedback on labs - students have not received feedback on their first lab before doing their second lab which was not good. The Chair advised that the Faculty was working hard to improve in this area.

There were no other matters to report - it was hoped that a report from the Students' Union would be provided for the next meeting of the Board,

2672 Library Matters

Mr Stacey provided an update on Library matters,

The team are involved in lots of teaching e.g. Doctoral Skills workshops, etc. We are running a workshop as part of the Skills4Study series which is part of a new series of 6 workshops on AI. Our session 'Research with AI' looks at ways to use tools effectively to avoid pitfalls like hallucinations, and explores how AI enhanced search is increasingly appearing in catalogues and databases. Dr Codinhoto suggested a CLT contact for Mr Stacey to follow up with regarding central advice for students re: using AI in research.

Free trial access has been set up this month for ASTM Digital Library (excluding their ASTM Standards (via ASTM Compass) which are prohibitively expensive to subscribe to. We continue to purchase on demand for researchers. The other trial, to MCX (MaterialConneXion) is for a new type of resource. This is a virtual materials library. It could prove complementary to the physical library in development in 4ES. It features 10,000 materials with 7,000 properties (including sustainable, natural etc), as well as supplier contact info, case studies, trend reports and more. It's likely to be of wider engineering interest - possibly of interest across the University.

Display work continues this month with a DHM (Disability History Month) themed display. The Library is also going to be illuminated 13-19 November for Trans Awareness Week, thanks to Campus Infrastructure and CDC (Commemorative Days Committee).

2673 Sub-Committee Minutes ED2025-26/037-038

The Board received the minutes of the following Committee meetings

- 1) Faculty Executive - meeting of 15 September 2025 ED2025-26/037
- 2) Faculty Learning Teaching & Quality Committee - meeting of 15 October 2025 ED2025-26/038

2674 Committee Minutes (SSLC, DBoS, FDSC) ED2025-26/039-040

The Board received and noted the minutes of the following Committees.

- 1) Doctoral Board of Studies - meetings of 7 May, 23 July & 9 October 2025 ED2025-26/039
- 2) Faculty Doctoral Studies Committee (FDSC) - meeting of 16 September 2025 ED2025-26/040

2675 Any Other Business

A Board member requested if a record of the attendance by members at meetings of the Board could be shared

Action: Secretary to coordinate

2676 Date of next meeting

The Board noted the date of the next meeting Wednesday 14 January 2026 at 2.15 p.m.