

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

Wednesday, 2nd April 2025 10:15 am

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

Attended

Kamal Asadi

John Chew

Ricardo Codinhoto

Mirella Di Lorenzo (on TEAMS)

Tina Düren

Adrian Evans

Jeffrey Gavin (on TEAMS)

Sabina Gheduzzi (on TEAMS)

Jonathan Graham-Harper-Cater

Marion Harney

Andrew Heath

Tim Ibell

Omid Maghazei

Francesca Marchetti

Benjamin Metcalfe

Emma Emanuelsson Patterson

David Stacey

Rachel Summers (Secretary)

Apologies

Elise Courbon

Jos Darling

Carmelo Herdes Moreno

Patrick Keogh

Tristan Kershaw

Despina Moschou

Fionna Uppilirajan

2557 Welcome and Quorum

The Chair welcomed members and apologies were noted.

2558 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.

2559 Minutes of the Previous meeting - ED2024-25/080

The unreserved minutes of the meeting of the Board of Studies held on 26 February 2025 (ED2024-25/080) were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

2560 Actions and Matters Arising

The Board noted the following actions,

Minute 2541 Board requested periodic PGR reports - Action complete (see agenda item 2565).

There were no matters arising.

2561 Chairs Business & Actions

The Chair reminded the Board about the work of the Integrated Faculty Working Group (IFWG) and associated task and finish sub -groups which is on track. Colleagues involved in the sub-groups were thanked for their contributions to the project.

The Chair was pleased to report that the Faculty's planning document had been submitted.

Feedback and commentary from Faculty staff in response to the Just Stop survey was being collated and analysed by the Faculty's Directors of Operations and EDI and a report would be submitted to the next meeting of Faculty Executive following which it would be presented to the Board of Studies.

2562 Individual Schemes of Study - Policy Consultation ED2024-25/081

The Head of Academic Quality & Standards introduced the discussion paper regarding Individual Schemes of Study and/or Assessment (ED2024-25/081). University guidance regarding the principles and procedures for the approval of course level adjustments for individual students is currently provided as an appendix to University Quality Assurance Code QA3 Approval of new programmes of study, Annex H. Given the evolving legal and regulatory compliance requirements within HE (in relation to the Equality Act) the University must move towards demonstrably consistent and equitable application of agreed principles which would be more appropriately expressed within a formalised Policy. The paper

presented to the Board contained a draft of the proposed Policy which encapsulates the existing guidance and practice currently contained within Annex H of QA3.

Board members provided the following comments;

i) the Faculty uses ISSs for students to vary the point in their studies at which they undertake the placement year or to be allowed to continue to a placement having failed the preceding academic stage. The Faculty would want to retain this mechanism.

ii) only student athletes who are part of the Breakthrough sporting programme are eligible for consideration of an ISS. Are there students who may not be part of the programme but who are nevertheless representing their country at the highest level who might also be considered for an ISS?

iii) in the scenario where a DoS did not support a student's ISS request, a right to ask for a review would be desirable

iv) the ISS process is reactive; course curricula should inherently facilitate flexibility rather than students having to request adjustments on an individual basis.

The Board noted the summary report of Individual Schemes of Study (ISS) approved by the Faculty over the 3-year period 2022/23 to 2024/25. Approximately a quarter of the schemes approved (8/34) had been to permit students to transfer from a 4-year MEng to a 3-year BEng course (having completed the MEng third year). The Faculty's BEng & MEng courses have different project activities in year 3 (BEng complete Individual Projects, MEng Group Business Design) so for the MEng students who for a variety of reasons (often health related) don't feel able to do the fourth year (which is when they would do an Individual research project) an ISS has been used to permit them to suspend and complete an Individual Project in semester 2 so that they can graduate with a BEng. The Head of AQS noted that under the credit accumulation model of the Government's Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) a Designated Alternative Course (DAC) which could award a BEng (not necessarily professionally accredited) to a student who has completed 3 years of study on the Eng was likely to be a future requirement.

Board of Studies members were invited to provide any additional feedback on the proposed policy to the Head of AQS.

2563 Progression & Articulation Policy & Procedure -Consultation on changes to QA20 ED2024-25/082

The Board considered proposals to move the approval of progression and articulation agreements out of University QA Code of Practice QA20 Collaborative Provision and create a separate policy and procedures. The Board welcomed the proposals which would remove the requirement for consultation and approval by numerous University Committees (APC, Board of Studies, Senate, FLTQC) and place responsibility for strategic decisions to Deans and ADIs. The current process and procedures are over complex and not sufficiently agile to respond quickly to emerging opportunities. The Board noted that the partnership agreements / articulation arrangements the Faculty has pursued to date are 'recruitment' tools not new courses and that therefore quality assurance aspects are primarily in relation to the proposed partner's reputation etc which should rightly sit with the IRO. However, given the Faculty's ambition to expand its international recruitment activities, concerns were noted as to whether the IRO has the resource and capacity to pro-actively lead, drive and provide operational support for the potential increase in international partnerships.

The Associate Dean International asked colleagues for any additional comments or feedback which she would then share with the Academic Quality Standards team.

2564 Centre for Digital, Manufacturing & Design rebrand proposals ED2024-25/083

The Board considered the proposal for the rebranding (change of acronym) of the Centre for Digital, Manufacturing & Design from dMaDe to 'The Foundry' as detailed in paper ED2024-25/08. The Board noted the work undertaken by the Centre in developing its proposed new acronym and visual identity. Members of the Board commented that the University's Legal Team should be consulted regarding any potential trademark issues (where a company or business may already be trading as The Foundry). A Board member suggested that the term Foundry may not be well-understood or translate well in the international sphere and Foundry described an industrial process that may not represent the Centre's focus and research. The Chair noted that the Faculty's marketing team, external consultants and members of the Centre had been consulted and had had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the new logo and brand.

The Board recommended the change of name to the PVC-RE subject to consultation with and clearance by the University's Legal Team.

2565 Postgraduate Research Student reports ED2024-25/084

The Board had requested regular reports on PGR numbers, registration and progression /completion data (see BoS minute 2541, 26 February 25). The reports presented to the Board were already provided to either University Doctoral Studies Committee (UDSC), Faculty Doctoral Studies Committee (FDSC) or to support annual planning.

The Board received reports providing snapshot data (as at Dec 2024),

- The proportion of FT PhD students in various starting cohorts (e.g. 2016/17, 2017/18, etc) who had submitted their thesis within 4 years. The data used for these reports is extracted twice a year, in June and December, to ensure a level of consistency in reporting
- Snapshots of doctoral student numbers in Engineering by academic Dept. (the Doctoral College is currently also working on a report to show the progression status of all students associated with IAAPS)

The Board discussed the data noting the disappointing submission rates. Members of the Board suggested that the data may reflect the continued impact on student progress arising from the Covid Pandemic in 2020. Doctoral student feedback has also pointed to a lack of peer support and little sense of a cohort community as negatively impacting students' overall experience of PGR study. The Board noted the increased efforts of the Doctoral College to rigorously monitor doctoral student progress particularly with a view to ensuring that sufficient progress is achieved in the first year of registration.

The Board agreed that the data were informative and requested that the reports be provided on a regular basis (e.g. twice yearly).

2566 Exam Paper Errors Semester One ED2024-25/085

The Board received the report on semester one exam paper errors as detailed in paper ED2024-25/085. Of the 78 exams held in semester one only four exams had had reported errors (1 in Chemical Engineering, 2 in Mechanical Engineering and 1 in Electronic & Electrical Engineering). The Board noted that the issues raised by students in relation to the EE52036 exam had been investigated by the Dept. and no errors had been found in the paper (it was possibly an issue of clarity in the exam question). The 3 other exams with reported errors had all been considered and either remedial action had been taken to ensure there had been no disadvantage to students or no action was required as there had been no perceived impact. The Board was satisfied that the respective Boards of Examiners for Units (BEU) had carried out their responsibilities in accordance with University regulations in assuring the quality of all assessments.

2567 Faculty IMC Panel ED2024-25/086

The Board received a report on the membership, terms of reference and operation of the Faculty IMC panel established and convened for the first time in semester one. A pre-Panel screening process had been trialed by which the IMC claims which met the criteria could be recommended for acceptance to the Panel with the Panel then responsible for the final decision. Criteria for the pre-panel screening had been formulated based on feedback from the IMC Panels in the Faculties of Science and Humanities & Social Science and the input of HoDs as Chairs of Departmental IMC panels. Approximately 92% of IMC claims were accepted (either by the full IMC panel or by the Chair on behalf of the Panel following requests for additional information). Following the first Panel meeting Directors of Study, HoDs and DoTs were asked for feedback which will be used to inform process improvements in semester two. A key requirement is clear communication to DoSs post-panel meetings particularly for any students requiring follow-up support.

The Board requested additional analysis of the IMC claims received – e.g. numbers by Dept.

The Chair thanked the ADE, Faculty Assistant Registrars and Faculty Programmes Manager for their work in getting the Faculty IMC panel up and running.

2568 Reports from Ex Officio members ED2024-25/087

The Board received the update reports from ex officio and academic leadership members of the Board as detailed in paper ED2024-25/087.

Dr Codinhoto provided an update on the PGT Strategic Review Phase 3 which will involve five workstreams based on the recommendations outlined in Phases 1 & 2 of the review. Dr Codinhoto is leading the workstream on Course Design & Interdisciplinary Opportunities.

2569 Report from Student representatives and/or Students' Union Officer ED2024-25/088

The Board received the Students' Union's March update report (Paper ED2024-25/088).

The Faculty student representative reported on the following matter,

Selection and recruitment of student representatives - changes to the processes for identifying and selecting student reps, which will allow Depts to directly manage these processes are currently being finalised by the Students' Union. The Board welcomed these initiatives as filling the student rep positions has been a longstanding challenge.

2570 Boards of Examiners ED2024-25/105

The Board approved minor updates and amendments to the PGT Boards of Examiners in the Dept. of Mechanical Engineering as detailed in paper ED2024-25/105

2571 Library Matters

Mr Stacey (Faculty Librarian) provided a verbal update report on Library matters noting a new book display to celebrate Autism Acceptance Month based on the Neurodiversity Library reading list.

2572 Sub-Committee Minutes ED2024-25/089-90

The Board received the minutes of the following Committee meetings:

- 1) Faculty Executive meeting of 27 January 2025 - ED2024-25/089
- 2) Faculty Learning Teaching & Quality Committee meeting of 12 March 2025 - ED2024-25/090

2573 Committee Minutes (SSLC, DBoS, FDSC) ED2024-25/091-095

The Board received the minutes of the following Committees.

- 1) Board of Studies (Doctoral) unreserved minutes of meetings 2 October, 13 November, 11 December 2024 and 22 January 2025 ED2024-25/091
- 2) Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering Staff Student Liaison Committee (Civil Engineering) minutes & action Log meeting of 19 February 2025 ED2024-25/092
- 3) Dept. of Chemical Engineering Staff Student Liaison Committee, minutes & action Log meeting of 18 February 2025 ED2024-25/093
- 4) Faculty Doctoral Studies Committee minutes of meeting of 18 March 2025 ED2024-25/094
- 5) PGT SSLC minutes & action log of meeting of 19 March 2025 ED2024-25/095
- 6) Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering Staff Student Liaison Committee (Architecture) minutes & action Log meeting of 19 February 2025 ED2024-25/096

2574 Any Other Business

There were no other items of business.

2575 Date of next meeting

The Board noted the date of the next meeting: 21 May 2025 at 2.15 p.m.