

Faculty of Engineering & Design Board of Studies

Unreserved - Confirmed

Wednesday, 25th February 2026 2:15 pm 2 East 3.4

Attendees

Kamal Asadi (via TEAMS)
Tareq Assaf
John Chew
Ricardo Codinhoto
Jos Darling (via TEAMS)
Mirella Di Lorenzo (via TEAMS)
Tina Düren
Adrian Evans
Jonathan Graham-Harper-Cater
Marion Harney (via TEAMS)
David Hassell
Tim Ibell
Patrick Keogh
Tristan Kershaw
Omid Maghazei
Benjamin Metcalfe
Despina Moschou
Will Roberts
Eleni Sikou
Rachel Summers (secretary)
Zach Yebuah

Did Not Attend

Florin Bisset
Chris Bowen
Jeffrey Gavin
Andrew Heath
George Newham
Emma Emanuelsson Patterson
David Stacey

2712 Welcome and Quorum

The Chair welcomed members and apologies were noted.

2713 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.

2714 Minutes of the Previous meeting - ED2025-26/071

The unreserved minutes of the meeting of the Board of Studies held on 14 January 2026 (ED2025-26/071) were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

2715 Actions and Matters Arising

The Board noted actions completed since the previous meeting,

Minute 2692 - Exam Paper Errors/ Conduct of Exams. The Board's comments on the conduct of and arrangements for in-person exams to be passed to the Exams Office. **Action complete.**

Minute 2694 - Operation of Boards of Examiners. The Board's request for BECs to be provided with longitudinal data on degree classifications to be passed to Academic Registry. **Action complete.**

There were no matters arising.

2716 Chairs Business & Actions ED2025-26/072

The Chair reported that Health & Safety tours of all Faculty laboratories had been completed, and the team had observed huge improvements. He thanked all colleagues for their efforts in driving this safety-focussed culture change whilst noting that it should not be contingent on regular inspections. There was still a lot of clutter in some labs which needed to be addressed.

The Chair reported that the annual planning cycle had begun noting that the 5-year plan previously agreed would form the backdrop to this year's planning discussions.

The Board noted actions taken by the Chair on behalf of the Board as detailed in paper ED2025-26/072.

2 February 2026 Conduct of Assessment

Department of Mechanical Engineering: Approval to re-run the semester one exam assessment for unit ME32016 / ME30041 Aircraft Stability & Control following the identification of errors in the exam paper. Academic Registry was consulted on the proposed arrangements.

2717 Research Activity Report ED2025-26/073

The Board received the second quarter report on Research Applications and Awards noting that the current research climate is extremely challenging e.g. fewer grant/funding opportunities, UKRI taking excessively long periods to announce funding decisions, in some cases up to 18 months. The Q2 data indicated that the Faculty was unlikely to achieve its year end research target of £27 million.

2718 Graduate Pledge ED2025-26/074

The Associate Dean (Community, Culture & Inclusion) introduced the paper proposing the establishment of a Faculty Graduate Pledge from summer 2026 onwards. The proposal represents a large piece of work led by the ADE (CCI) with significant support from the Faculty's Education Manager, Joanne Pike. Faculty Executive endorsed work on development of the pledge in Spring 2025 and since then a structured programme of staff and student consultation has been undertaken. The final wording is the output from those conversations and has been co-created with students. It encapsulates the Faculty's values and philosophy focusing on sustainability, ethics, innovation & global citizenship. The pledge will be 'made' at Dept graduation receptions and students may choose to opt out. The pledge has no legal standing. Members of the Board noted that the proposal for a public commitment to the pledge may not sit comfortably with all students and their friends or family members who are accompanying them at graduation events. Would students choosing to opt-out stand out amongst their peers and feel exposed? The ADE CCI noted that the pledge is a broad statement of values and not any one person's values - it provides a touchpoint to prompt self-reflection. The Board agreed that further reflection on the opt-in/ opt-out optics would be valuable. The pledge itself needs to run through all Departmental & faculty student-facing materials (e.g. handbooks, course materials) so that it is embedded in a student's academic journey from first year through to graduation. There were some operational (logistical) questions to be resolved e.g. how would students who are ineligible to attend the degree ceremony - those receiving an exit award or a PG certificate- or students choosing not to attend, will have the opportunity to make the pledge. Students will also receive a symbolic physical item (design to be decided) - how will this be managed, resourced and supported? The Board noted that the paper indicated that only minor administrative support would be required and could be absorbed within existing resources - more detailed analysis of the administrative resources and costs to support the pledge arrangements was required in due course. The Board supported the idea that students could contribute to the design or selection of the symbolic physical item.

The Board approved the introduction of the pledge, the arrangements for pledge to be taken at graduation receptions etc. & the proposed final wording as detailed in paper ED2025-26/074.

2719 Reports from Ex Officio members ED2025-26/075

The Board received the update reports for ex officio members of the Board. The Faculty Director of Postgraduate Taught Studies, Dr Codinhoto, provided his update at the meeting, FDPGT Update (submitted post-deadline due to Faculty Executive priorities)

Over the past period, priority has been given to preparing and presenting a Faculty-level paper to the Faculty Executive on the viability of several PGT programmes with low recruitment. This included a structured consultation to test support for potential course suspension scenarios. The consultation indicated partial support for targeted suspensions; however, significant concerns were raised regarding the integrated nature of provision, where suspending individual programmes does not proportionally reduce delivery requirements, thereby limiting the intended efficiency gains. As a result, the Faculty

Executive will consider alternative approaches at its next meeting.

A Board member commented that the proposal to suspend some of the Faculty's MSc courses was a disappointing development.

In parallel, discussions with Registry have highlighted a policy gap within QA3, namely: No clearly defined process for programme suspension and No mechanism for reactivation of suspended programmes. This creates a risk that "temporary suspension" functions effectively as programme withdrawal. There is also currently no formal guidance on how such processes should be consulted on with staff. A proposal to address both procedural and communication aspects is being developed for Faculty-level discussion.

Separately, the application to the British Council (£90k, scholarships linked to the EBM online provision) was unsuccessful. While no formal feedback was provided, the likely issue is alignment with the scheme's specific objectives rather than course quality. This will be reviewed ahead of the next funding round.

Finally, recruitment-related scholarship activity is progressing. Shortlisting is ongoing and interviews are being arranged for: Commonwealth Scholarship (1 award); Women in STEM (2 to 3 awards across the Faculty). Relevant programmes include Robotics and Autonomous Systems, Sustainable Energy Engineering, Sustainable Engineering (Decarbonisation), and Artificial Intelligence for Engineering and Design.

Dr Metcalfe (HoD Electronic & Elec Eng) noted that the Dept's focussed efforts in promoting the National Student Survey (NSS) has led to a very positive response rate (currently sitting at 63%, the highest Dept in the University).

2720 Report from Student representatives and/or Students' Union Officer

The Faculty Student Reps provided an update to the Board on the following items,

- 1) Semester one exams. There had been observed variation in invigilation practice across exam venues which was confusing for students. Some 'mock' exams (formative assessments) had been scheduled in venues alongside normal summative exams. Students sitting the mock exams were not under the same pressure and may not have had the same attitude in the exam venue as those students for whom the exam was more serious. Students felt this had been less than ideal as there had been some disruption as students sitting mock exams left the venue at different times. In some venues there had been no clocks. The ADE Education noted that issues with semester one exams had already been shared with the Head of Registry Services with the request that they be addressed for semester 2.
- 2) Dept rep roles. The Students' Union has been trialing a dept reps forum as a mechanism for effective communication between Academic reps, Dept reps & Faculty reps. It was disappointing to report that the forums had been poorly attended - the SU is looking into ways of energising the forum. The Chair asked that Faculty Reps follow up with the SU and for SSLCs to remind Dept Reps of their roles and responsibilities.
- 3) External teaching. There had been reports of some student dissatisfaction with the quality and standard of teaching provided by some external tutors- the Chair encouraged reps to raise any such concerns at the respective SSLC.

2721 Library Matters

Mr. Stacey was unable to attend the meeting - no matters to report.

2722 Sub-Committee Minutes ED2025-26/076-077

The Board received the minutes of the following Committee meetings,

- 1) Faculty Executive meeting of 19 January 2026 ED2025-26/076
- 2) Faculty Learning Teaching & Quality Committee 21 January 2026 ED2025-26/077

2723 Committee Minutes (SSLC, DBoS, FDSC) ED2025-26/078-

The Board received and noted the minutes of the following Committee meetings,

- 1) Architecture UG SSLC meeting of 27 November 2025 ED2025-26/078
- 2) Civil Eng UG SSLC meeting of 26 November 2025 ED2025-26/079
- 3) Chemical Eng UG SSLC meeting of 25 November 2025 ED2025-26/080
- 4) Elec Eng UG SSLC meeting of 10 December 2025 ED2025-26/081
- 5) Mech Eng UG SSLC meetings of 30 October & 27 November 2025 ED2025-26/082
- 6) PGT SSLC meeting of 14 November 2025 ED2025-26/083

2724 Any Other Business

There were no matters raised under Any Other Business.

2725 Date of next meeting

The Board noted the date of the next meeting, Wednesday 22 April 2026 at 2.15 p.m.