



Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Studies for the Faculty of Engineering & Design on Wednesday 1 March 2023 at 2.15 pm held in 2 East 3.4 and remotely via Teams

Present:

Professor Tim Ibell (Chair)	
Ms Angelli Atienza Atienza	PGT Student Rep (Dept of Chemical Engineering)
Prof. John Chew	Dept. of Chemical Engineering
Dr Ricardo Codinhoto	Faculty Director of PGT Programmes
Dr Charles Courtney	Dept. of Mechanical Engineering
Dr Jos Darling	Dept. of Mechanical Engineering (<i>via TEAMS</i>)
Dr Vaggelis Giannikas	School of Management Rep (<i>via TEAMS from 2.50 p.m.</i>)
Dr Sabina Gheduzzi	Dept. of Mechanical Engineering
Prof. Marion Harney	Associate Dean Education
Prof. Andrew Heath	Dept of Architecture & Civil Engineering
Dr Carmelo Herdes Moreno	Dept of Chemical Engineering
Dr Nigel Johnston	Director of Doctoral Studies
Prof Davide Mattia	Deputy Dean
Prof. Mirella di Lorenzo	Associate Dean (International)
Prof. Andrew Plummer	Dept of Mechanical Engineering
Mr Anointing Reuben	UG Student Rep (Dept. Electronic & Elec Eng)
Mr Alexander Robinson	SU President
Mr David Stacey	Subject Librarian (<i>via TEAMS</i>)
Dr Jannis Wenk	Dept. of Chemical Engineering
Prof. Peter Wilson	Dept. of Electronic & Electrical Engineering

In Attendance:

Mrs Rachel Summers	Faculty Assistant Registrar
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Apologies for absence were received from:

Prof. Kirill Cherednichenko	Faculty of Science representative
Dr Emma Emanuelsson Patterson	Dept of Chemical Engineering
Dr Tristan Kershaw	Dept. of Architecture & Civil Engineering
Dr Ben Metcalfe	Dept. of Electronic & Electrical Engineering

Part I Business

2225 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

2226 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The unreserved minutes of the meeting of the Board of Studies held on 18 January 2023 (Paper FE2022-23/062) were approved as a correct record of the proceedings and signed by the Chair.

2227 Matters Arising

The Board noted updates on matters arising from the previous meeting. The following matters were pending;

Minute 2207 Scaling Overview Report 21/22. Departments to be asked to complete annual monitoring for the units detailed.

Minute 2208 GTA Overview report 21/22. Secretary to discuss common format for record keeping with departments. BoS discussion and Annual Report to be forwarded to EQSC

Minute 2209 SSLC Chairs to be asked to agree common Terms of Reference to be introduced for 23/24.

2228 Chair's Business & Report

The Board noted the following business approved by the Dean taking Chair's Action on behalf of the Board;

19 January 2023 GTA input to marking – approval for GTA input to assessment and marking for EE50237 Robotics Software

1 February 2023 Approval of re-running of the semester one exam for EE50235 Autonomous Systems Engineering outside of the normal assessment period. The exam was originally held on 20 January but due to errors in the set-up in Inspira some students were unable to submit their work and others may have had a disrupted exam experience. Having consulted with Academic Registry it was agreed that as it was not possible to establish the extent to which students had or had not been affected all students should be offered the opportunity to sit the exam again (with a new exam paper).

2 February 2023 Amendments to the membership of Boards of Examiners for Units (BEUs) in the Dept of Mechanical Engineering. UG & PGT unit business had been disaggregated.

The Dean reported on the following items,

- I. Annual Planning. Work on the Faculty's annual planning submission is in an advanced position. The previous planning cycle prioritised investment in additional academic resource including 7.5 Professorial and 3 Lecturer positions. This year's focus is enhancing other areas i.e. the Faculty's professional /technical services. Investment here will free up academic time for teaching, learning and research. A new approach to Professional Services career progression is being explored by the Faculty's Executive. Annual planning proposals are also highlighting the need for investment in physical infrastructure and a re-imagining of the Faculty's physical estate, particularly the older buildings (2 /4 East) to make them fit for contemporary ways of working. Dr Codinhoto commented that he was able to provide digital models of both buildings and agreed to liaise with the Faculty's Director of Technical Services.
- II. Curriculum developments. Discussions are ongoing with the School of Management for the development of new undergraduate courses.

2229 Monitoring Report – Exam Paper Errors (FE2022-23/064)

The Board received the annual monitoring report on exam paper errors covering the full academic year 2021/22 and semester one assessments 2022/23. The Board noted the return to in-person exams in 2021/22 alongside retention of Inspira (remote) exams and discussed the recent semester one exam arrangements. Points which emerged in discussion,

- Members reiterated the view that the different models of calculators provided by the Exams office *did* provide students with an advantage / disadvantage (even if very minor) depending on which version they received in the exam
- Internal procedures pre-pandemic provided sufficient time between the printing of exam papers and the exam itself for academic staff to visibly check the paper and confirm all was

correct and in order. There was concern that this process did not appear to have been re-established.

- In-person exams – rooms had been poorly set-up for exams. On at least one occasion the correct exam materials, additional sheets & invigilators instructions were not provided in the pack from the Exams Office. Spare calculators were provided but were not working (possibly battery issues)?
- In-person exams – students in separate venues were not provided with the same communication as those in the main venue.
- In-person exams – student feedback via SSLCs has suggested dissatisfaction with the conduct of some invigilators. Provision of training for invigilators in advance of semester two exams is required.
- The resumption of in-person exams had led to a (noticeable) associated decrease in IMC claims
- Inspira exams – procedures for the uploading of the ‘final’ correct version of the exam paper to Inspira need to be improved / clarified. Inspira set-up should remove the possibility of two versions of an exam paper being held on the system. Professor Wilson commented that the Dept of Electronic & Electrical Engineering is piloting using Microsoft TEAMS (rather than Moodle) for the setting, review and moderation of exam papers and have introduced a second moderation panel, chaired by the HoD to re-check all papers following receipt of external examiner comments and approve them ready for printing/ uploading.
- Inspira exams – anecdotal comments from students suggest that collusion / cheating is considered to be widespread amongst students sitting exams remotely.

Student reps on the Board also queried how student complaints or feedback about the conduct of exams are captured; this is currently through Department SSLCs.

The Board noted that Depts were shifting their thinking towards a wholesale return to in-person exams which will place additional demand on the Exams Office – adequate resourcing of this area of Academic Registry is therefore essential.

Action: Secretary to pass the Board’s comments to the Head of Registry Services.

2230 Faculty Research Centres (FE2022-23/065)

Professor Bowen introduced paper FE2022-23/065 outlining the Faculty’s proposals for the establishment of six new research centres and the dissolution of the fifteen existing centres over the next 12 months. The consolidation of research into larger multidisciplinary centres will create the critical mass able to react quickly to multidisciplinary research grant opportunities. There will be a strong focus on research culture within each centre (active, supportive and inclusive) to enable the faculty to deliver to its Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The six new proposed research centres are

- Centre for Bioengineering & Biomedical Technologies (CBio)
- Centre for Climate Adaptation & Environment Research (CAER)
- Centre for Digital Manufacturing & Design (dMaDe)
- Centre for Integrated Materials, Processes & Structures (IMPS)
- Centre for Regenerative Design & Engineering for a Net Positive World (RENEW)
- Centre for Sustainable Energy Systems (SES)

IAAPS is already established as an Institute and will therefore continue with this organisational structure. Details of the new Centre Directors and Deputy Directors were included in the paper. The proposal outlined how the Faculty’s Research KPIs would be divided and distributed across the six centres focussing on

- I. Research Awards /Income
- II. Number of 4* outputs
- III. Number of 4* Impact case studies
- IV. PGR submissions

The Associate Dean Research will lead on other research KPIs e.g. consultancies. The Centre allocated KPIs will be monitored and subject to annual review. The proposed Centres will receive Faculty support, including £1k per year for each primary affiliated E&R member. The Board's endorsement of the proposals was sought prior to formal approval by Faculty Executive.

The Board welcomed the proposals and expressed its thanks to Professors Bowen and Mattia along with other colleagues for the work involved in bringing forward the proposals. The following points were discussed,

PhD students – where would students 'sit'? In the academic dept or within their research centre? Professor Bowen explained that centres would be responsible for recruiting PhD students to achieve their allocated KPI, but students would then sit within the academic department linked to their research supervision.

Cross centre research funding – how will this be agreed? Its expected that the new Centres will share a collaborative ethos and culture in delivering to the Faculty's research targets.

Clarity of line management – is there potential tension between Departments and Centres. Professor Bowen clarified that the centres would have no line management responsibilities, their role is to bring added value.

Scope of the proposed DMaDe Centre was potentially not as broad as it could be and the emphasis on robotics autonomous systems was unclear. Professor Bowen agreed to take this onboard.

What would the future role of Dept Directors of Research involve? The roles will still exist and have a key input to supporting REF delivery e.g. through input to assessing the quality of outputs, undertaking peer reviews and enhancing research culture within departments.

The Board fully endorsed the proposals and confirmed support for approval of the proposals by Faculty Executive.

[2231 Research Activity Report Quarter 2 2022-23 \(FE2022-23/066\)](#)

The Board received and noted the second quarter Research Activity Report for 2022-23 noting the new format which provides clearer visibility of progress in achieving the University Strategy KPI on Research Income. Activity in Engineering & Design was reported at a Faculty level given the anticipated move to reporting via Centres. Quarter 2 awards had been in the region of £2 million; the Dean noted that Quarter 3 was already looking very strong with anticipated awards of approximately £22 million.

[2232 Reports from Ex Officio Members \(FE2022-23/067\)](#)

The Board noted the update reports from ex officio members as detailed in Paper FE2022/23-067.

[2233 Reports from Student Reps/ Students Union Officer](#)

AI Tools / Chat GPT. The SU President noted that the launch of ChatGPT had influenced decisions by some Departments to return to in-person exams in semester 2. ChatGPT and other AI tools are very much in the news at the moment and present a real challenge to Universities. The Board was asked what short, medium and long term measures were being taken to mitigate and prepare for the potential impact of AI tools on assessments. The AD L&T advised that the Centre for Learning & Teaching (CLT) was coordinating guidance and resources for staff on the use of AI tools in academic work and the Skills Centre was providing a student guide with questions for students to consider. Members of the Board commented that we need to understand and work with the tools as opposed to implementing an outright ban on usage.

Fostering Student Community. The SU president explained that the Student Experience Board was exploring opportunities to foster and support cross department / faculty student communities. The Board discussed what opportunities were available within the faculty for students to interact and collaborate with students from other departments e.g. the various Team Bath engineering teams (Racing Electric, Green Bath Racing, Bath Drones and the latest group Team Bath Heart) and the

Student Women's Engineering Society (WESBath). The SU president commented that the SU could provide support if students clubs/ groups affiliate with the SU but that not all groups were affiliated.

Study Space on campus. Students continue to struggle to find appropriate study space on campus. The SU president commented that anecdotal observations of the refitted Wessex Staff Hub and Polden space suggested there was limited take up by academic staff which begged the question if the space was not being fully utilised could students be given access too. The Board noted that the facilities had only recently opened and that staff/pgr work and meeting space was limited on campus especially since the Claverton Room had been turned into a student study space.

2234 Library Matters

Mr Stacey provided a brief update on library matters including that the library was providing input to web resources in respect of AI tools.

Part II Business

2235 Minutes of Boards of Studies Sub-Committees

The Board received the minutes of the following Committee meetings:

Faculty Executive Committee	16 January 2023
Faculty Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee	14 December 2022
Faculty Learning Teaching & Quality Committee	25 January 2023

2236 Minutes of Doctoral related Committees

The Board received the minutes of the following Committee meetings:

Board of Studies (Doctoral)	20 September, 12 October, 2 November and 22 December 2022
Faculty Doctoral Studies Committee	12 September, 5 October, 9 November, 7 December 22 and 25 January 23

Part III Business

2237 Any Other Business

NSS Student Lists: Dr Gheduzzi was pleased to report that following on from discussions at the last meeting of the Board, the Dept had satisfactorily resolved the issue of students omitted from NSS.

PGR submission deadline change: The Faculty noted with concern the recent decision to bring forward the submission deadline for PGR students intending to graduate and attend the July degree ceremonies. Students were only informed of the new deadline (22nd March) in early February, and many have planned their submission and corrections anticipating the normal timelines for submission which have historically been set for late May / early June. Board members were aware of significant disquiet amongst students at the additional pressure the new deadline placed upon them as well as the impact on family arrangements already in train for attendance at the summer degree ceremonies. Whilst understanding the rationale for the Doctoral College's decision (an issue at a recent graduate ceremony of a student ineligible to graduate presenting themselves) the Board felt that the timing of the announcement had placed students in a very difficult position. The Board felt that the decision to bring forward the submission deadline appeared somewhat disproportionate given the relatively rare occasions where students attempt to attend a degree ceremony in which they are not eligible to participate, however if the College considers that going forward this is the best solution then students should be notified well in advance of the submission deadlines. For *this year*, the Board asked that the Doctoral College reconsider its decision noting that the March deadline will also coincide with the PRES survey and is bound to be reflected in the PRES results. The Board asked that their concerns be raised with the Doctoral College.

Action: Secretary to pass the Board's comments to the Doctoral College. (*Secretary's note: The*

Associate PVC Research (Doctoral) confirmed that the earlier award confirmation deadline had been postponed for 2023 summer graduations. Students were informed of the revised position on 22 March)

Action Summary

Minute no 2229: **Action: Secretary to pass the Board's comments to the Head of Registry Services.**

Minute no 2237: **AOB PGR submission deadline. Secretary to pass the Board's comments to the Doctoral College.**