



# UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

## **The twenty-fourth meeting of the University of London International Academy Academic Committee (Confirmed)**

**Friday 23 February 2018**

### **MINUTES**

#### **PRESENT**

Dr M Stiasny (Pro Vice-Chancellor, International, and Chief Executive, International Academy; Chair, Academic Committee)  
 Dr S Anderson (Chair, Complaints Resolution Panel)  
 Dr K Baker (Chair, Inclusive Practice Panel, and Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards Panel)  
 Prof J Broadbent (Chair, Institutions Sub-committee)  
 Dr J Clark (Chair, Quality Assurance & Student Lifecycle Sub-Committee)  
 Prof M Cook (External member. Professor of Healthcare Leadership and Management, University of Bedfordshire)  
 Mr N Deyes (Chair, Systems and Technologies Sub-committee)  
 Mr J Ginman (Chair, Learning Teaching and Assessment Sub-committee)  
 Ms M Hafredal (Student Member)  
 Prof K Ibeh (Pro-Vice-Master (Internationalisation), Birkbeck)  
 Prof R Jackman, (Interim Academic Director of the International Programmes Office, LSE)  
 Mr N Meuer (Student Member)  
 Mr C O'Callaghan (Director of Operations and Deputy Chief Executive, International Academy)  
 Prof N Poole (Chair, CeDEP Board of Examiners, SOAS)  
 Prof C Rust (Emeritus Professor of Higher Education, Oxford Brookes University)  
 Dr J Stockdale (Chair, Assessment Offences Committee)  
 Mr T Wade (Director of Student Services, International Academy)

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr J Berry (Head of Student Affairs, International Academy, Secretary)  
 Ms L Devlin (Programme Manager, International Academy, Assistant Secretary)  
 Ms P Roberts (Director of Student Recruitment and Enrolment)

#### **APOLOGIES**

Mr S Askey (Director, Undergraduate Laws Programme, International Academy)  
 Mr S Brenton (City University of London, Cass Business School, City University of London)  
 Dr P Frantz (Chair, EMFSS Board of Examiners, LSE)  
 Prof D Gilbert (Vice Principal, Quality & Standards, RHUL)  
 Prof E Hill (Pro-Warden, Learning, Teaching & Enhancement, Goldsmiths)  
 Prof R Lingwood (Vice-Principal, Student Experience, Teaching & Learning, Queen Mary)  
 Prof F Macmillan (Dean, Undergraduate Laws, Birkbeck)  
 Prof W Morrison (Professor of Law, Queen Mary University of London)  
 Prof N Pachler (Pro-Director: Teaching, Quality and Learning Innovation, Institute of Education)

## APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2348. The apologies for absence are recorded above.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

2349. The Chair thanked outgoing Academic Committee member Rosemary Deem (Vice-Principal, Education, RHUL) and welcomed incoming member Professor David Gilbert (Vice Principal, Quality & Standards, RHUL) who will attend the next meeting in May.
2350. The Chair provided an update on the recent rebranding exercise, following the last Academic Committee meeting. Rebranding took effect from 1 February 2018. All programmes are now programmes of the University of London (losing the International Programmes descriptor), and University of London Worldwide replaces the International Academy as the Central Academic Body of the University.
2351. The Chair noted that we are in a period of transition presently and that members will continue to see old and new terminology in the short term. Papers for this meeting refer to the International Academy and International Programmes. The new nomenclature will take effect from the next meeting of Academic Committee in May.
2352. It was noted that the ongoing governance review will further consider the name of Academic Committee in the context of wider changes.
2353. The Chair provided an update on the Quality, Standards and Governance (QSG) Directorate, which underwent a comprehensive review carried out by an independent consultant over summer 2017. The review concluded that QSG operated systems effectively, however, it was recommended that a change to the current operating model would be required. As a result, a proposal was drawn up to realign the work and the teams of QSG within other areas of the University of London International Academy. Consultations with staff regarding proposed changes took place between October and the end of 2017 and took effect from 1 February 2018.
2354. The Chair provided the members with information on the University of London's Leading Women campaign, which marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women first being admitted to enrol for 'special examinations'. A number of events were referenced, including participation in the 'WOW – Women of the World' festival at the Southbank Centre in March.
2355. The Chair noted that the University of London International Programmes' annual graduation ceremony at the Barbican in London was due to take place on Tuesday 6 March with over 3,000 attendees expected. The Chair also acknowledged additional ceremonies that had been run over the past year, both in country (Malaysia, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka) and in London (Professional Accountancy at Senate House).

## Agreed

2356. **That an updated organisational structure chart will be circulated to Academic Committee members, following changes as a result of the Quality, Standards and Governance (QSG) review.**

**MINUTES****Received**

2357. Minutes of the twenty-third meeting of the Academic Committee held on 20 October 2017 (AC 24/1).

**Noted**

2358. That, with reference to the action sheet, the Student Experience team had considered feedback provided by Academic Committee following the screening of a draft induction video at the last meeting (minute 2262 refers). Member Institution logos and reference to placings in University rankings had subsequently been removed from the video. A separate welcome video featuring University of London staff speaking greetings in various languages is also being revised.
2359. That, with reference to the action sheet, QASL is expecting to consider operational aspects of the undergraduate periods of registration change (Minute 2114 refers) at their April meeting.

**Agreed**

2360. **That the minutes of the twenty-third meeting of the Academic Committee, held on 20 October 2017, be approved.**

**MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION****Received**

2361. Contract Cheating (AC 24/2), an update on activity underway to address the threat of contract cheating across the sector and within the International Academy, was presented by the Head of Student Affairs.

**Noted**

2362. That Academic Committee was previously informed that a report would be submitted in due course giving broad consideration to the issue (AC 21, minute 1983 refers). It was further noted that actions are now underway to consider the matter for programmes offered through the University of London International Academy.
2363. That contract cheating (also referred to as commercial plagiarism, ghost-writing and academic fraud, amongst other terms) is the act of obtaining academic work from a third party, usually in exchange for a fee, which is then submitted for assessment.
2364. That two key challenges were named for the International Academy. Firstly detection; these are original pieces of work and as such traditional plagiarism detection methods such as Turnitin are ineffective. A small number of allegations of this nature have been considered by the University, but it remains difficult to estimate the true scale of the issue. Secondly, policy; that although assessment offence and misconduct procedures allow allegations to be considered, individually they have their limitations. There is a perceived need to develop an explicit policy containing necessary investigative tools and proportionate sanctions.

2365. That Turnitin recently announced the release of software which will analyse two or more coursework submissions, by comparing numerous linguistic attributes and document metadata, to form a judgement on whether they are likely to have been written by the same person.
2366. That members welcomed a Thematic Review into plagiarism, focusing on contract cheating, which has been commissioned by the Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle sub-committee (QASL). Recommendations will be made on the mitigation of risk and enhancements to policy and procedure. In addition it was noted that a Centre for Distance Education (CDE) project operating in parallel would be exploring programme-level approaches to plagiarism.
2367. That members discussed approaches to prevention, and there was some agreement that being upfront about the issue and its consequences, affirming core principles of academic integrity at induction, and providing accessible resources to assist students' understanding of plagiarism and contract cheating were all necessary steps.
2368. That members acknowledged the range of services on offer, from model essay writing, to online tutoring and viable businesses creating work (e.g. computer code) on commission, and the small print and assurances that were routinely offered by essay mills. It was suggested that this was likely to be a threat that could never be entirely defeated and that new technology to aid detection is unlikely to provide conclusive evidence of misconduct.
2369. That innovation and evolution of assessment design was seen by some members as being the best response, requiring the performance of varied, linked tasks that test candidates' application of knowledge, which may include open book examinations. Revisiting assessment principles regularly, taking stock of evolving threats to both coursework based assessment and time constrained written examinations, was also seen as important.

### **Agreed**

2370. **That members were invited to provide any further thoughts on the subject in writing, through the Secretary, to feed into wider considerations.**

## **STATUTORY RETURNS**

### **Received**

2371. HESA (AC 24/3), an update on progress made towards submitting a HESA return in the academic year 2019-20, was presented by the Director of Operations.

### **Noted**

2372. That the deadline for the submission of data under the HESA 'Data Futures' project has been delayed by one year, and is now September 2020.
2373. That a review of student data processes and practices has been undertaken with a view to advising on the steps that would be necessary to prepare for the submission.

2374. That a number of issues have been identified which will need to be addressed to enable University of London International Programmes to submit the required data.

2375. That a HESA Project Board has been established to address the identified issues and to enable the submission of HESA student data.

## **SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

### **Received**

2376. The confidential minutes of the meetings of the Institutions Sub-Committee (ISC) held on 4 October 2017 (ISC 35 - AC 24/4a) and 24 January 2018 (ISC 36 - AC 24/4b).

### **Noted**

2377. The Chair of the Institutions Sub-Committee provided a summary of discussions held at the last two sub-committee meetings. She noted her thanks to the administrative staff who support the meetings, particularly during recent changes in staffing.

2378. That the Chair of Academic Committee in turn expressed thanks to the Chair of the Institutions Sub-Committee, and to all the Chairs of Sub-committees, Subject Committees and Panels of the Academic Committee.

2379. That at the most recent meeting of the ISC (24 January 2018), members welcomed the development of a formal relationship with Beijing Foreign Studies University and considered them well positioned to provide support for the BSc Accounting and Finance, BSc Banking and Finance, BSc Management and Digital Innovation and MSc Professional Accountancy programmes.

2380. That members of the ISC agreed that Beijing Foreign Studies University has the qualities required to be recommended as a Registered Centre for the MSc Supply Chain Management programme (under development) but recognise this cannot be progressed until the programme has undergone a formal academic approval process, due in March 2018.

### **Agreed**

2381. **That the recommendations and actions of the meetings of the ISC held on 4 October 2017 (ISC 35 - AC 24/4a) and 24 January 2018 (ISC 36 - AC 24/4b) be endorsed.**

### **Received**

2382. The minutes of the Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle Sub-Committee (QASL) meeting held on 26 January 2018 (QASL 41 – AC 24/5).

### **Noted**

2383. The Chair of QASL provided a summary of discussions held at the last meeting, including:

- Student Voice Group

- Assessment Quality Panel
- Thematic Review on plagiarism
- Teaching Excellence Framework
- Diploma Supplements
- APR and PPR reports

2384. That QASL had received a proposal for changes to the MOOC Annual Monitoring process. QASL approved the proposed change to the constitution of the panel for the MOOC Annual Monitoring event but asked for further clarification on proposed changes to the monitoring process at the following QASL meeting.

#### **Agreed**

2385. **That the recommendations and actions of the meeting of the Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle Sub-Committee meeting held on 26 January 2018 be endorsed.**

#### **Received**

2386. The confidential minutes of the Systems and Technologies Sub-Committee (STSC) meeting held on 29 January 2018 (STSC 36 – AC 24/6).

#### **Noted**

2387. The Chair of STSC provided a summary of discussions held at the last meeting, including:

- Student Retention Project
- Resource allocation and criteria for ranking projects
- Key Performance Indicators and Service Level Agreements
- Academic Contractor Project

#### **Agreed**

2388. **That the recommendations and actions of the Systems and Technologies Sub-Committee meeting held on 29 January 2018 be endorsed.**

#### **Received**

2389. The minutes of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Sub-Committee meeting held on 18 January 2018 (LTAS 30 – AC 24/7).

#### **Noted**

2390. The Chair of LTAS provided an update of discussion at the most recent meeting, including an interim report on the impact of changes in assessment from unseen written examinations to coursework, a report also submitted to the Academic Committee (AC 24/12). The Chair of LTAS noted that it is too early to draw any definitive conclusions from the data gathered so far, and that LTAS will look carefully at further evidence so that a full evaluation can be undertaken in due course.

2391. The Chair of LTAS summarised the sub-committee's views of the approval report for the MSc, PG Cert and PG Dip in Data Science with academic direction by Goldsmiths. Disappointment was expressed that there were a large number of issues requiring attention, however, it was confirmed that approval was recommended to Academic Committee, subject to fulfilment of six conditions to the satisfaction of the approval panel.
2392. It was further confirmed that all conditions have now been fully met, with the exception of condition 3, relating to the facilities at examination centres when using digital assessment methods, which was adequately responded to. A reasonable alternative was provided by the programme team should the University's requirements regarding digital assessments not be met three months prior to programme launch.
2393. A member noted the approval, at the last meeting of Academic Committee, of the undergraduate BSc Data Science and Business Analytics, and associated Graduate Diplomas (minutes 2292-2296 refer), with academic direction by the LSE. It was agreed that where similarly titled programmes are launched, the key differences between them should be indicated to potential applicants from the marketing stage.
2394. Reflecting on their experiences of the MSc, PG Cert and PG Dip in Data Science approval process, the Chair of LTAS and the Chair of the approval panel, who is a member of Academic Committee, each made suggestions pertaining to potential improvements, including;
- a. That clarification regarding the structure and timescale of programme approvals, taking into account the wider context of programme development and associated deadlines, would be beneficial for all stakeholders.
  - b. That expected timescales for confirming when conditions should be met are clear and that sufficient time is available for the approval panel to review changes.
  - c. That the approval panel's Terms of Reference should be provided to the development team, which would help clarify the expectations of the approval process and potentially avoid the imposing of conditions at a late stage in the process.
  - d. That consideration should be given to the changed dynamic of personnel involved in both the development and approval of University of London led Track C programmes.
2395. Members agreed that the launch of a programme should be considered to start from when the programme begins to be marketed and that approval timescales should take account of this date.
2396. The Chair of Academic Committee and the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Operations (UOL International Programmes) thanked members for their feedback. The approval process has undergone revision recently (the MSc Data Science being the first programme to go through the new process) and it was acknowledged that there may be aspects that require fine-tuning.

### **Agreed**

2397. **That the MSc, PG Cert and PG Dip in Data Science was recommended for approval to the Board of the University of London International Academy**

2398. **That suggestions from members regarding the programme approval process are provided to the Quality team.**

2399. **That the recommendations and actions of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Sub-Committee are endorsed.**

## **SUBJECT COMMITTEES OF THE ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

### **Received**

2400. An executive summary of the Laws Programme Board meeting (AC 24/8), held on 18 October 2017.

### **Agreed**

2401. **That the recommendations and actions of the Laws Programme Board are endorsed.**

### **Received**

2402. An executive summary of the International Foundation Programme Board meeting (AC 24/9) held on 18 October 2017.

### **Agreed**

2403. **That the recommendations and actions of the International Foundation Programme Board are endorsed.**

## **PANELS OF THE ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

### **Received**

2404. The minutes of the Inclusive Practice Panel (IPP) meeting held on 25 January 2018 (IPP15 - 24/10) were presented by the Chair of the IPP.

### **Noted**

2405. That the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Inclusive Practice Policy was approved at the last Academic Committee meeting (minutes 2226 - 2234 refer).

2406. That the approved policy was presented at the last Dean's and Director's Forum. There were some concerns conveyed by Programme Directors regarding cost and resource implications of updating all VLE material to ensure that it is fully accessible.

2407. That the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Operations acknowledged the resource implications of ensuring compliance for existing VLEs. It was further noted that the International Academy does not have access to the same funding in this area through HEFCE as other Higher Education providers.

2408. That compliance activity is being aided and supported by the Learning Technology team and a solutions document accompanying the new policy. It was further stated



that although this activity remains a work in progress for existing provision, all new programmes would be compliant from launch.

2409. That the Academic Committee commended the work of the Learning Technology team in the development of the VLE Inclusive Practice Policy, and the significant changes which have already been made to improve the accessibility of content.

#### **Agreed**

2410. **That the actions and recommendations of the Inclusive Practice Panel meeting held on 25 January 2018 are endorsed.**

#### **Noted**

2411. That the Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards Panel that was due to be held on 31 January 2018 has been postponed until 13 June 2018. Minutes from the meeting will be provided to Academic Committee.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

#### **Received**

2412. University of London MOOC Provision (AC 24/11), an update report on the scale of the University of London's MOOC operations to date, was received.

#### **Noted**

2413. That as of January 2018, 42 MOOCs have been developed by the University of London and 36 of these are live and available to learners on the Coursera platform.
2414. That in 2018, the University of London will mark five years since the launch of its first MOOC in 2012. As a reflection of this milestone, the University will be conducting a detailed review of its MOOC provision and will also establish its future MOOC strategy. An accompanying report will be published in Autumn 2018.
2415. That members noted that this was a very interesting paper, and conveyed their thanks to Julia Leong Son (Associate Director: Academic Projects) and Alice Hobbs (Academic Project Manager) for providing the summary.

#### **Received**

2416. Evaluating Assessment Changes (AC 24/12), an interim evaluation of recent assessment changes with reference to programmes that have moved to 100% coursework, was received.

#### **Received**

2417. An update on the University of London International Academy Governance Review was noted.

#### **Noted**

2418. That a comprehensive review of International Academy governance has been conducted and a report from this review was considered by the Senior Leadership Team in November 2017. An internal Governance Working Group has been established to consider the recommendations and propose a way forward. The Governance Working Group has met fortnightly and is making progress. It aims to be able to present a revised draft committee structure to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) by the end of February 2018. The working group will seek to consult relevant colleagues once proposals have been formed.

**Received**

2419. An update on the Teaching Institutions Recognition Framework (TIRF) was noted.

**Noted**

2420. That the revised agreement for University of London Recognised Teaching Centres will be finalised by the end of February 2018 and will be presented to colleagues from teaching institutions at the Symposium in March 2018. The aim is that current recognised centres sign the new contract by 1 August 2018, but it is acknowledged that institutions may require more time to allow for review and consideration through their own governance structures. Therefore, the deadline for signing the contract has been set to 1 January 2019. The TIRF Working Group continues to meet to retain oversight of the identified work streams involved in the review.

**Received**

2421. An oral update from the Director of Student Services on the ongoing work to respond to the recommendations of the Marking Practices and Guidelines Working Group.

**Noted**

2422. That a previous meeting of Academic Committee included discussion regarding the development of a community of assessment practice (minute 2334 refers). The Director of Student Services noted that whilst work had advanced on implementing the recommendations of the Marking Practices and Guidelines Working Group, including the establishment of the Assessment Working Group and Assessment Quality Panel, at this stage more time and resource is required before it would be possible to systematically implement a Community of Assessment Practice.
2423. A member commented that the key missing component may be the inclusion of students in the community. The member added that student assessment literacy should be addressed as part of assessment design, and that learning outcomes should be self and peer assessed. In response, it was noted that summative assessment for peer review was a feature of new programme developments.

**Received**

2424. Retention Working Group update (AC 24/13) was received.

**Noted**

2425. That the Student Retention Working Group is now a working group of the Senior Leadership Team.

2426. A member stated that in considering retention there is a clear and obvious link to assessment and that the literature suggests one reason students drop out is because they do not understand how well they are performing academically.
2427. Another member further suggested, with regards to the monitoring of targets, that consideration by the Working Group should not only be focussed on quantitative measures, but also on the student experience.

## **UNIVERSITY OF LONDON GOVERNANCE**

### **Received**

2428. An oral report from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) on relevant matters arising from meetings of:
- Board of the University of London International Academy, 23 November 2017
  - The Collegiate Council of the University of London, 8 December 2017

### **Noted**

2429. That discussions at the Board of the University of London International Academy focused on the announcement that Sir Adrian Smith has been appointed as Director of the Alan Turing Institute and will stand down as Vice-Chancellor of the University of London at the end of August to take up the role.
2430. That the Board of Trustees will now put in place arrangements to appoint a successor and further details will be announced shortly.

### **Received**

2431. An oral report from the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Operations on relevant matters arising from the meetings of the International Academy Finance Committee held on 2 November 2017.

### **Noted**

2432. That matters addressed at the last meeting included:
- An update on current financial performance
  - New programme business cases
  - Existing programmes investment update

## **MATTERS FOR REPORT**

### **Received**

2433. An overview report of Stage 2 appeals and complaints considered by the University of London International Academy during the academic year 2016-17 (AC 24/14).

### **Received**

2434. Updates to the General Regulations for the academic year 2017-18 (AC 24/15).

## **Received**

2435. A complete list of awards made for the 2016-17 academic year and 2017 calendar year (AC 24/16).

## **Received**

2436. An oral update on the International Programmes Student Experience Survey 2017-18 from the head of Student Affairs

## **Noted**

2437. That the Student Experience Survey 2017-18 was conducted between October and January. External consultants are currently analysing the data, conducting further qualitative research and producing a series of reports on the findings.
2438. That a significant increase in the student response rate across the majority of programmes has been noted compared to the 2015-16 survey. The overall response rate for the 2017-18 survey is approximately 30%, compared to approximately 20% for the 2015-16 survey.
2439. Benchmarking with the National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Educational Survey (PTES) will form part of the analysis (possible on some but not all of the questions), as will analysis of our UK based student responses. This should produce valuable insights that will support our preparation for future HESA obligations and participation in the Teaching Excellence Framework.
2440. Academic Committee will receive a full report of the findings at the May meeting.

## **Received**

2441. Notification of the Closure of CeDEP 15 Credit programmes (AC 24/17)

## **Noted**

2442. That the MSc, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate programmes offered through the Centre for Development, Environment and Policy (CeDEP) at SOAS have been withdrawn.

## **CHAIR'S ACTIONS**

2443. Members were asked to note that Chair's action was taken to approve the following suspensions of regulations:
- LSE: 3

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

2444. Members were asked to note the date of the forthcoming Academic Committee meeting:
- Friday 18 May 2018

## **RESERVED ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

*[AC Minute 2445 is considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.]*