

Academic Board

ACTIONS

Action from current meeting

Action completed since last meeting

Ref	Action	Lead	Due Date
23/011	Invite the Students' Union sabbatical officers elected for the 2023-24 academic year to observe the June Academic Board meeting	CM	June AB
23/018	Add a discussion item on artificial intelligence tools and academic integrity to the next agenda of Academic Board	CM	June AB
23/039 and 23/053	Elected member to send detailed queries on the proposed amendments to the College Statutes to Academicboard@rhul.ac.uk Principal to review comments	SM and JS	June AB
23/040	Update Academic Board on analysis of the responses to the Committee Effectiveness Review	CM	June AB
22/193	Add Foundation Year Degree to a future agenda of Academic Board	CM	End of autumn 2023
23/061	Clarify the timeline for the publication of the Emergency Regulations outside the meeting and update the Board in October.	MH/CM	October 2023
23/68	Circulate the proposed Terms of Reference and membership of the Schools review group	TB	October 2023
23/097	further update on progress with Assessment Futures should be provided to the 29 November meeting of Academic Board	MH	November 2023
23/101	Set up working group to scope future developments in AI	MH	Summer 2023
23/109	Update Academic Board on the implementation of recommendations arising out of the effectiveness review	CM/AB	Autumn 2023
23/118	Discuss with the University Secretary whether the Committees Handbook, last published in 2015, should be re-introduced	CM/AB	October 2023
23/122	Inform the Secretariat and Events Manager that AB approve the recommendations in the Honorary Degrees paper	CM	June 2023
23/124	Advise the Secretariat and the Events Manager that AB recommend references to marital and parental status are removed from appendix 2 of the Honorary Degrees paper as a matter of urgency.	CM	June 2023
23/137	To hold an information/ drop-in session for academic staff interested in applying for one of the elected member positions	AB/CM	
23/156	Present Regulatory Addendum for 2023/24 and timeline for review of academic regulations	MH	November 2023
23/159	Update the timeline of the Emergency Regulations to include the date of the announcement of the Marking and Assessment Boycott and the instruction from the Office for Students issued on 12 June	MH	November 2023
23/177	To present the terms of reference for an external review of Academic Board	AB	November 2023

23/211	Provide an update on discussions at AQuASC about degree outcomes in Economics, Electronic Engineering and Geography	MH	June 2024
23/224	Provide update on implementation of a mark management system and assessment changes as part of Assessment Futures project	MH	March 2024
23/238	Give further consideration regarding input into the AB governance review a wider pool of staff than those sitting on the Board.	AB	January 2024
	Present report and recommendations from external AB governance review	AB	March 2024
23/240	Present recommendation on additional Honorary Degree to Council for approval	AB/CM	November 2024
24/24	To note that any discussion of Artificial Intelligence and the sector includes reference to PGR	AB/CM	To be scheduled for 2025/26
24/31	To include item on June agenda on prioritises emerging from academic governance review and approval of terms of reference for implementation working group	AB/CM	June 2024
24/58	To receive an update on the processing times referenced in the Admissions Policy	MF	June 2024
23/209, 24/76	Receive final update on the last year of the current strategic plan (June 2024) – on agenda	MF/AW	October 2024
24/84-85	Update Costing and Pricing policy to either replace ‘man’ or insert ‘sic’ against the Frascati definition of research quoted in the policy – completed	RL	Summer 2024
24/154	Update on non-submission of External Examiner report 2022-23 for Clinical Psychology – Uni Sec provided verbal update	MH	Autumn 2024
24/160	Add agenda item on strategic vision for London campus and enhancing the student experience for students based there	AB/CM	During 24-25
24/203	Correct Daniel Elphick’s title to Dr in the 4 July Minutes	CM	December 2024
24/218	Add catalysts lessons learned paper to December meeting agenda	CM	December
22/227	Add Agenda Item in March 2025 for NSS Action Plan update	CM	March 2025
24/275	Correct Minutes from 16 October to reflect that Dr Sophie Nield was not present at the meeting	CM	ASAP
24/317	Confirm PGT application deadline	MF	March 2025
24/297	Reflect on feedback re 2024/25 exams and results schedule	EM	Autumn 2025
25/33	Review School overview template for reporting outcomes from Annual Review and consider including data on course sizes in the overview report.	EM/ Clerk	Summer 2026
25/36	Explore an additional amendment to the Regulations on Academic Misconduct requiring that academic misconduct in PGR work be reported in annual research integrity monitoring	RL	ASAP
25/39	Review number of credits required for progression between stages on the MSci and MEng to ensure these were correct.	SA and CM (Clerk)	ASAP

25/47	Discuss some indicative examples of incidents that could invoke use of the Extraordinary Regulations at a future Academic Board.	EM/NB	TBC
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Unconfirmed

ACADEMIC BOARD

Wednesday 19 March 2025

2pm

Wettons B (in person) or MS Teams (online) [hybrid]

Min. 25/01- 25/67



Minutes

Present:	Prof J Sanders (Chair), Prof T Bhamra, Prof M Fellowes, Prof W Morgan, Prof A Gupta, Prof R Mock, Prof G Pieri, Prof C Tsinopoulos, Prof K Dodds, Prof C Frost, Dr R Priest, Prof S Wright, Prof C Kremmydas, Prof A Roberts, Prof J Parker-Starbuck, Dr N Hall, Prof S Rose, Prof D Anderberg, Prof R Barn, Dr K Smets, Prof S Hosany, Prof S Sian, Dr C Tsai, Prof T Wainwright, Dr P Wu, Prof J McEvoy, Dr C Manning, Prof S Blockley, Prof A Palombi, Prof H Zagefka, Prof C Matos, Dr S Alty, Prof E Coles-Kemp, Prof S Gibson, Prof I Moffatt, Dr M Bentley, Prof R D'Alton-Harrison, Dr S Dissanayeke, Dr D Elphick, Dr K Jasmin, Dr J Murdoch, Dr S Nield, Dr C Paltrinieri, Prof P Meeson, Prof S Shah, Ms S Sivarajah, Ms M Gray, Ms O Davies, Ms B Asqalan, Dr D Brown, Prof M Tsakiris, Dr V Greenaway, Prof M Humphreys, Prof R Livesey, Prof D Watling.
Secretary:	Mr A M Boggs (from item 15)
In attendance:	Mr S Kendrick, Mr S McAuliffe, Ms A Wallis, Miss C Munton (Clerk)
Apologies:	Dr N Barratt, Dr N Rata, Dr M Ribary.
Trade Union Observers:	Mr A Alway

1. Welcome and Apologies

Members were welcomed to the meeting. It was noted that the University Secretary would be late joining due to a meeting clash. 25/01

Apologies are noted in the section above. 25/02

The Board RECEIVED paper AB/25/01, updated membership list for 2024/25. 25/03

The Board NOTED 25/04

- The role of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) has been added to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) category, increasing the number of members in this category to 11. Professor Ruth Livesey holds this position.
- To maintain the balance with the number of Senior Leadership members, an additional elected member role was created, increasing the number of members in this category to 11.

- Following a call for nominations in February 2025, congratulations were extended to Dr Daniel Elphick and Dr Kyle Jasmin for their election to Academic Board.
- Dr Kaat Smets has been appointed as Head of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy.
- Changes in the co-opted members category following the end of the posts of Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Quality and Standards) Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

The Board APPROVED the co-option of Dr Vicky Greenaway, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Inclusive Teaching and Learning), recognising the importance of Dr Greenaway's role in leading the major interventions on awarding gaps as detailed in the Access and Participation Plan. 25/05

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 December 2024 were APPROVED. 25/06

3. Matters arising

The Board RECEIVED an update on actions arising: 25/07

24/227	Add Agenda Item in March 2025 for NSS Action Plan update An update is be provided under agenda item 15	WM
24/297	Reflect on feedback re 2024/25 exams and results schedule This will be reviewed at the end of the 24/25 academic year as to whether turnaround times for marking and results processing remain a concern.	WM/EM
24/317	Confirm PGT Application deadline The deadline for overseas applicants is 31 July 2025 and for home students it is 29 August 2025.	MF

4. Actions taken by the Chair

No actions had been taken by the Chair since the previous meeting. 25/08

5. **Unstarring of items**

The following papers were unstarred-

25/09

- Item 21.1 Minutes of the University Education Committee meeting held on 13 November 2024;
- Item 22 Minutes of the Doctoral School Committee meeting held on 19 February 2025.

Formal Reports

6. **Vice-Chancellor and Principal's Report**

The Board RECEIVED paper AB/25/02 Report from the Vice-Chancellor and Principal.

25/10

The following key points were NOTED:

25/11

- The 'For What Matters' lecture series, which is being delivered on the Egham and London campuses and has included inspirational speakers;
- Ongoing action against hate crime on campus and steps being taken to encourage more reporting of incidents to ensure prompt investigation and appropriate support;
- An expanded presence in Stewart House, London. More information about developments in this space would be provided later in the meeting;
- Improvements to positioning in the People and Planet and QS World University:Sustainability rankings;
- Updates to the Senior Leadership Team: the Academic Board welcomed Professor Ruth Livesey into her new role as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) and Ying Kay as Executive Director of Finance. Thanks were recorded to Professor Wyn Morgan for his work as interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience). Professor Emma Mayhew will be starting in the role in early April;

Professor Sanders recorded her thanks to the academic and professional services colleagues involved in the recent trip to India.

25/12

7. **Regulatory and Legislative Update**

The Board RECEIVED paper AB/25/03 Regulatory and Legislative update.

25/13

It was NOTED that Professor Edward Peck, outgoing Vice-Chancellor of Nottingham Trent University, has been appointed as the new Chair of the Office for Students' (OfS).

25/14

8. **Report from the Students' Union President**

The Board RECEIVED paper AB/25/04 Report from the Students' Union President.

25/15

The President REPORTED that priorities for the sabbatical officers remain unchanged with each working on their respective manifestos to improve the student experience at Royal Holloway. The President and Vice President (Wellbeing and Diversity) are working together on the violence against women and girls' campaign.

25/16

	The Board were PROVIDED with a verbal update on the recent elections. 3472 students voted, which was a turnout of 24.3% and an increase on last year's turnout. Olivia Davies, currently Vice President (Wellbeing and Diversity) has been elected as President in 2025/26. The Vice-Chancellor & Principal wished to record her congratulations to all candidates who stood for election as well as those elected. In response to a question from the Board about whether there had been any reflection on the changes to the manifesto guide, the President confirmed candidates had been supportive and she considered it to be a positive step.	25/17
9.	Report from the Council	
	The Board RECEIVED paper AB/25/05 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21 November 2024. Council approved the Student Protection Plan which had been referred to them following consideration by Academic Board at their October meeting. Council also approved the new Articles of Association for the Students' Union.	25/18
10.	RH2030s reporting	
	The Board RECEIVED paper AB/25/06 update from the Strategic Action Plan leads.	25/19
	Each of the leads PROVIDED a summary of recent workstream activity in the three areas (Education and Student Experience, Research and Innovation and Global Engagement).	25/20
Major items of business		
11.	Student number count	
	Paper AB/25/07 1 February student number count was RECEIVED.	25/21
	The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Strategy, Planning and Resources) REPORTED that there had been too great a dependence on clearing for undergraduate student recruitment for 2024/25, noting that over 1,000 students were recruited through this process. Professor Fellowes reiterated the importance of moving the university away from a reliance on clearing to achieve student number targets. Undergraduate application numbers for 2025/26 were on a par with 2023/24, however, applications are unevenly spread across the institution. He recorded his thanks to the Admissions team for the improvements they had made this year in processing applications and reducing turnaround times for issuing offers.	25/22
12.	UG Entry Grades 2026/27	
	Paper AB/25/08 UG Entry Grades 2026/27 was RECEIVED and NOTED.	25/23
13.	School Name Change	
	Paper AB/25/09 name change for School Business and Management was RECEIVED.	25/24
	The Executive Dean (Business and Management) REPORTED that Executive Board had approved a name change from the School of Business and Management to Royal Holloway Business School effective from September 2025. He summarised the context for the change, noting that many leading universities have a Business School. It was noted that the current name is not	25/25

- well understood outside of Royal Holloway and the new title would will resonate better within the market and therefore support a stronger relationship with alumni and industry. It would also help to support delivery of the School's ambitious strategy to be a leading Business School in and outside of Europe. There had been extensive consultation with students, colleagues and alumni.
14. **London Campus**
- The Provost and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global) REPORTED the University had a signed a lease to provide additional space on the first floor of Stewart House. This will provide an adaptable and accessible environment for students, colleagues and visitors, and enable the University to explore the opportunities for alternative provision discussed at Academic Board last spring. Early discussions are underway regarding accelerated undergraduate degrees in Business and Management and Law. 25/26
15. **National Student Survey**
- Paper AB/25/10 update on NSS was RECEIVED. 25/27
- The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) REPORTED completion rates in mid-March are on a par with last year. Vice Deans (Education and Student Experience) have led on a series of activities during the year to address concerns raised in the 2024 survey. Professor Morgan reported that colleagues had reported it was more difficult to convince students to engage with the survey this year. These challenges should be considered as part of planning for NSS 2026. 25/28
- In response to questions from the Board, it was noted that multiple reasons will be contributing to levels of student participation in the survey. 25/29
- It was noted that the OfS had added a non-compulsory pilot survey on sexual misconduct to this year's NSS, but institutions will not be provided with completion data on this component. 25/30
16. **Annual Review**
- Paper AB/25/11 composite School reports from the review of postgraduate taught provision in 2023/24 were RECEIVED and NOTED. 25/31
- In response to questions from the Board about sharing and discussing the best practice cases reported in the annual review reports, it was confirmed that these examples are circulated to School Education Committees. Professor Morgan is also working with the incoming Pro-Vice-Chancellor and relevant colleagues on further opportunities to explore these and ensure there are opportunities for shared skills development. 25/32
- It was noted that the composite report template reporting outcomes from Annual Review scrutiny was unchanged since the pandemic and it would be useful to revisit this to ensure it remains in line with sector norms. The Board considered it would be helpful to include data on course sizes in the overview report. 25/33
17. **Academic Regulations**
- 17.1 Paper AB/25/12, changes to Academic Regulations for 2025/26 was RECEIVED and PRESENTED by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience). 25/34

The proposals in Section A: Proposed Amendments to the Regulations on Academic Misconduct were APPROVED.	25/35
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) REPORTED she would like to explore an additional amendment to the Regulations on Academic Misconduct requiring that academic misconduct in PGR work be reported in annual research integrity monitoring. This would be discussed outside of the meeting and any amendment brought to the June meeting for approval.	25/36
The Head of Computer Science REQUESTED corrections to proposals 2 and 3 in Section B: proposed amendments to Academic Taught Regulations as follows:	25/37
• Page 15 / Proposal 2: ○ To avoid ambiguity, the regulation should read “AND EITHER” rather than just “AND” between a) and b) ○ The non-IET part should explicitly require students to pass 90 credits at level 6 • In page 16 / Proposal 3: ○ The first instance of “module” in “Complete the module and satisfy the requirements on submission of work for constituent modules;” should read “course”.	
These amendments were AGREED by the Board.	25/38
The Head of Electronic Engineering REQUESTED that the number of credits required for progression between stages on the MSci and MEng was double checked. The Board AGREED that a final check could be undertaken outside of the meeting and that the amendments could be taken as approved if no errors were found.	25/39
Secretary’s note: a check was undertaken, the proposed wording was found to be correct and the proposals were APPROVED subject to incorporating the corrections requested by the Head of Computer Science.	25/40
Section C: proposed amendments to the Regulations on the Conduct of Assessment and Section D: proposed amendments to the Fitness to Practise Policy and Procedures were APPROVED.	25/41
17.2 Extraordinary Regulations	
The Board RECEIVED paper AB/25/13 Extraordinary Regulations.	25/42
It was noted that Professor Humphreys had led the development of these regulations in his previous role as Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Quality and Standards) and would therefore be presenting this item. Professor Humphreys REPORTED these regulations had been developed to provide certainty to students and colleagues on the approach the university would take in the event unforeseen circumstances impeded its ability to implement standard academic policies and procedures. He noted the lessons learned from different versions of emergency regulations used over the past few years and that these have been incorporated into Extraordinary Regulations. The regulations were intended to clarify the decision-making process for instigating them whilst leaving open the circumstances that might trigger them. It was noted that having a set of	25/43

	Extraordinary Regulations is good practice in the sector and that sector examples had been reviewed as part of the design process.	
	Board members raised questions about the option of listing the circumstances that would invoke the Extraordinary Regulations, whether they provided enough assurance that quality and standards would be maintained and the governance processes for implementing them. Professor Humphreys confirmed it is not possible to provide a definitive list of events or threshold for instigating these regulations. Their use would need to be determined as scenarios arise. He noted the regulations had been carefully drafted to ensure the university can work in an agile manner in an emergency situation and to provide a robust framework for protecting student interest and outcomes. The Chair confirmed these regulations provided a framework and that Academic Board would still need to be consulted about adjustments to the standard regulations and policies. It was noted that membership of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor's Committee referenced in section 3.7 was indicative only and that at least one Head of Department, as pertinent to the situation, would join the committee.	25/44
	The Board APPROVED the Extraordinary Regulations.	25/45
	Dr Donna Brown and Dr Sophie Nield asked that their dissent be recorded in the Minutes.	25/46
	It was noted that these could be revisited in future. It was agreed that some indicative examples of incidents that could invoke use of the regulations could be discussed at a future Academic Board.	25/47
18.	Degree Outcomes Statement	
	Paper AB/25/14 Degree Outcomes Statement was RECEIVED.	25/48
	The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) REPORTED that first class degree awards had returned to pre-Covid levels, which was encouraging. Work to address awarding gaps was ongoing as part of commitments in the Access and Participation Plan and under workstream 2 of the Education and Student Experience Strategic Action Plan. There were no gaps in outcomes between disabled students and those not reporting a disability and the university needed to reflect on what is being done well in that space.	25/49
	The Board AGREED to recommend the report to Council for approval.	25/50
19.	Research Culture	
	Paper AB/25/15 update on Research Culture, including REF29 and the Festival of Research was RECEIVED.	25/51
	The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) provided highlights from the paper, which included:	25/52
	An overview of the second Festival of Research taking place between 16-19 June, including the themes for the interdisciplinary workshops. The festival is intended as a touchpoint to gather information about activities from across the university and to offer a space for interdisciplinary sandpits, as requested by Academic Board members last year;	

- Good take up of the new mid-career development programme 'Honing Your Purpose' which is being co-designed with Senior Lecturers and Readers. The focus of the programme is identifying agency and growth and navigating a complicated stage in an academic career;
- Plans for preparing a draft People, Culture and Environment Institutional Statement based on the five areas being assessed in the ongoing pilot exercise. It was noted a major challenge will be demonstrating at unit level that the university has the required level of quantitative data on CPD because take up and reporting are currently both poor. Professor Livesey stressed the importance of working with colleagues to encourage take up of training opportunities coming up and that developmental training is reported on MyView;
- An update on the Research Culture Action Plan that has emerged from staff research environment working group;
- Stressed the requirement for rigour in how the university ensures there are meaningful mechanisms institutionally and locally around research culture, noting this is challenging for smaller units.

20. **Academic Governance Review**

20.1 Paper AB/25/16 Schedule of Delegation was RECEIVED. 25/53

The University Secretary extended his thanks to the Clerk and members of the Academic Governance Review Group for their work on the Schedule of Delegation. He noted that the document would be reviewed annually, usually in the autumn term. 25/54

The Board discussed the delegated authority for approval course suspensions and withdrawals, noting this is devolved to Curriculum Development Committee and University Education Committee. It was clarified that whilst university committees may monitor recruitment data and ask Schools to consider the viability of low recruiting courses, the decision to withdraw or suspend courses sits with the academic Schools. The role of the university level committees is to oversee the process on course closure and withdrawal, in accordance with the Course Closure Policy, once a decision has been taken by the School to close/suspend a course. Schools were responsible for ensuring they have a governance route through their own Executives and Education Committee to support conversations about the portfolio and to engage relevant colleagues in decision making. 25/55

The Schedule of Delegation was APPROVED. 25/56

20.1 Paper AB/25/17 updated Terms of Reference for Research and Knowledge Exchanged Committee were RECEIVED and APPROVED. 25/57

Items for formal approval

21. *University Education Committee

Item unstarred

Paper AB/25/28 Minutes from the 13 November 2024 meeting of the University Education Committee were RECEIVED. 25/58

This item was unstarred with the requester seeking clarification on minute number 24/119 discussing an Office for Students' Insight Report and the risks identified in terms of teaching proficiency of part-time staff and industry experts. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) confirmed that UEC regularly consider OfS findings from recent quality assessments into courses, with this latest report relating to business and management, and computing. The OfS report summarises risks to quality which they have identified and sets out points for other HEI providers to consider and UEC considered report was interesting reading in that it highlighted some instances of staff members from industry backgrounds lacking adequate teaching skills and this leading to poor module outcomes. Professor Morgan clarified that UEC did not raise concerns regarding the competence of part time staff or colleagues from industry backgrounds. 25/59

21.2 Education Awards

Paper AB/25/18a setting out the new awards process for excellence in education was RECEIVED. 25/60

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) REPORTED that these new awards would be presented at the summer graduation ceremonies, ensuring these were a high profile celebration of great work within the institution. Winners in specific categories would be subsequently supported by education leaders to apply for national excellence awards. 25/61

22. *Doctoral School Committee

Item unstarred

Paper AB/25/19 Minutes of the Doctoral School Committee meeting held on 19 February 2025 were RECEIVED. 25/62

In response to the request for clarification about plans to find Postgraduate Research Students social space the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate Research Students) advised that students repeatedly ask for dedicated social and study space and a request for space has been submitted in the planning round. Relating to this, Board members noted it would also be good to have additional colleague social space. 25/63

The Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor REPORTED that these minutes were unconfirmed and clarified that there the consultation about the Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) model had not yet started. Some initial sector research was being conducted prior to the consultation to identify good practice from other institutions. 25/64

23. ***Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee**

Paper AB/25/20 Minutes of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee meeting held on 16 September 2024 were RECEIVED.

25/65

Other Matters

24. **Any other business**

The Board recorded their thanks to Professor Wyn Morgan for his excellent work during his tenure as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience).

25/66

25. **Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 4 June at 2pm, venue to be confirmed.

25/67

Unconfirmed