



Senate

Paper Title	Minutes of the last meeting of Senate held on 13 June 2024
Outcome requested	Senate is asked to approve the minutes of the last meeting.
Points for Senate members to note and further information	n/a
Questions for Senate to consider	n/a
Regulatory/statutory reference points	n/a
Strategy and risk	n/a
Reporting/consideration route for the paper	Senate to approve.
Authors	Jane Pallant, Director of Governance and Legal Services
Sponsor	Professor Colin Bailey, President and Principal

Senate

Minutes of 13 June 2024

Present:

Prof Colin Bailey (Chair)
Serena-Amani Al Jabbar
Prof Frances Bowen
Dr Livia A Carvalho
Dr Dianne Cooper
Prof Panos Deloukas
Dr Lei Fang
Prof Neve Gordon
Prof Michael Harker
Dr Philippa Lloyd
Prof Wayne Morrison

Dr Émilie Oléron Evans
Dr Sharri Plonski
Dr Simon Rawlinson
Prof Elizabeth Tanner
Prof Wen Wang

Amaan Abbas
Dr Oscar Bandtlow
Prof Christopher Bray
Prof Sir Mark Caulfield
Prof Martin Coward
Dr Jayne Dennis
Elizabeth Gillow
Prof Emma Griffin
Prof Steffi Krause
Dr Michaela MacDonald
Prof Rachael Mulheron KC
(Hon)
Jovani Palnoni
Prof Thomas Prellberg
Prof Kathryn Richardson
Prof Christopher Tredwin
Dr Yannick Wurm

Prof Amrita Ahluwalia
Dr Erik Blair
Prof Liam Campling
Prof Mary Collins
Prof Kavita Datta
Dr Pedro Elston
Dr Abimbola Giwa
Prof Richard Grose
Prof Andrew Livingston
Prof Scott McCracken
Dr Ali Nankali
Dr Anthony Phillips
Aisha Qadi
Prof Hazel Screen
Prof Steve Uhlig

In attendance:

Prof Alison Blunt
Danny Hassell
Prof Anthony Michael
James Patterson
Prof Kate Spencer
Kaya Wiles (Secretary)

Haylee Fuller
Simon Hayter
Jonathan Morgan
Prof Richard Pickersgill
Prof Nick Vriend

Prof Yang Hao
Prof Stefan Krummaker
Jane Pallant
Adeola Popoola
Prof Tim Warner

Apologies:

Prof Adrian Bevan
Prof Rob Briner
Dr Giulia De Falco
Prof Martin Knight
Prof Stephanie Marshall
Dr Michael Page
Prof Jason Sturgess
Prof Anthony Warrens

Dr Georgia Black
Dr Giorgio Chianello
Dr Paula Fonseca
Prof Ioannis Kokkoris
Prof John Marshall
Prof Nitzan Rosenfeld
Prof Galin Tihanov

Prof Caroline Brennan
Dr Joseph Cronin
Prof Boris Khoruzhenko
Prof Arunthathi Mahendran
Prof Mike Noon
Dr James Strong
Prof Fiona Walter

Part 1: Preliminary items

Welcome and apologies

2023.174 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and **noted** the apologies received.

Minutes of the last meeting on 14 March 2024 (SE2023.58)

2023.175 Senate **confirmed** the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2024.

Chair's actions (SE2023.59)

2023.176 Senate **noted** the approval of Dr Rohini Sabharwal's appointment as Chair of the Professional Capability Committee by Chair's action.

President and Principal's report (SE2023.60)

2023.177 Senate **received** the President and Principal's report. The following points were **noted**:

- (i) Undergraduate application numbers were encouraging, with a 4% increase in applications compared to the same time in 2023. The postgraduate taught overseas position remained challenging while home application numbers were comparable to this point last year.
- (ii) The Senior Executive Team had endorsed the establishment of Queen Mary's third University Research Institute; the Early Life Research Institute (ELRI).
- (iii) A consultation was currently underway regarding the closure of Westfield Nursery. This difficult decision had been taken in recognition of the increasing costs of running the nursery, which was operating at a loss, creating challenges for Queen Mary in meeting its obligations as a registered charity. A [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section was available on the EAF webpages, providing further information for staff and students.

Vice Principal's reports (SE2023.61a-f)

2023.178 Senate **received** a report from the Vice-Principal (Health) (SE2023.61a). The following points were **noted**:

- (i) The Faculty's full-year cash generation was forecast to be £5.7m higher than budget. This forecast was based on higher tuition fees, Office for Students (OfS) teaching income, research overhead income and the reduction in pension contribution rates.
- (ii) Undergraduate application numbers were down by 10% from the same point in the previous academic year, but firm acceptances had increased by 5%. Postgraduate taught home applications remained similar when compared with the same point last year, however there was a 9% increase in offers, a 30% increase in acceptances and a 29% increase in firm acceptances. These increases were in part due to an increased focus on conversion activity and improvements to admissions processes. Overseas applications remained buoyant, with a 4% increase in applications compared to this point last year.

2023.179 Senate **received** a report from the Vice-Principal (Humanities and Social Sciences) (SE2023.61b). The following points were **noted**:

- (i) The Faculty was working towards the priorities identified in its revised Strategy 2030 Enabling Plan. The three priority areas were coherence and consistency in delivery, regrouping and regenerating the humanities, and premier postgraduate taught delivery at scale. Schools within the Faculty had held awaydays to translate the priorities into deliverable initiatives.

2023.180 Senate **received** a report from the Vice-Principal (Science and Engineering) (SE2023.61c). The following points were **noted**:

- (i) The Faculty hosted its second Night of Science Engineering showcase event in February 2024. Over 130 external guests attended, including key stakeholders from across industry, government, funders, the third sector and community-based organisations.

2023.181 Senate **received** a report from the Vice-Principal (Education) (SE2023.61d). The following points were **noted**:

- (i) The Education Excellence Awards were held on 23 May 2024. Over 160 colleagues attended, including members of the Senior Executive Team, Heads of Schools/Directors of Institutes, past award winners and nominees for this year.
- (ii) The refreshed Education and Student Experience Enabling Plan had been finalised with three priorities; world-class education consistently delivered by professionally developed educators, consistent advice and support for students, and employability and real-world experience embedded in the curriculum.
- (iii) The National Student Survey (NSS) for 2024 had closed, with an institutional response rate of 69.5%. Results would be published on 10 July 2024.

2023.182 Senate **received** a report from the Vice-Principal (Policy and Strategic Partnerships) (SE2023.61e). The following points were **noted**:

- (i) Preparations were underway for the September 2024 cohort of students at the London City Institute of Technology (IoT). Upgrades to the physical facility and curriculum for apprenticeships programmes were being sought in response to learner and employer feedback.
- (ii) Extensive work, including deep dives into all apprenticeship areas, were underway in preparation for a full Ofsted inspection of degree apprenticeships.

2023.183 Senate **received** a report from the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) (SE2023.61f). The following points were **noted**:

- (i) Work to implement the Research and Innovation Enabling Plan was ongoing. Research Institutes, including the recently approved ELRI, were in alignment with the University's research priorities.

An update on strategic hires for ELRI would be provided at the next Senate meeting.

- (ii) The Research Culture Team held their first Sharing Research Cultures event in March 2024, bringing together over 40 colleagues from across the University to hear talks that showcased best practice and the vibrancy of local research cultures in Schools, Institutes and Professional Service departments.
- (iii) The second Research and Innovation awards took place on 2 May 2024. The event celebrated the achievements of Queen Mary's research community, and was attended by external stakeholders and partners in the research, innovation and civic landscape, allowing Queen Mary to showcase research achievements alongside recognising the excellent contributions of colleagues.

Students' Union President's report

(SE2023.62)

2023.184 Senate **received** the Students' Union President's report. The following points were **noted**:

- (i) The Students' Union Executive Officers had been working to facilitate discussions between the University and students taking part in the encampment on the lawn area in front of the Queens' Building.
- (ii) The Vice-President, Barts and The London, had been working on key BLSA events, including the annual Association Dinner and Doctors Day.
- (iii) The Vice-President, Science and Engineering, had been working on employability, having launched the Employable Education Survey which received over 1200 responses.
- (iv) The Vice-President, Humanities and Social Sciences, had been elected for a second term for 2024–25 and so would be able to continue projects into the new academic year. Key projects included work on the employability tab on the Students' Union website with the aim of making employability relatable and accessible for all students.

2023.185 Senate members expressed their thanks to the QMSU Executive Officers for their hard work throughout the year.

Part 2: Matters for Discussion

Formation of the School of the Arts

(SE2023.63)

2023.186 Senate **considered** a presentation and paper from the Vice-Principal (Humanities and Social Sciences) on the proposed formation of the School of the Arts (STA) within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences by uniting the School of English and Drama and the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film. Senate was being consulted on any issues of academic

policy arising from the proposal ahead of a formal recommendation being put to Council. The following points were noted:

- (i) The Vice-Principal said that the proposal grew out of the Faculty's wider ambition to regenerate the humanities by responding to external pressures and potential opportunities. There had been a decline of approximately 25% in the student intake across the two Schools, but there were opportunities to expand the number of taught postgraduate students by expanding into subject areas with greater demand and engaging with the growth of the creative and cultural industries. The proposed timeline would see the disciplines, staff and students of the two Schools brought together under a single academic and governance structure at the beginning of the 2024–25 academic year, with the external launch of the proposed School of the Arts at the beginning of 2025–26 and new educational offerings expected to be operational from September 2026.
- (ii) The Vice-Principal said that there had been ongoing engagement with colleagues to discuss the proposal since February 2024, including a dedicated inbox for feedback and open meetings, and thanked colleagues who had been involved for their input. Senate members had been contacted directly by people inside and outside the University to express concerns about how the proposal was being taken forward. It was noted that the open letter from staff in the two Schools was based on a previous version of proposal, which had envisaged a higher level of change to take effect from the beginning of 2024–25, but which had since been scaled back in response to feedback.
- (iii) The Vice-Principal (Science and Engineering) referred back to a similar proposal, and similar challenges and opportunities, that had led to the bringing together of disciplines from the previous School of Biological and Chemical Sciences and the School of Physics and Astronomy. It could be seen over time that the approach taken had enabled Physics to move forward as a discipline on a sustainable footing. The Vice-Principal (Health) also referred to a more recent decision to unite the previous Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine and the Institute of Population Health Sciences, which was enabling staff to engage more effectively with the direction and needs for research in those areas.
- (iv) The Head of the School of English and Drama read a statement raising concerns about the speed and process of change and arguing that the change had already started under the Faculty's recent voluntary severance scheme, which offered improved financial arrangements for staff in the two Schools. Staff who had written to members of Senate did not feel consulted and were arguing for a proper planning process involving experts in the disciplines, to include the opportunity to contribute to a business plan for the proposed school, to plan the proposed new curricula and consider relevant market research, and to consider and plan the infrastructure that would be required. Similar concerns were raised by some other members of Senate from the two Schools.

One member from the School of Physical and Chemical Sciences also noted that, although the change referred to previously by the Vice-Principal (Science and Engineering) had put Physics as a discipline in a better position, the process was not without difficulty, which underlined the importance of careful planning.

- (v) The Vice-Principal (Humanities and Social Sciences) said that decisions taken through the voluntary severance scheme reflected the significant shortfalls in student recruitment that had already happened in 2023–24 and were anticipated to occur again in 2024–25. As a result, the professional services teams in the two Schools had begun the move towards operating as a combined office which would be able to support both the existing and proposed school structures as required. The Vice-Principal also said that the phasing of the proposal, beginning with the creation of a combined academic and governance structure, was intended to enable deeper co-creation to take place over the course of the 2024–25 academic year in areas such as those highlighted by the Head of the School of English and Drama without creating a prolonged period of uncertainty for staff. In relation to the timing of the proposed change, the Head of the School of History referred to the recent closures and retrenchments of humanities disciplines in other universities, which might have been avoided or reduced if earlier action had been taken in response to pressures on student recruitment. The Head of the School of Politics and International Relations highlighted that the shortfalls were already having an impact on staff in other disciplines who needed to absorb additional student numbers to help balance the overall Faculty budget.

- (vi) In summarising the discussion, the President and Principal noted that there was consensus on Senate about the continuing importance of humanities disciplines for the University, the economy and wider society, and the need therefore to respond to external challenges that were putting these disciplines at risk; but there were different views about whether there had been sufficient consultation to validate the proposal and ensure a smooth transition for staff and students if the proposed changes were to take effect at the start of the 2024–25 academic year. Members were thanked for their engagement and comments, which would be considered by the Senior Executive Team and Council.

Assessment Strategy

(SE2023.64)

2023.187

Senate **considered** the draft Assessment and Feedback Strategy and noted the following:

- (i) The Assessment and Feedback Strategy set out high-level principles that should be followed in the design and delivery of assessment and feedback. Specifically, it stated that all assessment and feedback should be relevant, authentic, meaningful, and proportionate. It had been previously considered by the Education, Quality and Standards Board and its Assessment Sub-Board.

- (ii) One Senate member highlighted that, in some academic disciplines, it could be more difficult to set assessment tasks that were 'authentic' and directly replicated the expectations of the workplace. The relevant section on authentic assessment would be reviewed to ensure it was clear that it referred to any real-world applications, i.e. making sure the degree delivered knowledge, skills and behaviours that were of value outside of the degree programme itself.
- (iii) Senate noted that the University would need to continue monitoring the impact of Artificial Intelligence on assessments and academic misconduct.
- (iv) Senate **approved** the Assessment and Feedback Strategy.

Student Casework Policies 2024-25

(SE2023.65)

- 2023.188 Senate **considered** the draft Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy. Members **noted** that the policy replaced the Academic Misconduct Policy, with the replacement policy shifting the focus more onto academic integrity.
- 2023.189 Senate **discussed** Appendix 2, Paragraph 4, which stated that repeated occurrences of misconduct would normally be treated more seriously. Members **noted** that the policy was worded to allow a degree of flexibility where there were exceptional circumstances or good reason not to award a more severe penalty than for a previous offence. In previous years, the backlog of cases also impacted the ability to treat repeat occurrences more seriously, as they may have been considered concurrently. The need for the word 'normally' would be monitored over the academic year, particularly given the increased speed with which cases were being processed.
- 2023.190 Senate **approved** the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy.
- 2023.191 Senate **considered** the Academic Appeals Policy and **noted** that it had been substantially reviewed by the Process Improvement Community of Practice and the Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Office. The existing Appeals Policy had been replaced by two separate policies: the Academic Appeals Policy and the Administrative Appeals Policy.
- 2023.192 Senate **approved** the Academic Appeals Policy.
- 2023.193 Senate **considered** the Administrative Appeals Policy and **noted** that it related to non-academic decisions, such as de-registration related to fee payment and enrolment.
- 2023.194 Senate **approved** the Administrative Appeals Policy.
- 2023.195 Senate **considered** the Student Discipline Policy and **noted** that it was formerly known as the Code of Student Discipline.
- 2023.196 Senate **approved** the Student Discipline Policy.
- 2023.197 Senate **considered** the Student Complaints Policy and **noted** that minor amendments had been made to reflect current practice of focussing on

support for reporting parties and around the receipt of complaints via Report + Support.

- 2023.198 Senate **approved** the Student Complaints Policy.
- 2023.199 Senate **considered** the Professional Capability and Fitness to Practise Regulations and **noted** that the revised Regulations provided clarification around disciplinary misconduct. An appeal stage had been added to the policy, in line with the OIA Good Practice Framework.
- 2023.200 Senate **approved** the Professional Capability and Fitness to Practise Regulations.
- 2023.201 Senate **considered** a proposal to appoint three new Misconduct Deputy Chairs.
- 2023.202 Senate **approved** the appointment of Dr Rodolfo Russo, Dr Mira Shamis and Dr Muhammad Salman Haleem as Misconduct Deputy Chairs.

Academic Regulations 2024–25 and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes (SE2023.66)

- 2023.203 Senate **considered** the Academic Regulations for 2024–25 and **noted** that the Regulations had been considered in detail by the Education Quality and Standards Board. There were no fundamental changes being proposed.
- 2023.204 Senate **noted** that paragraph 3.52 stated that students must submit extenuating circumstances as soon as possible after the assessment. Paragraph 3.48 (vi) stated that where extensions were allowed, students must apply before the submission date with an extenuating circumstances form. It was suggested that there could be some ambiguity around when students should submit extenuating circumstances which would benefit from further clarification.
- 2023.205 Senate **noted** that the Regulations permitted three separate incidents of self-certified extenuating circumstances each academic year. Members expressed concerns around this number, particularly as extenuating circumstances could, in some cases, be used strategically by students, resulting in delayed feedback to students and increased workloads for staff. The Assessment Sub-Board of the Education Quality and Standards Board would be reviewing extenuating circumstances. Senate recommended that the concern around the number of permitted self-certified extenuating circumstances should be considered as part of the wider extenuating circumstances review.
- 2023.206 Senate **approved** the Academic Regulations for 2024–25.
- 2023.207 Senate **considered** the Academic Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and **noted** the clarification around progression panel membership. It was clarified that the Director of Graduate Studies responsible for making the final decision on a student's academic progression could not be a member of that student's progression panel. It was noted that there may be some circumstances, particularly for smaller disciplines, where this could be challenging. This issue would be monitored over the coming academic year.

2023.208 Senate **approved** the Academic Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes.

Assessment Handbook 2024–25 (SE2023.67)

2023.209 Senate **considered** the Assessment Handbook for 2024–25.

2023.210 Senate **noted** that work on the Marking Policy, which currently formed Chapter 5 of the existing version of the Assessment Handbook, was ongoing. The revised documents and related proposals would be circulated to Senate members in due course. In the meantime, Senate members were asked to approve the revised Assessment Handbook for 2024–25 and to note that the existing Marking Policy would remain in force for the time being.

2023.211 Senate **approved** the Assessment Handbook for 2024–25.

Student Learning Engagement Policy (SE2023.68)

2023.212 Senate **considered** the draft Student Learning Engagement Policy.

2023.213 Senate **noted** that the Policy had been developed in consultation with Directors of Education and student representatives. The procedures and accompanying guidance were designed to be used flexibly to suit each discipline. The main aim of the Policy was to provide supportive interventions for students who were not engaging with their studies.

2023.214 Senate **noted** that there had been issues with the platforms used to gather engagement data. The Policy offered flexibility in recognition of the technical issues some colleagues had been experiencing and would also help to underpin a review of available platforms for the future. It was the intention to bring the Policy back to Senate in June 2025 once potential platforms had been explored.

2023.215 Senate **noted** that not all Schools and Institutes had a named Learning Engagement Officer role. The Policy could state 'or equivalent' to ensure it aligned with existing arrangements.

2023.216 Senate **noted** a query around whether the policy should cover both the options for supporting students and visa compliance issues. It was suggested that these could form two separate policies to affirm the supportive role of the Student Learning Engagement Policy.

2023.217 Senate **agreed** to revisit the Student Learning Engagement Policy in October 2024 and further discuss the Policy's implementation.

Intellectual Property Policy Verbal report

2023.218 Senate **noted** that the Intellectual Property Policy was under review. The revised policy would consider sector best practice and would be circulated to Senate members for comments in due course.

Update on the review of academic governance (SE2023.69)

2023.219 Senate **received** an update on the review of academic governance.

2023.220 Senate **agreed** to hold an online session over the summer to discuss the academic governance review in detail, including the results of the survey on governance effectiveness that had been completed by members of Senate. A further update would be provided at the Senate meeting in October 2024.

Ordinances (SE2023.70)

2023.221 Senate **considered** revised Ordinances and **noted** that they had been updated with a simpler and more accessible structure adopted.

2023.222 Members **noted** that Senate's responsibilities around academic freedom were unchanged, however this section may need to be revisited in due course as the relevant legislation developed.

2023.223 Members were invited to share any comments with the Chief Governance Officer and University Secretary by email, prior to the Ordinances being considered by Council.

Research Misconduct Policy (SE2023.71)

2023.224 Senate **considered** the draft Research Misconduct Policy.

2023.225 Senate **noted** that the Policy had been amended to include detail on how the University would process anonymous allegations. The purpose of the amendment was to make sure the University fulfilled its obligations to investigate allegations while exercising its duty of care by maintaining confidentiality.

2023.226 Senate **approved** the Research Misconduct Policy.

Admissions Policy 2025-26 (SE2023.72)

2023.227 Senate **considered** the draft Admissions Policy for 2025–26.

2023.228 Senate **noted** that minor amendments had been made to the Policy to clarify wording around acceptability and verification of qualifications.

2023.229 Senate **noted** that the Policy had been considered by the Policy Scrutiny Group, which had recommended a review with the EDI team of the language under the section concerning disclosure by applicants with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. Members queried whether the wording prevented contextual offers, where these were appropriate. The language would be reviewed with this in mind.

2023.230 Senate **approved** the Admissions Policy 2025–26, subject to clarification of the aspects noted in minute 2023.229 above.

Degree Outcomes Statement 2022–23 (SE2023.73)

2023.231 Senate **considered** the Degree Outcomes Statement for 2022–23.

2023.232 Senate **noted** that the percentage of 'good honours' had fallen by 8.03% since 2020–21, but there had been an overall increase since 2018–19.

2023.233 Senate confirmed that it had no concerns regarding the processes of awarding degrees.

Semester dates 2027–28 to 2031–32 (SE2023.74)

2023.234 Senate **considered** the proposed semester dates for 2027–28 to 2031–32. Senate was required to approve semester dates at least five years in advance for various administrative and funding-related purposes.

2023.235 Senate **approved** the semester dates for 2027–28 to 2031–32.

New award title of Licence in Dental Surgery (SE2023.75)

2023.236 Senate **considered** a proposal to establish the new award title of Licence in Dental Surgery (LDS) to Ordinance A16.

2023.237 Members **noted** that the award of LDS allowed UK students to become a member of the Royal College of Surgeons and international students to apply for registration with the General Dental Council. Unlike the BDS, student numbers were not capped for the LDS and so delivering the programme presented an opportunity to increase student numbers.

2023.238 Senate **agreed** to recommend to Council the addition of the award title of Licence in Dental Surgery to the relevant Ordinance.

Part 3: Matters for Report

Council (SE2023.76)

2023.239 Senate **noted** the minutes of the Council meeting held on 28 March 2024.

Taught Programmes Board (SE2023.77)

2023.240 Senate **noted** proposals relating to programme and module academic developments that have taken place between 27 February 2024 and 28 May 2024.

Education Quality and Standards Board (SE2023.78)

2023.241 Senate **noted** the executive summary of business considered by the Education Quality and Standards Board at the meeting on 27 March 2024.

Ethics of Research Committee (SE2023.79)

2023.242 Senate **noted** the executive summary of business of the Ethics of Research Committee meeting held on 20 March 2024 and actions taken since.

Partnerships Board (SE2023.80)

2023.243 Senate **noted** the executive summary of business considered by the Partnerships Board 30 January 2024 to 08 May 2024.

Part 4: Other matters

Dates of future meetings

- 2023.244 Senate **noted** the upcoming Senate meetings for 2024–25:
- 24 October 2024, 15:00 – 17:00
 - 12 December 2024, 15:00 – 17:00
 - 13 March 2025, 15:00 – 17:00
 - 12 June 2025, 15:00 – 17:00

UNCONFIRMED