FALMOUTH UNIVERSITY

DRAFT MINUTES

AB/26/01

ACADEMIC BOARD

Wednesday, 22 October 2025, 11.30 – 14.30, Penryn Campus

1.1 Present

Professor Emma Hunt (EH)	Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive [Chair]
Professor David Prior (DP)	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research & Knowledge Exchange [Deputy Chair]
Professor Russell Crawford (RC)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Interim)
Dr Douglas Brown (DB)	Dean of Faculty of Screen, Technology & Performance, and Associate Professor
David Dickinson (DD)	Director of Student & Academic Support, FX Plus
Andrew Harbert (AH)	Technical Staff Member [Elected Member]; Technical & Facilities Manager, Falmouth Campus
Robert Ingram (RI)	Senior Head of Academy of Continuing Education
Jadelle Luckman (JL)	SU President: Falmouth 2024-26
Dr Adrian Markle (AM)	Academic Staff Member [Elected Member]; Senior Lecturer, BA Creative Writing
Professor Lee Miller (LM)	Head of Postgraduate Research
John Sumpter (JS)	Head of Online & Digital Learning
Robyn Wyatt (RW)	Head of Governance Services, and Secretary to the Board of Governors [Co-opted Member]
Dr Jennifer Young (JY)	Dean of the Faculty of Business & Design
Dr Tom Baugh (TB)	Associate Dean, Faculty of Creative Arts & Communication
Holly Hayman (HH)	Head of Digital & Content [Professional Services Staff Member [Elected Member]

1.2 Servicing Officers

Dr Brian Hoskin (BH)	Head of Quality Assurance & Enhancement [Secretary]
Mary Flewitt (MF)	Governance & Executive Support Officer [Clerk]

1.3 In attendance

Duncan Cameron (DC)	Course Leader: BA Drawing & Integrated Foundation Year [*Introductory Presentation*]
Jennifer Jehan (JJ)	Employability Content & Delivery Manager [*Item 9d*]
Anna Brown (AB)	Director of Marketing & Engagement [*Item 14b*]
David McCarron (DMc)	Head of Recruitment, Outreach & Admissions [*Item 15b*]

1.4 Apologies

Alex Mesterton-Gibbons (AMG)	Head of Employability [Co-opted Member]
Aisha Lord (AL)	SU Vice-President: Falmouth 2025-26
Dr Tadhg Leane (TL)	Independent Member of the Board of Governors [regular attendee]

2 Chair's welcome (EH) [Verbal] ☐

2.1 **Noted:** the Chair provided a warm welcome to the newly elected Professional Services Staff Member, Holly Hayman; and Jennifer Jehan, Employability Content & Delivery Manager, who attended in place of AMG.

2 a) Declaration of interests related to the agenda

2.2 **Noted:** the Chair highlighted the register of interests provided as a silent paper and requested Members to declare any potential conflicts of interest relevant to items on the agenda. No conflicts were declared.

INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION

---

3 **Basket Shark and beyond** (DC) [Presentation] ☐

3.1 **Received:** to note, a presentation that provided an overview of a collaborative project for Integrated Foundation Year (IFY) students, Basket Shark – the creation of a life-size basking shark sculpture, which focused on awareness of plastic pollution and damage to local ecosystems. The project aimed to advocate for environmental awareness and creative engagement across the IFY and local community, involving students from the outset in conceptualisation and design, whilst fostering partnerships with local stakeholders and environmental organisations like the Shark Trust and Surfers Against Sewage.

3.2 **Noted:** the pedagogy of the project and the student involvement throughout every aspect of the journey allowed for development of skills in external collaboration and negotiation, and fostering relationships with local partners. Students were involved in navigating logistical challenges and public liability, which was highlighted as an accurate representation of the realities of public exhibitions and socially engaged art. Future projects were outlined, with Members thanking DC for a thorough and fascinating presentation.

INTRODUCTORY REPORTS

---

4 **Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive's report** (EH) [AB/25/069] ☐

4.1 **Received:** to note, the standing item report from the Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive which covered: sector news, updates on local/regional policy, transformation, research and knowledge exchange, league tables, University news, student and staff successes and a summary of the Vice-Chancellor's external advocacy activity.

4.2 **Noted:** the Chair summarised the key points of the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper, which had been published in mid-October 2025. The need for careful interpretation of the detailed information within the White Paper was highlighted, as the implications for specialist institutions such as Falmouth University differed from those for larger universities.

4.3 **Noted:** RI queried regulatory changes regarding Level 4 and above by the Office for Students (OfS), and Level 3 and below by the Department for Education (DfE); it was clarified that there were no major proposed changes within these areas, although full details were still unclear and subject to ongoing consultation. Further details on the implications of the report would be provided to Academic Board in due course.

4.4 **Noted:** relevant developments within the local and national political landscape were highlighted. The Chair had sat on a Creative UK panel at the September 2025 Labour Party Conference to champion the creative industries in Cornwall and across the South West, calling for recognition of the area as a creative hub and testbed for innovation. The Chair attended the official launch of the 'Creative Industries in the Great South West' report, which she had initiated, at the House of Commons. This was an output of the Great South West (GSW) Partnership Board, led by Falmouth University along with relevant regional university partners.

4.5 **Noted**: Members were informed of the University's ongoing Strategic Transformation Programme and the three pillars of On-Campus, Online and On-Demand within.

Emphasis was given to the importance of sustained focus on the student experience and delivering targeted improvements to the University's National Student Survey (NSS) and Graduate Outcome Survey (GOS) results. This would impact the next Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) exercise, which was paramount to the University's reputation and future funding, and which would in turn affect the University's growth and development within these three pillars.

4.6 **Noted:** also highlighted were recent positive league table results along with the University's shortlisting for a Times Higher Education award of Specialist Institution of the Year (2025). Other items of note included strategic visit and the installation and unveiling on Falmouth Campus of a portrait of Robert Were Fox.

5 Students' Union President's report (JL) [AB/25/070] ☐

5.1 **Received:** to note, the standing item report from the elected Students' Union (SU) President which included: changes to the bus services and pricing, SU National Student Survey (NSS) action plans, Student Rep research on hidden course costs, increased engagement plans for online students, and the outcomes of the SU's 'Getting Started' survey.

5.2 **Noted:** the President reported on a highly successful Welcome Week, with positive feedback and strong student attendance at events. The SU had run a targeted Welcome Event for neurodiverse and disabled students to boost the inclusion of this cohort of the student body, which had led to the formation of specific neurodiverse and disabled student societies and collectives.

5.3 **Noted:** work had been underway to mitigate the ongoing challenges with local bus provisions due to First Bus' removal of student bundles and increased prices. Due to the complexity of the situation externally, the SU's focus had been on immediate short-term solutions internally, with discussions ongoing through the Cornwall Joint Student Partnership Group, Falmouth Student Experience Group and between the SU and FX Plus as to how to tackle this situation longer-term. The SU had purchased 150 bus passes, to be given out to students via a referral process to ensure they reached those most in need.

5.4 **Noted:** the University's hardship fund remained open for students in financial hardship and impacted by these external changes, and the University was working with the SU on communications to support access to the hardship fund.

5.5 **Noted:** following the release of the National Student Survey (NSS) results in June 2025, which marked a notable improvement in the relevant question area, plans were outlined to further enhance engagement between the SU and third-year students to assist with future NSS improvements. Plans included course visits and expanded student advice provisions, as well as expansion of existing SU-led services such as the food pantry and hygiene stations. As part of her manifesto priorities, the President had also been focused on ensuring transparency for prospective students regarding course-specific costs and had been working proactively with Student Reps and the senior team to ensure course information was up-to-date and transparent around any additional costs.

5.6 **Noted:** the President highlighted recent efforts to further engage online students, which had included SU induction sessions. This had resulted in the establishment of the first online student society – 'Cosy', an online space for students to socialise and share ideas. Discussions were ongoing around ways of adapting on-campus societies for online participation to further boost engagement and inclusion.

5.7 **Noted:** the 'Getting Started' student survey had received a record number of responses – 1,141, after a concerted push from the Presidents to ensure students had the opportunity to have an influence on future topics that would be explored by their SU. Top student concerns were outlined as the cost of living, wellbeing, loneliness, and employability. Members discussed student perceptions of AI, and were interested to see results of the survey's AI question, in order to explore the topic further and understand if there was any contrast between survey answers and other feedback received.

5.8 **Action:** share results from the 'Getting Started' student survey, including the AI responses with RC and HH once available. (JL)

5.9 **Noted:** the Fox Café late opening times pilot was discussed. This was a pilot initiative to provide equal access to facilities to Falmouth Campus students through later opening times of the café. The initial pilot in May had seen a low uptake and it was hoped that the September trial during Welcome activities would see better engagement. The President noted in her report that September had also seen poor uptake and AM advised that this outcome had likely been impacted by limited promotion by the café. The President advised that discussions were still ongoing regarding event-led opportunities for later opening through the Falmouth Student Experience Group, and a subsequent working group comprised of FX Plus and Falmouth University staff. The Chair confirmed the importance of equal opportunities for all students across both campuses and further endorsed the need for continued development of the later opening initiatives on Falmouth Campus.

5.10 **Action:** update from the Fox Café late opening times working group to be provided.

6 Minutes of previous meeting (EH) [AB/25/071] ☒

6.1 **Approved:** the minutes of the meeting held on 2 May 2025 were approved as presented for publication on the website (with redaction as highlighted in the document), in alignment with the publication schedule.

7 Matters arising (BH) [AB/25/072] ☐

7.1 **Received:** to note, a report on matters arising from the previous meetings, supplemented by verbal updates from members.

7.2 **Noted:** Academic Board confirmed closure of 15 actions, and was satisfied with the progress updates provided for the remaining five open actions.

8 Academic governance annual re-induction (RW) [AB/25/073] ☐

8.1 **Received:** an annual paper that provided Academic Board with an overview of current academic governance arrangements and matters including a summary of the key responsibilities of Members, key governance documents, and related useful information.

8.2 **Noted:** An update was given on the Halpin Effectiveness Review following the September impact report, with 90% completion reported and 100% completion forecast by the January 2026 Academic Board. All remaining open actions would be transferred to Academic Board's matters arising tracker to ensure Board oversight of completion.

a) **Terms of Reference reviews** (RW) [AB/25/073] ☐

8 a) i) Academic Board Terms of Reference and new Guiding Principles

8.3 **Received:** to approve, following routine cyclical review, proposed updates to the Terms of Reference (tracked) and new Guiding Principles for Academic Board and all of its sub-committees. These had been adjusted following drop-in sessions focused on gathering feedback on the Terms of Reference and draft Team Charter (the draft Charter had been put forward at the July 2025 meeting of Academic Board). The Charter has been distilled into new Guiding Principles with related enhancements to the Terms of Reference for Academic Board. Members commented positively on the approach to the development of the Guiding Principles, which reflected Members' feedback.

8.4 **Approved:** the updated Academic Board Terms of Reference to be recommended to the Board of Governors for approval.

8 a) ii)Academic Board subcommittees Terms of Reference

8.5 **Received:** to approve, following routine cyclical review, proposed updates to the Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee, Research, Integrity & Ethics Committee, and Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee with changes tracked.

8.6 **Approved:** the updated Terms of Reference for the named sub-committees as presented, subject to a final check with regard to the currency of job titles.

8 a) iii)Student Staff Liaison Group (SSLGs)

8.7 **Received:** to approve, revisions to the SSLG Terms of Reference following a collaborative review, led by the SU. Key findings were outlined along with the rationale for the proposed changes which sought to clarify roles, responsibilities and procedures surrounding SSLGs. Discussion emphasised the need for clear trackable actions, positive culture of collaboration and continuous improvement within SSLGs, with annual effectiveness reviews led by the SU as welcomed addition to the procedures. The need to ensure effective information flow from course-level meetings to faculty-level meetings via the Departmental Reps was also highlighted.

8.8 **Approved:** the updated Terms of Reference for SSLGs, subject to the strengthening of phrasing around the importance of action tracking.

8.9 **Action:** phrasing around the importance of action tracking to be strengthened within the SSLG Terms of Reference. (RW/JL)

9 **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) (Interim)** (RC) [AB/25/074] ☐

9.1 **Received:** to note, the standing item report from the DVC, which had been mapped to the Terms of Reference of Academic Board. This report included an Access & Participation Plan update along with a briefing on the Office for Students consultation on the future approach to quality regulation (which incorporated proposals around the next Teaching Excellence Framework, (TEF) exercise).

9.2 **Noted:** concerns were raised about the removal of contextualisation of data in the proposed new TEF methodology, which had previously allowed institutions to account for their unique geographic and specialist contexts; the DVC confirmed that the University was to submit a robust response to the consultation, working with sector bodies such as GuildHE and Universities UK to advocate for the interests of small and specialist institutions. The proposed bronze TEF rating reprofiling was discussed as also being of concern with linked punitive measures - such as potential limits on student numbers and fees - making it harder for institutions to improve if rated bronze. It was also highlighted that the lower down the silver and bronze categories an institution was, the faster the TEF evaluation was to occur in the newly proposed cyclical arrangements from the OfS.

9.3 **Noted:** Members were advised that the proposed rolling schedule for TEF assessments and variability in assessment frequency could create uncertainties around categorisation, which could impact funding and eligibility for initiatives like the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE). Potential risks following the proposed merging of the TEF with the Access and Participation Plan (APP) were identified as possible disincentives for access to students from diverse backgrounds. This was to again be highlighted in the consultation response.

9.4 **Noted:** the recommendation from the DVC was for a focus on achieving excellence across all areas of evaluation in the next TEF, to avoid being negatively impacted by shifting methodologies, with key areas of focus in this regard detailed within the annual academic assurance papers later on the agenda.

10 **Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC): Research & KE's report** (DP) [AB/25/075] ☐

10.1 **Received:** to note, the standing item report from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) Research & Knowledge Exchange (RKE), which had been mapped to the Terms of Reference for Academic Board and included updates on preparations for Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP); Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029; the ongoing live portfolio and pre-award; a review of internal funding; an update on On-Demand; Postgraduate Research (PGR) and a Knowledge Exchange update.

10.2 **Noted:** an update was given on the RDAP process, with the Board being informed that the University had submitted the first stage of its application to the OfS in August 2025 and was awaiting further scrutiny. A meeting was anticipated in December 2025 and a site visit expected in 2026 which was to involve staff and students across the institution. The Post-16 White paper was highlighted as another factor that increased the importance of RDAP and members were encouraged to explore any queries they may have around RDAPs with DP outside of the meeting to support their full understanding and knowledgeable engagement during the scrutiny period.

10.3 **Noted:** members were updated on the pause to REF2029 which was to allow for institutional adjustments; the paper also confirmed the future continuation of REF. Falmouth was currently developing its code of practice for REF, with a staff consultation planned for January 2026 to decide which units of assessment to enter. The current proposal was a continuation of one unit, Art and Design, to align with the institution's specialism and government direction.

10.4 **Action:** staff consultation on REF to be brought to Academic Board once ready. (DP)

10.5 **Noted**: the PVC updated on strategic risks regarding the timing of scrutiny visits and the need to secure RDAP before the next REF submission.

10.6 **Noted:** updates were provided on internal research funding and ongoing work to support RKE, including short courses and doctoral briefs. Members were informed of incoming professors within RKE and the Centre for Blended Realities: Nicholas Peres, Dylan Yamada-Rice, and Hetty Blades.

REPORTS

---

11 **Academic Assurance report 2024/25** (RC/BH) [AB/25/076] ☒

11.1 Received: for endorsement, a paper that highlighted key messages within the suite of academic assurance reports for Academic Board. This included a series of annexes which provided more detailed information and analysis for the Board's information and assurance, including an annual report from each of the sub-committees. The report found that Academic Board had appropriately and effectively discharged its responsibilities, as evidenced within the paper, with this opinion supported by internal and external data. Academic Board was asked to endorse the paper and its annexes to go to the November 2025 meeting of the Board of Governors.

11.2 Endorsed: Academic Board welcomed the summary and endorsed to go to the Board of Governors.

11 a) Annual Report of Academic Board (BH) [AB/25/076a] ☐

11.3 Received: to note, a paper that gave a representative summary of key activity over the 2024/25 academic year and provided an overview of the Board's sub-committee business, showing examples of how Academic Board had discharged its responsibilities against the Terms of Reference set by the Board of Governors. The intent of the report was to provide assurance to the Board of Governors and reflect on achievements of the past year.

11.4 Endorsed: Academic Board endorsed this report to go to the Board of Governors.

11 b) B3 metric report (RC) [AB/25/076b] ☐

11.5 Received: to note, a paper that analysed the University's latest B3 student outcomes data released by the Office for Students, with comparison against prior years, the University's targets and the OfS' minimum thresholds. The data showed that the University continued to exceed the minimum thresholds for Continuation, Completion and Progression.

11.6 Noted: the report highlighted a continued marginally declining trend in Completion rates which was noted as a concern.

11.7 Action: in light of lower reported PGT retention (evidenced within the student retention report, 11 c)) and persistent declining trend for B3 Completion, RC to provide further information on PGT retention and B3 Completion, inclusive of activity undertaken or planned to address declining trends for the Board's information and assurance.

11.8 Endorsed: Academic Board endorsed this report to go to the Board of Governors.

11 c) Student retention report (RC) [AB/25/076c] ☐

11.9 Received: to note, a paper that provided an end of year summary of the University's retention position and that of its academic partners, offering comparisons for both on-campus and online, undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) study modes. An overview of the reasons cited for leaving study in each mode was also included.

11.10 Noted: there had been an overall improvement for the third consecutive year which was attributed to the adoption of a University-wide approach to retention as a key focus. Specific attention was paid to the improvement of the integrated foundation year (IFY) attrition rates which exceeded the sector average.

11.11 Noted: discussion reflected on student retention trends and observations of diminishing impact of Covid-19 on student cohorts, as a potentially positive retention factor going forward.

11.12 **Endorsed:** Academic Board endorsed this report to go to the Board of Governors.

11 d) **National Student Survey (NSS) report** (RC) [AB/25/076d] ☐

11.13 **Received:** to note, a paper that provided a detailed update on the 2025 NSS performance for Falmouth University (with and without academic partner data) as well as commentary and analysis of the free-text comments provided by students within the survey.

11.14 **Noted:** the DVC presented the latest NSS results, highlighting overall improvements alongside persistent gaps compared to the sector, especially in the course organisation and management theme. Analysis had shown that students with declared disabilities tended to report more negatively in the NSS, which indicated a need for targeted support, particularly with the high percentage of declared disabilities within the student population. It was highlighted that a c. 2% overall increase in NSS scores would have moved the University to the top of its competitor group, highlighting the significant impact of small gains and the importance of a continued University-wide approach to NSS.

11.15 **Endorsed:** Academic Board endorsed this report to go to the Board of Governors.

11 e) **Graduate Outcome Survey report** (JJ) [AB/25/076e] ☐

11.16 **Received**: to note, an annual report that compiled data gathered through the latest Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS), which was completed by graduates 15 months post-study. The report included an infographic presentation of the results, to support dissemination of key messages across the University.

11.17 **Noted**: there had been a slight decline in overall scores and ongoing challenges in full-time employment and further study rates, which prompted discussion on the need for continued efforts to embed and extract employability-linked skills across the whole curriculum. Self-employment remained a strong area for Falmouth University graduates, and the response rate remained high (top 20 in the sector). Academic partners continued to have an overall positive impact on the University's GOS scores.

11.18 **Noted:** the Employability Team was actively working with academic departments to analyse GOS scores and promote the new Employability Framework (approved at the May 2025 Academic Board) which aimed to help students articulate their skills and improve future outcomes. Further initiatives included the embedding of GOS information in final year modules, direct engagement with students, and collaboration with the SU to raise awareness.

11.19 **Endorsed:** Academic Board endorsed this report to go to the Board of Governors.

11 f) **Concordat to Support Research Integrity** (DP) [AB/25/076f] ☒

11.20 **Received:** for approval, the annual statement of compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity for 2024/25, as recommended by Research Integrity & Ethics Committee. The statement summarised: activity that had been undertaken to support research integrity; processes that the University had in place to deal with allegations of misconduct; data from formal investigations of research misconduct - of which there had been three within the 2024/25 academic year; and a statement on actions taken to create and embed a positive culture. A supplementary briefing was considered.

11.21 **Endorsed:** Academic Board endorsed the statement to go to the Board of Governors.

12 **Prevent Annual report and return** (DD) [AB/25/077] ☒

12.1 **Received:** for approval, the annual report and draft Annual Accountability Return to the OfS, which was produced to demonstrate that the University had continued to have due regard to the Prevent duty; had provided all required information to the OfS about its implementation of the Prevent duty; and had reviewed and updated where necessary its Prevent risk assessment and action plan.

12.2 **Noted:** within the year, significant policy updates and new guidance had been implemented (reported to the Office for Students). New guidance included internet monitoring arrangements and compliance with new legislation, Martyn's Law. It was noted that the triannual risk assessment review had reported no changes from 2024/25, however efforts were ongoing to improve reporting and assurance for partner institutions. There were no serious incidents that met the threshold for reporting to the OfS in 2024/25.

12.3 **Approved:** the Prevent return was endorsed for submission to the Board of Governors, before onward submission to the OfS.

DISCUSSION

__Look forward__

12 **Faculty continuous improvement priorities 2025/26** (Deans) [Presentation] ☐

12.1 **Received:** a presentation that provided an overview of improvement priorities for each faculty, with emphasis placed on enhancements to the student experience, graduate outcomes and readiness for RDAP.

12.2 **Noted:** all Faculties were implementing targeted initiatives to improve NSS scores, particularly linked to the course organisation and management theme; this was happening through regular meetings, targeted interventions, staffing adjustments, increased NSS awareness and enhanced communication with students and staff.

12.3 **Noted:** student recruitment was also cited as a major priority, with efforts to enhance the open day experience and targeted outreach activities to support applicant engagement. Deans were aligned on the importance of portfolio currency and provided examples of relevant portfolio developments.

12.4 **Noted:** research environment developments were outlined and discussed with key focus areas including: transdisciplinary cross-faculty collaboration; the appointment of research leads; integration of research objectives into staff development conversations; and the promotion of research opportunities within less research-active areas of faculties.

12.5 **Noted**: other key activities included the embedding of the Employability Framework, and working alongside the Employability Team for effective growth of proposed strategies. Deans were also addressing course level recruitment and retention challenges and exploring ways to adapt successful on-campus initiatives for online students with support from relevant central services and the SU.

13 **Student & Academic Support (SAS) priorities for 2025/26** (DD) [AB/25/078] ☐

13.1 **Received:** to note, a paper that provided an update regarding the proposed development priorities of the FX Plus student support, advice, timetabling and learning and research support services in 2025/26 – including the Student Support & Wellbeing system.

13.2 **Noted:** DD outlined two priority focus areas, NSS improvement priorities, inclusive of mental health and accessibility; along with transparent and compliant services. He highlighted ongoing work on the Student Support & Wellbeing system, which was to replace the current Compass system; policy updates; and support for portfolio diversification, especially on-demand offerings. Members discussed the importance of parity of service for online students, supporting retention wellbeing and successful outcomes for the growing online cohort.

13.3 **Action:** DD to meet with JS and HH to discuss opportunities to enhance information about student and academic support services to online students.

13.4 **Noted:** the Chair raised the need for clearer articulation of the Falmouth-specific impact of the priorities, suggesting a summary of intended impact and how Student & Academic Support priorities aligned with and supported the Deans' priorities – to ensure harmonisation and to avoid risk of duplication or confusion. This was to be presented at the January 2026 meeting, but the Chair emphasised that work should continue, in partnership, in the meantime.

13.5 **Action:** a clearly articulated summary on the Falmouth-specific intended impact of the SAS priorities for 2025/26 to be presented at the January Academic Board. (DD)

13.6 **Noted:** the Compass student support system replacement project was discussed. The proposed go-live date was cited as early December 2025, with assurance given that the current system was not to be decommissioned until the new Student Support & Wellbeing system was in place and tested. There was an awareness of the potential impact on NSS associated with any potential failure of the transition to the new system, and the Chair requested written assurance of plans to ensure a smooth transition.

13.7 **Action:** provide the Chair with written assurance of plans to ensure a smooth transition between the Compass Online and new Student Support & Wellbeing systems by the end of Term 1 – mid January 2026. (DD)

13.8 **Noted:** Members discussed timetabling challenges which directly affected students and in turn NSS scores, particularly with regard to the organisation and management theme. Confirmation was given that this was a key improvement focus area for SAS with discussion underway with the Director of Planning & Business Intelligence Services, Executive Director of Estates, Operation & Planning, and Head of Timetabling, to progress. A paper on the subject was proposed to go to University Executive Board with the Chair advising that consultation with the Deans and Academic Board members more broadly was necessary.

13.9 **Action:** timetabling report to be provided to Academic Board (DD/MF)

14 **Strategic transformation overview** [AB/25/079] ☐

14.1 **Received:** a paper and presentation on the Strategic Transformation programme. The on campus, online and on demand pillars were separately presented, with key updates on scoping, planning, delivery, and ongoing risk mitigation. The programme linked to closely to the Mission, Vision and Values and key institutional risks, inclusive of shifts in demand for higher education.

14 a) **On campus** (RC) [AB/25/079] ☐

14.2 **Noted:** external market analysis and consultancy had informed portfolio planning, with the development of 5 new courses and adjustments to enhance 15-courses underway, with a number of changes planned for September 2026. Risks were being actively managed, with focus on ensuring high quality, standards, and student experience.

14 b) Online (JS) [AB/25/079] ☐

14.3 **Noted:** Members were informed of the latest developments from the Transforming Online Project (TOP) group that were overseeing the growth, model refinement and staffing of the University's online provision, as well as the teach-out period for Falmouth Flexible courses, with close links to Online Quality Committee. New online courses were in development with parallel workstreams for content creation and student recruitment. Risks and risk mitigations were explored.

14 c) On demand (DP) [AB/25/079] ☐

14.4 **Noted:** acknowledged for its strategic importance in relation to modular learning and readiness for the Lifelong Learning Entitlement, development of the University's on demand provision was being overseen by a steering group and dedicated Rapid Action Groups. Key areas of focus were highlighted as the development of the portfolio (inclusive of research-informed courses), business model and governance. 2024/25 had been the first full year of operation for the Academy of Continuing Education, and it was highlighted that a whole-University approach was needed to deliver sustainable growth. Risks and risk mitigations were explored.

14.5 **Noted:** Academic Board recognised and praised the pace of the progress of the Strategic Transformation programme and highlighted the importance of the structured co-ordination across the pillars which ensures that transformation planning took account of any emergent impacts and/or capacity challenges.

DECISIONS

---

14 Portfolio developments

14 a) Course approval: Games Online Business Cases (DB) [AB/25/080] ☒

14.1 **Received:** for approval, the business cases for three new online courses through the Games Academy (GA). The approach was to adapt and build on the success of the on campus games portfolio and reach into a new online subject area. The context for the development of the three new courses was outlined and considered.

14.2 **Noted:** the following courses were proposed for launch in September 2026: BA (Hons) Game Art, and BA (Hons) Game Development. BA (Hons) Games Studies was proposed to be launched in September 2027, allowing further time for exploration of the level of award (potential for PGT), synchronisation with adjacent provision, and review of market demand. The Board discussed the business cases. It was confirmed that the business case would be brought back to Academic Board if substantially amended.

14.3 **Approved:** the business cases for the three new courses to go forward to the Course Approval events.

14 b) Course approval: Data HE Course Proposals (AB/RC) [AB/25/081] ☒

14.4 **Received:** for approval, the business cases for the approval of five new on campus courses that had been shortlisted following engagement with external consultants, Data HE, to analyse the University's portfolio and identify growth opportunities. A briefing on the Data HE outputs was provided.

14.5 **Noted:** Members discussed distinctions between proposed course designations, and all discussion points would be considered in further depth within the Course Approval event. The Board was assured that the distinction between MA and MSc would be clarified and confirmed with Academic Board by circulation.

14.6 **Approved:** the five business cases to go forward to the Course Approval events with Academic Board's feedback.

14.7 **Action:** LM to be invited to the AI for the Creative Industries Course Approval event. (BH)

14.8 **Action:** final designations for AI for the Creative Industries and Creative Computing to be confirmed by Academic Board by circulation, along with MSc Digital Marketing should the latter be recommended to change. (RC)

15 **Schedule of policies** (RW) [AB/25/082] ☒

15.1 **Received:** to approve, the policy approval authorities within the latest version of Academic Board's schedule of policies.

15.2 **Approved:** the policy approval authorities were approved as documented within the paper.

15 a) **Personal Tutoring Policies** (RC) [AB/25/083] ☒

15.3 **Received:** for approval, a new staff-facing Personal Tutoring Policy and an updated student-facing Personal Tutoring policy that had been harmonised to ensure alignment of expectations. The staff-facing policy had been created in collaboration with the Deans and supported by Learning Teaching and Quality Committee (LTQC), and responded to student feedback that highlighted inconsistencies across personal tutoring and the impact this had on students.

15.4 **Noted:** the staff-facing policy introduced eight core essentials for personal tutoring: academic support; career advice and employability guidance; encouragement of student engagement and distance travelled thinking; a minimum of one synchronous meeting a year; the development of academic skills; thorough understanding of safeguarding and wellbeing referrals; use of student information dashboards; and ensuring consistent delivery and clear expectations across departments. The aim was to standardise expectations without an increase to workload, with scope for departments to add discipline-specific elements as needed. Concerns around workload and capacity were aired. It was confirmed that supporting guidance and best practice examples were being developed to support implementation.

15.4 **Noted:** Members provided feedback around the need for guidance and training to ensure effective delivery of the policy. The value of group tutorials as an option for initial meetings was discussed, and it was clarified that as this was included in the student-facing policy it should therefore be made explicit in staff policy and guidance. The need for clarification over wording was also requested and it was agreed that the policy required refinement following further discussion between the DVC and identified members to address these points and ensure full alignment between the staff and student policies.

15.5 **Action:** RC to (1) meet with AM to discuss and address the points raised regarding the staff-facing policy, and (2) ensure alignment between the two policies. Following further consultation, final versions to be circulated outside of the meeting by MF, with changes highlighted and approval sought if changes were significant.

15.5 **Approved:** Academic Board approved the staff-facing policy in principle, subject to the extent of the final drafting amendments.

15.6 **Approved:** Academic Board approved the updated student-facing policy, subject to any final adjustment to harmonise with the staff-facing policy.

15 b) Updates to English Language Policy (DMc) [AB/25/084] ☒

15.7 **Received:** for approval, the annual review of the policy proposed to update the range of accepted English Language qualifications and adjust the requirements for some tests in line with the sector and UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). Recommendations had been made following benchmarking with competitor institutions and consultation with the Languages English for Academic Purposes team and Applicant Services. The updated policy was to be published on the University website and communicated to international student agents, with due diligence taken not to disadvantage students already in the application process whose qualification would no longer be accepted.

15.8 **Approved:** proposed adjustments to the English Language Policy.

16 Revisions to the Professorial Appointments Procedure (DP) [AB/25/085] ☒

16.1 **Received**: for approval, a revised procedure for the Awarding of Professorial Titles, which were reviewed annually following the conclusion of the annual Professorial Appointments process. The revisions addressed feedback from the stage I and II Professorial Appointments Panel with the aim to increase transparency and sector alignment.

16.2 **Noted**: proposed adjustments included increased referee requirements; and a two-year gap between a successful appointment to Associate Professor and an application for full Professor, with the rationale for these changes explained to Members. Clarification was also given regarding adjustments to visiting and emeritus professor appointments.

16.3 **Noted:** an update to performance indicators was noted which clarified metrics for both teaching and scholarship, and RKE routes. The changes were to reduce expectations in the RKE exchange route which had been based on feedback that previous metrics had been too demanding.

16.4 **Approved:** the proposed revisions to the Professorial Appointments Procedure were approved by Academic Board.

16.5 **Noted:** the Honorary Awards process was queried, and it was agreed that this should be brought back to Academic Board after the next cycle.

16.6 **Action:** Honorary Awards process to be reviewed and brought to Academic Board for approval in 2025/26. (RW/DP)

TO NOTE – SILENT RECEIVED WITHOUT COMMENT

17	**Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee report**	[AB/25/086]
18	**Research Integrity & Ethics Committee reports:**	[AB/25/087+088]
19	**Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee report**	[AB/25/089]
20	**Register of interests**	[AB/25/090]
21	**Cycle of Business**	[AB/25/091]

22 **Date, time and location of the next meeting:** 21 Jan 2026, 12:30-15:30, Online