

CONFIRMED

LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

PRESENT: Dr P Haughan (in the Chair), Professor D Bolt, Professor S Kelly, Ms S Murray, Dr L Owens, Dr L Palumbo, Prof N Rao, Ms Alex Toomath, Assoc Prof K Wagner, Dr C Walsh, Assoc Prof A Ridge-Newman

Invitees: Mrs C Brownlie (item 5ii), Dr W Bignold (item 9i),

Secretariat: Mr H Pearce

Apologies: Ms L Burkert, Ms U Boote, Ms V Seddon.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members receive the minutes of Academic Committee held on 16th October 2024. These were **APPROVED** as an accurate record.

2. Matters Arising

- i) Inclusive CoP Recommendations: Mrs Murray reported that progress had been made against the checklist. It was noted that a survey had been sent out to all teaching staff, however response rate was low. Dr Haughan requested that the survey should be shared with the Executive Dean in each faculty to increase response rate after Christmas. Committee Members also recommended to Ms Murray providing academic colleagues with the opportunity to complete at the next Learning and Teaching Day could increase response rate.

Action: Ms Murray to share the survey with each Faculty Executive Dean and make arrangements for it to be completed at the next Learning and Teaching Day.

- ii) Belmont College: Dr Haughan advised that the College was recruiting well and students have already started, with ongoing liaison over academic content taking place between the college and Liverpool Hope Business School.
- iii) BCS Accreditation: Dr Haughan advised that the University has taken external advice on managing those students graduating without accreditation. Each student has received an individual letter and the Executive Dean of Faculty is managing the student experience. The OfS have been updated accordingly.
- iv) GES Feedback and course evaluations: Mr Pearce is awaiting response from Dr Clear.

Action: Mr Pearce to contact Dr Clear and provide feedback at the next meeting.

- v) Apprenticeship Scheme: members noted that external comment is not required as part of the course approval process for Apprenticeships because of significant employer engagement in the process.
- vi) Guidance on assessment matters related to AI: Mrs Murray shared with the committee the key priorities and actions required to support the staff and student body related to AI. Mrs Murray reported that an AI Advisory group has been established and includes representatives from each faculty, student life and the Student Union. An AI webpage will be created to standardise university policy and procedure in relation to this area. The committee noted that this would be particularly beneficial for those students studying combined degrees.

Action: Mrs Murray's team to create a student friendly webpage on AI.

- vii) Progress to date on the Action Plan for School of Mathematics Computer Science and Engineering: Professor Donnelly submitted a report to update the committee on this action. The Chair is assured that progress is being made against the action log and that the quality of the student experience has been put right. Dr Owens also shared that the necessary documents including M Maps have been updated and are being monitored closely by the Executive Dean.

The Chair requested a reflection of this process to be brought to the next meeting so that a discussion can take place about what we have learnt. The Registrar also requested a copy of the action plan to come to the next meeting to reassure the committee that the appropriate progress has been made.

Action: Dr Owens is to produce a reflection paper of the process and present this at the next meeting, along with the action plan.

- viii) Dr Haughan has visited all schools and Professional Service Units to seek feedback on the review of Academic Structures. Dr Haughan has collated this feedback and submitted a recommendation to Professor Ozanne.
- ix) External Examiner for Criminology: the committee agreed to proceed with recommending Dr Elaine Williams for BA Criminology on the understanding that the appropriate induction and mentoring within the faculty is set up.

3. Course Approval and Review

It was noted that UEB have approved a series of Postgraduate Flagship Courses for September 2025 entry. These areas have been identified and recommended by the Executive Deans of each Faculty. PGT Flagship courses for Sept 2025 entry will be:

- MBA
- International Project Management
- International Business Management
- Data Science
- Computer Science
- AI
- MSc Public Health
- (Potential for Food Science to become a flagship course in 2026)

- i) CVG/Course Specifications Approvals by UEB: the Chair noted that MSc Public Health and MA International Project Management would progress through the appropriate stages of the Course Viability Group.
- ii) Definitive Documents to be approved and to be recommended to Senate: The Chair noted that there was nothing to report since the last meeting.
- iii) Definitive Documents to be approved and to be recommended to Senate: The Chair noted that there was nothing to report since the last meeting.
- iv) Withdrawals/Suspensions approved by UEB: Members had received and noted the withdrawal of MA Theology, Philosophy of Religion and the suspension of BA Game, Art and Design for 2025 entry.
- v) Title changes: The Chair noted that there was nothing to report since the last meeting.

4. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- i) School External Examiner Reports (and Responses): Members received the outstanding reports from the Faculty of Human and Digital Sciences and the Faculty of Business Law and Criminology. It was noted that the Business School reported in the Faculty Academic committee minutes that the external examiner had not produced the report despite numerous interventions from the faculty to do so.

Of those that were received, there were certain themes which emerged similar to others such as the need to ensure consistency in marking and feedback; the need to ensure that rubrics give the opportunity for criteria to be achieved; some issues in navigation of Moodle and student view; concern about the use of GradeMark; and misuse of AI.

After feedback from members of the committee, the Chair requested that the quality of handbooks related to external examiners and the deadlines for completing the reports are reviewed with refreshed guidance being issued for 2025-2026 academic year.

The committee noted that all reports received to date indicate that Academic standards are in line with the sector.

Action: Dr Walsh is to conduct a full review of the guidance issued to faculties and introduce dates centrally for the submission of external examiner reports.

- ii) ARE Reports: the following ARE Reports were received: The Business School, Law, Computer Science and the Environment, Health and Sport Sciences, Creative and Performing Arts, Humanities, Education, Social, Sciences. Given the volume of reports, at the request of the chair, Mr Pearce allocated reports to certain individuals to read. The Registrar was requested to have oversight of all reports.

Whilst the committee were assured that in the reports submitted the appropriate monitoring and processes were in place within each school, the committee raised concerns about the lack of reflection in the reports, in particular relation to the first section. The committee requested that the Registrar contacts each Head of School to provide clarity on behalf of Academic Committee on the ARE process. Dr Haughan noted that the School of Humanities report would be a good report to use. The committee agreed that each report should be resubmitted to the next meeting of

Academic Committee after the Registrar has liaised with Heads of School and is happy with the quality of the reports.

Action: Dr Walsh is to contact each Head of School on behalf of Academic Committee and provide feedback on their AREs. Each ARE will then be resubmitted for discussion at Academic Committee.

AMR Reports: these following AMR Reports were received from members of Professional Services: The Data Team, Student Learning, Student Life, Global Student and Partnership Centre. Given the volume of reports to read, at the request of the chair, Mr Pearce allocated reports to certain individuals to read. The Registrar was requested to have oversight of all reports.

Committee members thanked members of professional services units for their positive approach to supporting students and staff, and complimented the deeply reflective reports. Of particular note, was that there has been an increase in students requiring learning support plans and support generally from the Student Life Team. Dr Haughan reassured the committee that the Director of Student Life and her function have appropriate arrangements in place to facilitate this demand.

The committee were assured that in the reports submitted the appropriate monitoring and processes were in place within each department.

- iii) TEF Working Group Minutes and Project Form: members had received the minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 13th November 2024. An initial project form has been developed by the TEF working group to capture the appropriate data from around the University. Mrs Murray is working with the Gateway Service Team to complete the form which will then be used as an example of good practice. The TEF working group continues to focus on developing tools, information and documentation, and the Metrics document. The aim to highlight issues now which can be addressed in time for TEF 2027 with milestones highlighted in the timeline.
- iv) Identification of staff training and development needs; Mr Pearce noted that Ms Anton is in the process of arranging Personal Tutor Training and will attend the next meeting of the committee to provide an update on personal tutor training.
- v) Learning Spaces Group Minutes: Members received the minutes from the meeting held on Monday 25th November 2024. Mrs Murray shared with the committee that the meeting focused on the opening of the i3 building and reviewing the student feedback on the building so far.

5. The Student Journey

- i) Student Numbers for the 1st Term: these were received by members for information.
- ii) Graduate Outcomes Report: Ms Brownlie was invited to present the recent Graduate Outcomes Report. Ms Brownlie reassured the committee that results for Hope show that we are meeting our stated targets (from the University Strategic Plan), but that there are ongoing apprehensions about graduate employability, especially in the Liverpool City Region. Overall, Response rate remains good for the survey. Using OfS methodology cohort is 66% positive progression into graduate level jobs for the 2022

The committee noted that Hope continues to have a good response rate of 58% overall. The sector average response rate is 56%. Hope has seen an increase in its graduates

continuing with further study (up 2% from last year, after a 5% drop the previous year). Hope has therefore moved from the median quartile of the sector on this metric to the higher quartile with further study results being 2% above the sector average.

Ms Brownlie noted that moving forward, the Student Futures Team will continue to work closely with academic and teaching & learning colleagues to embed employability development within the curriculum. This year the intention is to consolidate Careers Fairs and run one big fair covering part time work, volunteering, placements and graduate opportunities and introduce more themed initiatives and events to support the new Access and Participation Plan.

The Chair and committee were reassured that the University are meeting stated targets from the University Plan and that the appropriate mechanisms are in place improve response rates.

iii) Access & Participation Plan Reflective Statement: Dr Walsh prepared a paper which was shared with the committee prior to the meeting. Dr Walsh reassured members of the committee that the appropriate steps had been taken in order to meet the milestones set out in the APP, the includes building areas of concerns from last year's APP to this year's version. There are, five areas where progress against the targets set out in the APP for 2022/23 was substantially less than expected. These elements of our APP are proving difficult to address:

- Attainment Percentage difference in attainment rates between IMD quintile 1 and quintile 5 students will decrease 8pp behind
- Attainment Percentage difference in attainment rates between POLAR4 quintile 1 and quintile 5 students will decrease 6pp behind
- Attainment Percentage difference in attainment rates for Global Majority and White students will decrease 7pp behind
- Progression Percentage difference in progression rates for students from POLAR4 quintile 1 and quintile 5 will decrease 5pp behind
- Progression Percentage difference in progression rates for Global Majority students and White students will decrease 4pp behind

Members **AGREED** to continue to implement the APP Action Plan through the remainder of the period covered by this APP ensuring to evaluate interventions for their effectiveness.

iv) Recruitment and Admissions Policy (QH13): Dr Haughan requested that Mr Pearce makes contact with Ms Boote to complete a summary document outlining the key changes within this policy.

Action: Mr Pearce to contact Ms Boote and re-circulate this document and policy to committee members for approval to recommend to Senate.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

i) NSS & SMS 2025 Arrangements: Committee members received the University arrangements for the NSS 2025 which will launch across all sites on Monday 20th January 2025 for information.

- ii) NSS 2025 Campaign Overview: Members received the campaign overview grid which outlines the events happening on campus in the lead up to the NSS launch for information.
- iii) Summary of Level H Evaluations: Members had received the evaluations which are designed to assist in planning for NSS 2025. It was acknowledged that the response rate was variable across the schools. Dr Haughan requested that each school has provided a response to the evaluations on Moodle by the end of term.

Action: Associate Dean Student Experience in each Faculty to ensure that schools have provided responses on Moodle by the end of term.

- iv) NSS Outcome; Action Plans: Members had received the NSS Action plans produced by each Faculty. Dr Haughan thanked the faculties for producing these detailed reports. It was noted that the actions set out in these plans should assist with resolving issues outlined in the Level H evaluations. Dr L Palumbo queried the purpose of the data within the level H evaluations. Dr Haughan clarified that the evaluations are indicative and designed to provide specific feedback for areas and to ensure faculties have a way to listen to student feedback prior to the NSS launching.

Action: Dr Walsh to review how the data is collated for the Level H course evaluations and share this with the committee members.

7. Registrar's Business

- i) Registrar's Business: Dr Walsh proposed three amendments to university regulations within the Academic Misconducts Policy as noted below:
- ii) Universal Conventions and Procedures Academic Year 2024/5 Mitigating Circumstances to allow 2 self-certificates per academic year. The Registrar noted that this would provide further support to students in light of external factors after recent issues with local GP practices providing the appropriate medical evidence in a timely manner. It was also noted that this particular change in regulation is something that has the support of the Student Union.

Members **APPROVED THE AMMENDMENT** and requested that this was reviewed regularly to ensure it is serving its purpose. It was noted that this amendment will be sent on to Senate for information.

- iii) Universal Conventions and Procedures Academic Year 2025/6 Indicative Assessment Descriptors and associated Marking Scales for Undergraduate [UG] and Postgraduate Taught [PGT] Programmes: The committee received these for discussion. Dr Haughan requested that this forms a substantial part of the agenda at the next meeting.

Action: Mr Pearce to include this on the agenda for the next meeting.

- iv) Universal Assessment Regulations Academic Misconduct Policy Academic Year 2024/5 to include more appropriate definitions of misconduct under Clause 3.1 and to confirm penalties rather than refer to them as 'Indicative'. The Registrar noted that this change in regulation would ensure that our students and staff have clear guidance on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in order to recognise that Gen AI can be used appropriately or inappropriately. The committee noted that this amendment would ensure that the University deal with GenAI more appropriately. The Registrar noted that at the

same time the University will develop a separate acceptable use policy to advise staff and students on the appropriate use of GenAI and provide guidance on how to avoid misconduct.

Members **APPROVED THE AMMENDMENT** as requested by the Registrar.

- v) Degree Apprenticeships Program Regulations: Dr Haughan noted that Ms Boote had sent apologies to the meeting and could therefore not talk members through the paper. Dr Haughan requested that this paper comes to the next meeting of Academic Committee before being recommended to Senate for approval.

Action: Mr Pearce to include this on the agenda for the next meeting and request Ms Boote to take the committee through the paper.

- vi) External Examiner Nominations: these can be accessed using the link which will be sent separately.

Members had received for consideration the following new nominations. For Shelley Coe and David Alderson, it was noted that, as they did not have relevant experience a senior member of staff will act as mentor/supervisor. It was also noted that Dr Haughan took chairs action on Christian Kerr.

Subject	Name	Institution	Commence	Comments
MA Social Work	Christian Kerr	Leeds Beckett University	September 2024	APPRVOED
BSc Food and Nutritional Sciences BSc Sport & Exercise Nutrition Major (programme) in Human Biology	Shelley Coe	Oxford Brookes University	November 2024	APPROVED
Advanced Musculoskeletal Practice	Mr David Alderson	Sheffield Hallam University	September 2024	APPROVED

Subject	Name	Nature of request	Comments
BA Social Policy MA Social Policy	Dr Jonathan Pratt	EXTENSION OF TENURE REALLOCATION OF DUTIES	APPROVED
IMBA	Dr Abdul-Razak Alhassan	EXTENSION OF TENURE REALLOCATION OF DUTIES	APPROVED
BA Politics and International Relations Major and Single Honours	Dr Greig Charnock	EXTENSION OF TENURE	APPROVED

- 8. Faculty Academic Committee Minutes (including NoH):** Members had received the Faculty Academic Committee Minutes. Dr Haughan asked the committee to discuss any particular issues raised in the minutes.

The Registrar noted that the Faculty of Business, Law and Criminology minutes do not have any reference to the key issues currently being faced in the faculty in relation to Belmont and other partnerships. It was noted that apologies had been received from both members of the faculty and therefore a discussion could not take place with the faculty and Registrar. Dr Haughan requested that Dr Walsh pick this up with the Faculty Executive Dean and requested that the minutes were resubmitted to the next meeting.

Action: Dr Walsh to meet with Dr Marsh and feedback the committee's concerns regarding the Faculty Academic Committee minutes. These should be resubmitted to the next meeting of this committee.

Of particular note within the Faculty Academic Committee minutes was the lack of reassurance relating to accreditation and partnerships within the schools and faculties

Action: Dr Haughan is to review this further with Dr Walsh and the Accreditation and Partnerships office.

9. Partnership & Accreditations Committee

- i) PAC Annual Assurance Report: Dr Wendy Bignold presented the PAC Annual Assurance Report as chair of the Partnership and Accreditations Committee. Dr Bignold reassured the committee that all partnerships and accreditations are meeting their contractual obligations as advised by the Associate Deans (External Engagement) and the Executive Deans in each faculty. Dr Bignold noted that there are three exceptions to this which give her cause for concern currently.

Belmont College: The Chair of PAC expressed significant concerns regarding the partnership with Belmont College, particularly related to the admissions process. Dr Bignold noted that the Business School has established an academic oversight group with agreed terms of reference to monitor and address these issues. Dr Haughan emphasised that all strategic mitigations related to this partnership must go through the formal University procedures. The Registrar sought reassurance that the academic oversight group had met and that a formal action plan was in place at the school level and that the minutes from this group be sent to PAC for further discussion. It was noted that no representatives from the faculty or school were present to discuss the matter, and there was no record of the issues in the Faculty Academic Committee minutes. Given these concerns, Dr Haughan requested that the Registrar and the Chair of PAC meet with the Executive Dean to address the issues. Additionally, Dr Haughan asked for the action plan related to this matter to be presented at the next Academic Committee meeting.

Action: Dr Walsh and Dr Bignold are to meet with the Executive Dean of the faculty to discuss the committee's concerns regarding this partnership. The action plan will be presented at the next meeting of the committee.

Spurgeon's College: Dr Bignold updated the committee on the validation agreement with Spurgeon's College for the MA in Digital Theology, which is currently in the run-off stage with only 11 students remaining. She noted that no quality assurance visits were undertaken in the 2023/24 academic year. As Chair of the Partnerships and Accreditations Committee, Dr Bignold will meet with the link colleague in the school to discuss the situation further and develop a detailed action plan, which will be presented for ratification at the next PAC meeting.

BcS Accreditation: Dr Bignold provided an update on the BcS accreditation, noting that the school is not seeking re-approval and that the issue has been reported to the Office for Students. Each affected student has been dealt with on an individual, 1:1 basis. Dr Haughan and the committee expressed satisfaction with how the matter has been handled, confirming that they are confident each student has received the appropriate guidance and support.

- ii) Minutes of the PAC Meeting held on 1st October 2024 were received for information.

10. Library Steering Group

- i) Minutes of the Library Steering Group Minutes on 23rd October 2024 were received for information. Ms Murray updated the committee on the Library Development Plan which will be brought to the next meeting of the Student Sounding Board and then academic committee for discussion.

11. Any Other Business

- i) Members received the terms of reference for a new Student Experience Committee. Dr Haughan expressed that the committee would be a subcommittee of Academic Committee and requested feedback to be sent to Mr Pearce from the committee on this.

Action: Committee members to provide feedback via email to Mr Pearce.

- j) Ms Toomath updated the committee on the current mood of the student body. Ms Toomath noted that all course representative training is now complete and that she is working with the Learning and Teaching team to introduce a new course rep forum based on feedback from the course representatives. A successful round of student trustee recruitment has taken place and new student representatives have joined the union team to enhance the student experience. Dr Haughan thanked Ms Toomath and the Student Union team for their hard work this term on behalf of the committee.

12. Dates for Future Meetings: can be found [here](#)

<u>Members:</u>	<u>For information:</u>
Dr P Haughan (in the Chair) Professor D Bolt	Prof C Ozanne

Ms U Boote Professor S Kelly Ms S Murray Dr L Owens Dr L Palumbo Prof N Rao Assoc Prof A Ridge-Newman Ms V Seddon Ms Alex Toomath Assoc Prof K Wagner Dr C Walsh	<u>Secretariat:</u> Mr H Pearce Date: 6 th December 2024
--	---