

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2025 IN ROOM RS109 REGENT STREET AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT:	Professor P Bonfield (Chair) Professor D Anand Professor C Dormor	Professor A Linn Professor C O'Connor I Wilmot (Deputy Chair)
IN ATTENDANCE:	M Baldwin (Minute 25.69) C Benyon (Minute 25.72) K Brown (Minute 25.73) S Ford (Minute 25.70) K Kinsella (Minute 25.71)	M Lurette (Minute 25.70) E McMillan (minute-taker) J Nicholas Dr M Yassim
APOLOGIES:	Professor C Kalantaridis J Lamarque (Secretary)	K Patel

25.66 ANNOUNCEMENTS

25.66.1 **Welcome:** The Chair welcomed all members and attendees to the meeting.

25.66.2 **Apologies:** Members accepted the apologies as recorded above and noted that Jeanette Nicholas – Associate Head (External Relations), College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Dr Mazia Yassim - Associate Head (External Relations), Westminster Business School attended on behalf of the respective Heads of Colleges.

25.66.3 **Declaration of interests:** Members did not declare any conflict of interest for the matters on the agenda.

25.66.4 **Requests to discuss starred items and business not on the agenda:** The Chair confirmed there were no requests to discuss starred items or items of business not on the agenda.

25.66.5 **Chair's business**
The Chair introduced the meeting agenda and gave a brief update on Government discussions around the international student levy and internal cost management and performance improvement actions.

25.66.6 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) informed members that Research England will announce changes to the Research Excellence Framework at the Universities UK meeting on 10 December 2025.

25.66.7 The DVC (Education) informed members that she is working with the Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance (SPP) and colleagues in the Quality and Standards team to identify any impact of the use of dual algorithms on degree outcomes and will submit a proposal for any necessary changes shortly. The Chair confirmed that the DVC (Education) will lead on the response to the Office for Students (OfS) on this matter.

25.66.7.1 **ACTION DVC (Education)** to develop a proposal for amendments to degree algorithms if necessary to ensure alignment with OfS expectations.

25.66.8 The DVC (Global Engagement and Employability) updated members on the Universities UK international students event the previous evening, noting the importance of human connection to international students' decisions on studying at UK higher education institutions (HEIs).

25.67 STAYING SAFE: BUSINESS CONTINUITY GROUP UPDATE

25.67.1 The University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (USCOO)/Co-Chair, Staying Safe: Business Continuity Group informed members that the Group met the previous week and discussed outcomes from the recent business continuity workshop, agreed a schedule of business and that work to benchmark student contracts against the OfS guidance on disruption will be considered by the Managing Industrial Action (MIA) Planning Group.

25.67.2 Members noted that the Group did not identify any new intelligence that should be reported to UEB.

25.68 INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGIC PLAN SIX-MONTHLY UPDATE

25.68.1 The Chair postponed this agenda item to January 2026 due to the change in the internal audit service provider from August 2025.

25.69 UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

25.69.1 Mark Baldwin - Executive Director, Performance Improvement and Innovation (PII) gave an oral update on progress in marking and feedback, a priority area in the Education Strategy:

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

25.69.2 [Redacted]

25.69.3 In response to a query, the Executive Director (PII) confirmed that any colleague with teaching responsibility – including Part-Time Visiting Lecturers - would be expected to engage with the development workshop.

25.69.4 The Chair summarised the timeline and noted that Colleges need to confirm dates and enable colleagues to sign up to training workshops and that the Executive Director (PII) will lead on this work liaising with the Associate Heads of Colleges (Education and Students).

25.70 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

25.70.1 Dibyesh Anand - Co-Chair of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Coordinating Group informed members that the SDGs annual report 2024-25 (Document UEB 251125A) would also be presented to the Court of Governors.

25.70.2 Members noted that the report cannot be changed as it has already been published and that UEB will receive the annual report in September/October in future so members can comment prior to publication.

25.70.3 The Co-Chair thanked Morgan Lurette - Sustainable Development Advisor – for compiling the report.

25.70.4 The Co-Chair asked members to notify either of the SDG Coordinating Group Co-Chairs or the Sustainable Development Advisor if they become aware of good examples that could be included in the annual report.

25.70.5 Steve Ford - SDG Coordinating Group Co-Chair – informed members that despite challenges the sector is performing well and in several areas the University is leading when benchmarked against other HEIs.

25.70.6 The Sustainable Development Advisor informed members of the history of the report and about plans to provide a more interactive report via the University's website that can be updated throughout the year, with the capacity to provide a collated annual report if required.

25.70.7 Members supported the proposal to introduce a more interactive approach to SDG reporting and to improve visibility of SDG activities via the website.

25.70.8 A member noted that this data – and the story it tells – is also relevant for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and business engagement and is of interest to external stakeholders.

25.70.9 A member noted the need for a common language acknowledging potential tensions between SDG activities and other areas, such as use of artificial intelligence.

25.70.10 Members discussed the gender imbalance in engagement in SDG work.

25.70.11 The Sustainable Development Advisor and SDG Coordinating Group Co-Chair invited members to provide a section in the report about UEB including their highlights from the past year and what members plan to do to embed SDGs in their respective areas.

25.70.12 **AGREED** Members recommend the SDGs annual report 2024-25 to the Court of Governors.

25.71 DISPOSAL OF INTERNATIONAL HOUSE (Confidential)

25.71.1 Ken Kinsella – Director of Estates Planning and Services (EPS) – briefed members on completion of due diligence on the prospective buyer (Document UEB 251125B).

25.71.2 **[Redacted].**

25.71.3 **AGREED [Redacted]**

25.72 JANUARY RECRUITMENT (Confidential)

25.72.1 Caroline Benyon - Director of Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications (GRAMC) gave a presentation on the current recruitment position for students starting courses in January 2026.

25.72.1.1 **ACTION Director of GRAMC** to provide a copy of the presentation slides to the UEB Secretary to publish for members.

25.72.2 The Chair commended the GRAMC team for all their work and the DVC (Global Engagement and Employability) reported some informal positive feedback about the Recruitment team from a sector event.

25.72.3 A member highlighted the potential tension and challenge between reaching out to international student groups and not treating international students differently from other students. The Director of GRAMC confirmed that all recruitment activities are generic and inclusive.

25.72.4 Members considered it would be beneficial for governors to receive a briefing on recruitment.

25.72.4.1 **ACTION Clerk to the Court of Governors and Director of GRAMC** to schedule a briefing session for the Court.

25.73 ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN

25.73.1 Kitty Brown - Director of SPP – summarised key points from a paper on work in progress to deliver the University's Access and Participation Plan (APP) (Document UEB 251125C), noting:

- The approach mandated by the OfS is clear: it must be evidence-based and evaluative, and the focus is on closing the gaps for specific target groups rather than raising rates everywhere.

- Within the APP the University committed to a mid-plan review in 2026-27.
- An operational group has been established to address some concerns around readiness and transition to delivery and data readiness.

25.73.2 **[Redacted].**

25.73.3 Members heard that a new APP programme operational lead role is being established.

25.73.4 The Director of SPP noted that the supporting operating model needs to include better defined role and responsibilities so there are clear expectations for colleagues and clarity around what their contribution should be.

25.73.5 Members discussed alignment between the APP programme, preparation for the TEF and the mid-term review, including around identifying data needs and colleague engagement with available data. A member commented that data on student success is evidence for the quality environment not just for individual exercises (i.e., B3 conditions, TEF and APP).

25.73.5.1 ACTION Chair of the EDI (Education) Steering Group and Director of SPP to report to UEB on 16 December 2025 about what progress has been made.

25.74 STUDENT CONTINUATION UPDATE

25.74.1 The DVC (Education) reported:

- The University's continuation rate is 0.8 points ahead of benchmark; however, is not at the internal target.
- Continuation from 2024-25 to 2025-26 is up two points and back in line with pre-Covid levels.
- There is variation between International and Home student continuation rates and variance across subject areas.
- All three Colleges demonstrated year-on-year improvement; however, there are a few areas to work with.

25.74.2 Members heard that the DVC (Education) is working with the Associate Heads of Colleges and will also engage with Heads of Schools and has discussed with the Executive Director (PII) identifying patterns in attendance data and first time sit rates to provide insight and better understand where there may be issues.

25.74.2.1 ACTION DVC (Education) to share with the Heads of Colleges the list of topics the DVC is using when engaging with Associate Heads of Colleges.

25.75 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING

25.75.1 **APPROVED** Members confirmed that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2025 (Document UEB 251125D) are an accurate record of the meeting.

25.75.2 Members noted an update on actions and matters arising from previous meetings (Document UEB 251125E).

25.76 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

25.76.1 **APPROVED** Updated terms of reference for the MIA Planning Group (Document UEB 251125H) to be implemented with immediate effect.

25.77 MEETING EVALUATION

25.77.1 Participants commented that the meeting was collaborative and covered a lot of ground, that the SDG annual report was impressive and that it is reassuring to see key aspects being addressed in a detailed way.

25.78 UPDATE ON APPRENTICESHIP PROVISION

25.78.1 Members received an update on apprenticeship provision (Document UEB 251125F) that will also be submitted to the Court of Governors.

25.79 SUB-COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

25.79.1 **APPROVED** Professors and Readers Awarding Committee terms of reference and membership 2025-26 (Document UEB 251125G) to be implemented with immediate effect.

25.79.2 **APPROVED** Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee terms of reference and membership 2025-26 (Document UEB 251125G) to be implemented with immediate effect.

25.79.3 **APPROVED** Partnership Scrutiny Committee terms of reference and membership 2025-26 (Document UEB 251125H) to be implemented with immediate effect.

25.80 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

16 December 2025	21 April 2026
6 January 2026	12 May 2026
20 January 2026	26 May 2026
3 February 2026	9 June 2026
17 February 2026	23 June 2026
2 March 2026 – UEB dinner	6 July 2026 – UEB dinner
3 March 2026 – UEB away day	7 July 2026 UEB away day
17 March 2026	28 July 2026
31 March 2026	11 August 2026

Regular meetings are 10.30am to 12.30pm (unless alternative time stated above) in Room RS109, Regent Street and via Microsoft Teams.