

University of Suffolk

SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11 March 2026 at 14.00 hours in W209, Waterfront Building

Chair: Professor Jenny Higham (Vice-Chancellor)

Present: Associate Professor Stuart Agnew (Director, Centre for Academic and International Partnerships), Javiera Artenas (School of Business, Arts, Social Sciences and Technology representative), Professor Rachel Allen (Provost), Dr Sam Chenery-Morris (Executive Dean, School of Business, Arts, Social Sciences and Technology), Dr Mary Cornelius (Educational Development and Digital Innovation Manager, Vice-Chancellor's nominee), Jo Divers (School of Health, Sciences and Society representative), Lee-Ann Durrant (Students' Union President of Education), Professor Eloise Ellis (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Education and Student Experience), Mars Hardy (Students' Union School Officer), Chantalle Hawley (Director of Student Life), Marek Hornak (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Careers, Commercial and Academic Partnerships), Dr Ross Kemble (University wide representative, School of Business, Arts, Social Sciences and Technology), Professor Paula Kersten (Executive Dean, School of Health, Sciences and Society), Laura Pennie (Academic Registrar), Danielle Ramsey (School of Health, Sciences and Society representative), Dr Marco Spada (University wide representative, School of Business, Arts, Social Sciences and Technology), Ann Teemal (Lecturer, School of Health, Sciences and Society, Vice-Chancellor's nominee)

Apologies: Pere Ayling (University wide academic representative, School of Business, Arts, Social Sciences and Technology), Chrissy Buckle (School Manager, Professional Services representative), Professor Emma Bond (Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Knowledge Exchange), Rob Ellis (Director of Learning and Teaching), Stuart Lipscombe (Representative, University and College Union), James Nial (Associate Director, Planning and Management Information), Shannon Pilsworth (Students' Union School Officer)

Secretary: Alison McQuin (Head of Quality)

In attendance: John Cavani (Chief Marketing Officer), Dr Kay Thompson (Head of Research Degree Awarding Powers and REF 2029) in attendance for Professor Emma Bond

Minutes shown in bold italics should be treated as confidential and will be removed from the published set on the University website.

Minutes of previous meeting

25/048 The minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

Matters arising

Policies and procedures – Professorial Appointments (from minute 24/076)

25/049 Updates to terminology was still to be completed.

Academic Framework (from minute 24/136)

25/050 It was confirmed that the Almanac has been re-positioned on The Hub to the 'Resource Hub' pages to make it more prominent to staff.

25/051 All other actions had been completed.

Students' Union report

25/052 The Students' Union (SU) President (Education) reported that, following the departure of the SU President (Activities and Wellbeing), that they were temporarily covering two roles. SU elections had concluded and two new Presidents had been appointed with effect from the new academic year. A review of democratic structures was underway and would be presented to the SU Student Officer Council later in the month.

25/053 It was noted that the SU had been collaborating with the Educational Development and Digital Innovation Manager on the institutional guidance to generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). The SU President would also be contributing to a WonkHE event to present the student perspective on GenAI.

Policies and procedures

Academic Appeals Procedure for Research Degree Students on University of Brighton Validated Programmes

25/054 A new procedure was developed following the University of Brighton agreeing to delegate responsibility for academic appeals on validated research degree programmes. The procedure mirrored the existing procedure in operation for research degree students on University of Essex validated programmes to facilitate parity across research degree provision. Members approved the new procedure.

Outcome: Approved.

Academic Misconduct Policy

25/055 Minor updates were proposed to the Academic Misconduct Policy to align and reflect the new Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy for Learning and Teaching. Members discussed the categorisation of misuse of GenAI and contract cheating as well as how instances would be recorded, but supported the amendments as proposed, subject to correcting a job title.

Agreed action: The Academic Registrar to update reference to the Deputy Academic Registrar role within the Policy prior to publication.

25/056 It was noted that further work would be required in relation to the penalty framework and this would be progressed as an ongoing piece of work along with calibration activities for academic misconduct Chairs and panels.

Admissions Policy

25/057 The Admissions Policy was reviewed annually. It was confirmed that the section related to insurance arrangements for applicants under the age of 18 had been developed with Safeguarding colleagues. However, as placement providers may have

different requirements and may not allow under-18s on placement, it was requested that this section be reviewed further and cross-referenced with the Under-18 Policy.

Agreed action: The Chief Marketing Officer to review the arrangements for applicants under the age of 18 to ensure it did not conflict with placement provider requirements or the Under-18 Policy. The Admissions Policy should be resubmitted to the next Senate meeting.

- 25/058 Members agreed that explicit reference to apprenticeship admissions processes should be included within the Policy, which could be as a separate appendix.

Agreed action: The Chief Marketing Officer to work with the Apprenticeships Team to include relevant references to admission of apprenticeship students. The Admissions Policy should be resubmitted to the next Senate meeting.

- 25/059 Members noted a further minor amendment was required to paragraph 16 to show that applicants only required a good honours degree, rather than taught postgraduate qualification, to enter postgraduate research courses.

Agreed action: The Chief Marketing Officer to update paragraph 16 to reflect the consideration of a good honours qualification rather than taught postgraduate qualification for resubmission to the next Senate meeting.

CAS Issuance Policy

- 25/060 A new Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) Issuance Policy was proposed. Members discussed the inclusion that a CAS would not ordinarily be issued where an applicant declared an intention to live beyond the specified 70-mile radius from the institution, noting that this was also included within the General Regulations. The 70-mile radius was put in place as it helped the University to discharge its sponsor responsibilities and was also intended to support student attendance and engagement. While students may still live further than 70-miles from the institution post-enrolment, the Attendance Team would manage instances where students were not attending or engaging with their studies.

- 25/061 It was confirmed that the CAS issuance process for exchange students was the same as 'new' students. It was agreed that this should be retained within the policy to reflect the position regardless of the low volume of cases and that this section should be reviewed by the Director of Student Life prior to publication.

Agreed action: The Director of Student Life to review the CAS issuance process for exchange students prior to publication.

External Examiner Policy

- 25/062 Minor changes to the External Examiner Policy were proposed as part of the regular cycle of policy reviews, including the removal of detailed operational content and the inclusion of headline references to modular provision and the Lifelong Learning Entitlement, to ensure the policy remained future-facing.

Outcome: Approved.

Framework and Regulations for Research Degree Awards

- 25/063 A minor amendment was proposed to the regulations to make more explicit the registration period for students entering under recognised prior learning (RPL). These changes were also updated and reflected within the Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure. Members approved the changes.

Outcome: Approved.

Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy for Learning and Teaching

- 25/064 Members considered the Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy for Learning and Teaching, which had been developed with a wide range of stakeholders. The associated training and guidance materials had been created and would be regularly updated.
- 25/065 It was confirmed that paragraph 14 relating to the use of personal data was discussed and agreed with the Data Governance team.
- 25/066 Members discussed the proposed declaration (paragraph 23) and noted that this would be implemented via a submission acknowledgement within Brightspace, supported by sample statements for students. It was acknowledged that this might present challenges for certain assessment types, e.g. OSCEs but this provision would be expected to be developed and refined over time. It was agreed that the guidance on how to conduct vivas for suspected misuse of AI would sit better referenced within the misconduct policies.
- 25/067 Members were supportive of the policy, subject to a minor amendment to paragraph 10 to include reference to the placement provider.

Agreed action: The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Education and Student Experience, to update paragraph 10 to include reference to the placement provider prior to publication.

Guidance on the Employment of Postgraduate Research students in Academic-Related Roles

- 25/068 New guidance had been proposed around the employment of postgraduate research degrees, which aimed to ensure that employment opportunities were structured and fairly managed. It was agreed that prohibiting postgraduate research students from any employment would be difficult to enforce and would not be equitable.
- 25/069 It was confirmed that employers' new obligations under the Employment Rights Act should not have an effect on the contents of the guidance, but the People and Organisational Development (POD) Team were reviewing the matter as part of a wider piece of work.

Outcome: Approved.

Intellectual Property Policy (Research and Scholarly Outputs)

- 25/070 Minor updates to the Intellectual Property Policy (Research and Scholarly Outputs) had been proposed as part of the regular cycle of policy reviews.
- 25/071 It was queried whether the policy should reflect the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) and Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA), particularly in paragraph 4 and 29. It was agreed that as this would affect the University's commercial practices that it would need further discussion by the Executive prior to inclusion. It was confirmed that academic staff needed to cite their own work within learning and teaching materials.
- 25/072 Members were supportive of the changes as proposed, subject to minor updates to correct terminology and include reference to the GenAI Policy for Learning and Teaching, noting that any future changes in relation to CoARA and DORA would need to be discussed by the Executive first.

Agreed action: The Director of Learning and Teaching to correct the use of Faculty and include reference to the GenAI Policy for Learning and Teaching prior to publication.

Postgraduate Research Misconduct Policy for Students on University of Brighton Validated Programmes

25/073 The University of Brighton had agreed for the University of Suffolk to take delegated responsibility of research misconduct for students on their validated provision. A new policy had therefore been proposed that broadly mirrored the approach in place for students on University of Essex validated programmes, supporting parity of provision.

Outcome: Approved.

Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure

25/074 A minor amendment was proposed to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Procedure to confirm arrangements for postgraduate research students. Members queried whether professional doctorate students from other institutions would be able to RPL into a PhD and it was confirmed that they would be able to do so from the research stage.

Agreed action: The Head of RDAP and REF to make explicit arrangements for professional doctorate students to RPL into PhD courses prior to publication.

Research Misconduct Policy

25/075 The Research Misconduct Policy was updated so that it only applies to staff, recognising that separate misconduct policies now covered research students. Members approved the policy, noting that it had also been considered by the Research and Ethics Committee and the Research and Enterprise Committee.

Outcome: Approved.

Support to Study Procedure

25/076 The Support to Study Procedure was updated as part of the regular cycle of policy reviews. Members agreed that students on a professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) course could be considered under either the Support to Study Procedure or the Fitness to Practise Procedure and that, where appropriate, the Support to Study Procedure was preferable as a primary route for supporting students.

25/077 It was noted that a separate risk assessment document would be developed to support staff members.

25/078 While members were supportive of the proposed changes, it was agreed that the procedure would be resubmitted to the next Senate meeting, to incorporate further amendments suggested by the Office for Student Appeals, Complaints and Conduct (OSACC) to ensure alignment with other OSACC related policies.

Agreed action: The Director of Student Life to update the procedure to reflect comments received by OSACC and resubmit for approval at the next Senate meeting.

Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP)

25/079 Members received an update on progress towards gaining Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP), noting that the initial application had been submitted to the

Office for Students (OfS) and while confirmation of the timing of the assessment phases was awaited, work would continue on gathering relevant case studies and evidence. The outcome of the RDAP process and regulatory decision would not likely be reported until 2028/29.

- 25/080 The results of the recent survey as part of the evidence against key staff-related metrics for RDAP were provided and had indicated some misunderstanding of the questions and a tendency for staff to understate their experience. Further examples would be provided in the next survey with the aim of meeting the relevant metric by the autumn.

Office for Student appeals, Complaints and Conduct (OSACC) annual report 2024/25

- 25/081 The OSACC Annual Report 2024/25 was shared with members, with an offer for OSACC to attend any team meetings to provide further insight.
- 25/082 It was noted that while there had been an increase in both the overall volume and complexity of cases, they represented a small minority of the student population. The volume of cases from partner institutions were monitored through the Partnership Management Group.
- 25/083 The number of student complaints related to service issues was discussed, noting that while Minerva was not considered to be the principal issue, the timeliness of responses had been a concern and work was ongoing to support earlier informal resolution where appropriate.

School course annual review

School of Business, Arts, Social Sciences and Technology

- 25/084 Members received an update on School course annual review activity for the School of Business, Arts, Social Sciences and Technology. It was reported that activity focused on continuous improvement and sharing good practice.

School of Health, Sciences and Society

- 25/085 Members received an update on School course annual review activity for the School of Health, Sciences and Society. It was reported that further support for colleagues in producing course annual reviews was required and that work was underway to progress actions in this area.

Academic calendar

- 25/086 Members received an update on work to standardise the academic calendar, thanking colleagues for progress made. It was noted that minor variations to the calendar, for example, assessment submission arrangements, would need to be documented and embedded into business-as-usual processes.
- 25/087 The importance of the standardisation, as far as possible, was noted, highlighting the impact of calendar setting on student payments.

Sector activity

- 25/088 An update on sector activity since the last meeting was provided to members for information.

- 25/089 The Targeted Peer Review by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) into the University of Glasgow was highlighted to members, noting that themes emerging from the review would be presented to the next Quality Committee.

Senate elections

- 25/090 The election process to find a replacement University-wide academic representative had been completed and Claire Culley had been appointed to membership with effect from the next meeting.

- 25/091 Members were advised of the timelines for the next round of elections.

Degree Outcomes Statement

- 25/092 The 2024/25 degree outcomes statement approved by Board was provided to members for information.

Annual Compliance Report

- 25/093 The annual compliance report 2024/25, approved by Board, was provided to members for information.

Course proposal forms

- 25/094 The list of course proposal forms approved by the Portfolio Oversight Committee were provided to members.

Course suspension, discontinuation and re-instatement forms

- 25/095 The list of approved course suspension and discontinuation forms was provided to members.

Activity since the last meeting

- 25/096 The list of items approved since the last meeting was provided to members.

Any other business

- 25/097 There was no further business.

Date of next meeting

- 25/098 The next meeting will take place in-person at 14.00 on Wednesday 10 June 2026.

Alison McQuin
Head of Quality