

Academic Board Minutes - Approved

Date 13 December 2023, 14.00

Location Great Hall, Strand Campus and MS Teams

Composition		Members	Attendance 2023-2024				
			1 Nov 23	13 Dec	6 Mar 24	17 Apr	26 Jun
Ex officio	Chair of Academic Board, President & Principal	Professor Shitij Kapur	P	P			
	Senior Vice	SVP Academic Professor Rachel Mills	P	P			
	Presidents & Vice Principals	SVP Health & Life Sciences Professor Richard Trembath	P	P			
		VP Education & Student Success Professor Adam Fagan	P	P			
		VP Research & Innovation Professor Bashir Al-Hashimi	P	P			
		VP International, Engagement & Service Professor 'Funmi Olonisakin	P	P			
	The Reverend the Dean	Rev'd Canon Dr Ellen Clark-King	A	P			
	The President of the Students' Union	Steven Suresh	P	P			
	KCLSU Vice Presidents Education	Vice President for Education (Arts & Sciences) Sadaf Abbas Cheema	P	-			
		Vice President for Education (Health) Janvi Jagasia	P	P			
		Vice President for Postgraduate Alizeh Abrar	P	-			
	Executive Deans of Faculty	Arts and Humanities Professor Marion Thain	P	P			
		Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences Professor Michael Escudier	P	P			
		Dickson Poon School of Law Professor Dan Hunter	P	A			
		King's Business School Professor Stephen Bach	P	P			
		Life Sciences & Medicine Professor Ajay Shah	P	P			
		Natural, Mathematical & Engineering Sciences Professor Mark French (Interim)	P	P			
Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care Professor Irene Higginson		A	A				
Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience (Interim) Professor Matthew Hotopf		P	P				
Social Science and Public Policy Professor Linda McKie	P	A					
Dean for Doctoral Studies	Professor Rebecca Oakey	P	P				
Executive Director: Centre for International Education & Languages (CIEL)	Sarah Shirley	P	P				
Elected Students	One student from each faculty, split equally across UG/PGT/PGR	Arts and Humanities Jenee Gardner	P	P			
		Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences Jekaterina Polomarenko	P	P			
		Dickson Poon School of Law Emilia Britain	P	P			
		King's Business School <i>Vacancy</i>	-	-			
		Life Sciences & Medicine Mariana Ferreira Teixeira Da Silva	P	A			
		Natural, Mathematical and Engineering Sciences Navye Jain	P	P			
		Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care Marie Martos	P	A			
		Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience Emil Galanides	P	P			
Social Science and Public Policy Joep Lahaije	P	P					
Elected Staff	Four academic staff members from each faculty (and five in the case of larger faculties) elected by and from the staff of	Arts & Humanities (5 members, including HOD equivalent)	Dr Virginia Crisp (HoD)	P	P		
			Dr Hannah Crawforth	A	P		
			Dr Zeena Feldman	P	P		
			Professor Nick Harrison	P	P		
			Dr Laura Gibson	P	P		
	Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences (4 members, including HOD equivalent)	Professor Kim Piper (HoD)	P	P			
		Professor Jeremy Green	A	P			
		Professor Richard Cook	P	P			
		Dr David Moyes	P	P			
	Dickson Poon School of Law (4 members, including HOD equivalent)	<i>Vacancy</i>	-	-			
		Professor Ann Mumford	P	P			
		Professor Ewan McGaughey	A	A			
Dr Elin Weston		P	P				
	Professor Gulcin Ozkan (HoD)	P	P				

each faculty.	King's Business School (4 members, including HOD equivalent)	Dr Jack Fosten	A	P			
		Dr Juan Baeza	P	P			
		Dr Andrew McFaul	P	P			
Life Sciences & Medicine (5 members, including HOD equivalent)	Professor Susan Brain (HoD)	P	P				
	Dr Manasi Nandi	P	P				
	Professor Claire Wells	P	P				
	Dr Baljinder Mankoo	P	P				
	Dr Anna Battaglia	P	P				
Natural, Mathematical and Engineering Sciences (4 members, including HOD equivalent)	Professor Luc Moreau (HoD)	P	P				
	Dr Andre Cobb	P	P				
	Professor David Richards	P	P				
	Professor Gerard Watts	P	P				
Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care (4 members, including HOD equivalent)	Dr Lorraine Robinson (HoD)	P	A				
	Dr Jocelyn Cornish	P	A				
	Dr Wladzia Czuber-Dochan	A	A				
	Irene Zeller	P	A				
Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience (5 members, including HOD equivalent)	Professor Sarah Byford (HoD)	A	P				
	Dr Eleanor Dommett	P	P				
	Dr Rina Dutta	A	P				
	Dr Yannis Paloyelis	P	P				
	Dr Eamonn Walsh	P	A				
Social Science and Public Policy (5 members, including HOD equivalent)	Professor Jelke Boesten (HoD)	P	P				
	Dr Hillary Briffa	P	A				
	Dr Sunil Mitra Kumar	P	P				
	Dr Tim Benbow	P	P				
	Tomas Maltby	P	P				
Three staff members on contracts which include teaching from Professional and Continuing Education elected by and from the staff members on contracts which include teaching in PACE. One of the three seats will be held by a Head of Department or equivalent.	<i>Sarah Shirley (see ex-officio)</i>	-	-				
	Suzie Coates	P	P				
	Dr Michael Elliott	P	P				
Three professional staff	Education Support	Thomas Seagroatt	P	P			
	Research Support	Dr Natasha Awais-Dean	P	P			
	Service Support	Akic Lwaldeng	P	P			
Two academic staff on research-only contracts	Arts and Sciences Faculties	Dr Harriet Boulding	P	p			
	Health Faculties	Dr Joanna Davies	P	P			

v= vacant post

In attendance:

Darren Wallis, Executive Director, SED

Lynne Barker, Associate Director (Academic Regulations, Quality and Standards), SED

Robin McIver, Deputy Vice President Operations (Item 5)

Lorraine Kelly, Director, Organisational Development/EDI (Item 6.2)

Liviu Matei, HoS, School of Education, Communication and Society (representing Linda McKie, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy)

Secretariat:

Paul Mould (Deputy College Secretary)

Joanna Brown (Governance Manager)

Sheron Balfour (Governance & Compliance Manager)

1 Welcome, apologies and notices

The Chair announced the new members of the Academic Board Operations Committee. There had been a call for nominations for two vacancies, and as there had been only one nomination received for each of those positions the new members were automatically acclaimed:

- Staff member: Professor Jack Fosten (King's Business School)
- Student member: Jekaterina Polomarenko (Faculty of Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences)

2 Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved.

3 Unanimous Consent Agenda (including Minutes of the Previous Meeting) [AB-23-12-13-03]

There had been two requests to remove items from the College Research Committee report from the Unanimous Consent Agenda:

- (i) Proposal for New Equity Participation Policy (Annex 1)
- (ii) Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research paper (Annex 2)

Decision

That the remaining items on the Unanimous Consent Agenda be taken as read and noted or approved.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

5 In Defence of Value-Based Impartiality [AB-23-12-13-05]

Academic Board received a report from the Vice President (International, Engagement & Service). The Vice-Chancellor introduced the report which set out the balance between freedom of expression and a harmonious community, and how, as a university, to be impartial and handle disagreements. Often disagreements were theoretical but recent events had raised the issues of freedom of expression for universities across the world more concretely and formally. He stated that it was important to consider what was meant by academic freedom, and to take the time to think through all the implications.

The Vice President (IES) stated the importance of context, noting that background research for the paper had generated a list of geopolitical emergencies in the last ten years of different levels of complexity. There were students and staff from every community in every case: it was not the University's responsibility to respond in every single case. However, there had not been consistency in deciding whether to respond and King's, as an institution, had sometimes been caught off-guard. King's held certain values dearly, and would speak on them: protection of its students and staff; protection of academic freedom; protection of an environment where every student and all staff could express themselves freely within the law.

During discussion points made included:

- General feedback that this was a good and necessary document, and an important step on the way to a university reference for providing the basis for taking positions on geopolitical and complex social issues.
 - The term "sociopolitical" referred to social tensions that affected King's community.
 - It was clarified that the terms "we" and "University" throughout the document referred to the institution and was not prescribing opinions of individuals within the University. The document intended to protect individuals' ability to speak and reflect their own opinions.
 - A member noted that the University had taken political stances on some issues in the past, for example Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) and fossil fuels. The Vice-Chancellor stated that with respect to matters concerning the regular operations of the University, it would take a stance, as would any corporation. With respect to divestment of fossil fuels, this had been the right ethical path for the University and did not prevent the right of an academic to take an opposing view. The Princeton Principles on academic freedom set out that: whereas individual students and faculty members [had] the right to speak out regarding any matter,
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the institution... should speak out only about matters that clearly affect their normal operations and the intellectual freedom they must protect..."

- Staff and students could speak out as individuals and say what they wanted to say and to whom (within the bounds of the law), including when they had an opposite view to the University, whereas the institutional view, which was the responsibility of management, would be limited to matters that related to its operations.
- As well as having guidelines the University should educate its community on the principles of freedom of expression, providing training and workshops. For example, the Chicago Principles were used widely as a pedagogical tool.
- That it be made clear that the wording of "safety" for staff and students referred to physical safety. Physical safety is sacrosanct, while emotional safety was more contextual. Psychological safety was not defined in law except with respect to harassment and bullying.
- Freedom of Expression Standing Advisory Group (FESAG): It was suggested by a member that FESAG's mandate be expanded to include academic freedom to enable it to help with the implementation of the document. The FESAG mandate was currently restricted to freedom of speech. It was noted that FESAG had been set up to provide support for high risk events, that only a tiny proportion of events got considered by FESAG, and it had never disallowed an event. Staff perceptions about FESAG being used to restrict events highlighted that more needed to be done to communicate its supportive role. A paper would be brought to the next Academic Board detailing its history. [ACTION]
- The KCLSU President corroborated that students needed the protection of clear communication of legal guidance, and that they looked to their academics for leadership and guidance. King's had a very diverse international student body, and it had been an extremely challenging time for KCLSU, with groups of students expecting it to take a clear partisan position. KCLSU represented all students, and was also subject to charity law, and so could not use its resources to enter into political discourse. KCLSU attempts at approaching (or not approaching) individual groups of students had sometimes been misunderstood.
- The guidance being developed to help King's community in understanding the legal boundaries both in the UK and elsewhere was the responsibility of senior management. An example of UK law which the University was under a duty to communicate clearly to its community included the proscription of Hamas in the UK as a terrorist organisation, making comments in support of Hamas illegal in this country. It was noted that such communications had been interpreted, in the past, as threatening though the intent had been to assist groups within King's to ensure they remained compliant with the law. Similarly, it was King's duty to provide its academic staff with guidance of the legal situations in other countries on work trips abroad.

Suggestions on wording/rephrasing/clarification:

- many of the key terms on which the paper rested were difficult to define but the ambiguities should not prevent the University from holding a position.
- Rephrasing of point 9.3 in case it could be read as lending support in one place and not another.

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- The difficulty of knowing reliably which individuals identified with particular groups was noted, and caution sounded about the institution attempting to do this (Point 10).

The Deputy Vice President (Operations) stated that conversations were much harder in times of crisis and the utility of the paper went beyond the current crisis in Israel and Gaza, during which there had been many representations from different groups insisting that the University take a clear partisan position on one side or another. It would have been much preferable to communicate the messages about legal limits when not in the middle of a crisis.

The Vice President (IES) stated that she wanted to see an emerging pattern where the University was not seen to be taking sides. Historically, issues had arisen because of communication issues, about who was making the decisions and how they were being made. This paper proposed to make the process consistent. Providing clarity would help to demonstrate that the University, and its community, were mature enough to have difficult and critically important discussions about what was going on in society with civility.

The Vice-Chancellor reflected that the Israel/Gaza conflict was a difficult issue for all universities, and that he was reasonably confident that King's had managed it well so far and had protected the physical well-being of staff, but acknowledged that there had been concerns raised by individuals about their sense of safety on campus. There had been a lot of pastoral support; there had been protests, and King's had supported individuals who had been challenged by the authorities because of their views, but there had not yet been any formal, academic events tackling the issues and encouraging a deeper discussion about what this conflict was all about and how it could be understood and he saw this as a shortfall.

The Vice-Chancellor & President thanked the Vice President (IES) for the discussion paper. Freedom of speech was about creating conditions that enabled dialogue and discourse to take place. He encouraged anyone thinking of holding an event on the Israel/Gaza conflict to do so. It would be uncomfortable, and there would not be a consensus, but it would engender more understanding about the conflict, because difficult discussion was what a scholarly community did best.

6 Report of the Vice-Chancellor & President

6.1 Summary Report on Key Issues [AB-23-12-13-06.1]

The Vice-Chancellor & President presented his report, which highlighted current issues, events and developments since the last meeting of the Academic Board, including: Admissions, King's Doctoral College, Campus Futures, PFI insourcing, AI courses, Academic titles, AEP Review Group. Updates included:

King's and the University of Portsmouth had that morning opened a branch campus at Portsmouth to deliver a medical degree leading to a King's degree, while the University of Portsmouth's plans for its own independent medical school were progressed. Portsmouth was one of the most deprived areas for GP services in the UK.

Admissions update: As previously reported, admissions were lower than expected and it was the first time King's had fallen below international UG and PGT targets. Some of the reasons were clear: the external environment had changed, with for example the UK introducing stricter visa regulations while other countries were relaxing theirs. King's also had implemented a conservative bias to try to avoid over enrolment – a problem in previous years.





6.2 EDI Update on current activity and plans [AB-23-12-13-06.2]

The Director, Organisational Development/Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, presented the report, which provided an update on current EDI activity, issues and plans. A key challenge of bringing people together across the organisation in an inclusive culture was having programming that worked across the whole institution.

Recent and ongoing project highlights included: wellbeing; tackling harassment and bullying; new platform for Report and Support providing data not available previously and increasing the call out of inappropriate behaviour; active bystander training; identifying gaps in supporting colleagues with disabilities; the hidden disability sunshine scheme; the race equality maturity model; and a staff wellbeing network.

During discussion points made included:

- Report and Support: staff concern over who views the reporting data and what happened to reports once they had been made was discussed. Introducing clarity about who sees the information once complainants identified themselves would make staff more comfortable about reporting. It was noted that most of the reports were anonymous but it was usually possible to identify the area and provide reports back to units concerned.
- Regarding bullying and harassment and Report and Support, more people were coming forward than in the past. In the first instance staff were making attempts to fix the problem informally, but were unsure where to go after that to get the negotiation skills needed to move forward. The Director of EDI reported that there was now a dedicated Employee Relations team who could assist, and that there was a plan for staff development in this space.
- Concern was raised that insufficient attention was being put to those who held gender critical views. Assurance was provided that university policy did not discriminate against such views. It was further clarified that during the promotion process, the information provided in the free text box on the form that allowed individuals to note what work they were doing on issues that may be controversial, did not impact the promotion decision.
- It was clarified that Stonewall had no impact on the University's policies and in no way presented any inhibition on academic freedom. The annual subscription offered King's some value but could be reconsidered at any time.
- Senior women's leadership programme pilot being run through Advance HE: There were four participants: two academic and two professional services staff. The University Executive had been asked to make nominations. The pilot was being run across the Higher Education Sector and updates would be provided in the next iterations of the EDI report.

7 Report of the KCLSU President [AB-23-12-13-07]

The KCLSU President took his report as read and highlighted KCLSU training of Academic Representatives and that the KCLSU was working closely with the Student Success Transformation Programme.

The Vice-Chancellor lauded the leadership of the KCLSU President and the KCLSU Executive Director, for maintaining a fine balance in such difficult times. With 40,000 students at King's this was a huge task and greatly appreciated.

8 Reports of Committees

8.1 Report of the College Education Committee (CEC) [AB-23-12-13-08.1]

The items in the CEC report were **approved** or noted on the Unanimous Consent Agenda:

- (i) *King's Online Managed Programmes Academic Calendar [approved]*
- (ii) *Lifelong Learning Entitlement*
- (iii) *Review of UK Transnational Education Case Study*
- (iv) *Academic Skills update*
- (v) *King's Education Awards 2023-24*
- (vi) *Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Reports*
- (vii) *Periodic Programme Review reports*
- (viii) *Reports of Sub-Committees*

8.2 Report of the College Research Committee (CRC) [AB-23-12-13-08.3]

(a) Proposal for New Equity Participation Policy

Academic Board member, Professor David Richards, welcomed the policy, and commented that obtaining evidence of impact was fundamental to how relationships with partners were maintained, and that this was an opportunity to embed the concept of impact evidence in the policy, in order to encourage those intending to enter into relationships to make this a key criterion. An additional sentence at the end of the "Tracking Impact" paragraph would bring impact evidence into the policy, and future iterations of the policy could further develop the concept: "Evidence of research impact will also be collected annually through REF and KEF exercises, and monitored through King's Innovation Board and 'One King's Impact'.

Professor Bashir Al-Hashimi, Chair of the College Research Committee, and Professor Richards agreed to work together on a form of words to include in the active sharing model to capture the message that as part of the partnership King's would have with spinouts, that the spinout would be expected to work with King's to provide impact evidence.

Decision:

That the proposal for a new equity participation policy within the Code of Practice for IP, Commercialisation and Financial Benefits, be approved.

(b) Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Participants

Academic Board member, Professor Gerard Watts had raised some questions on "fully-informed consent" that had resulted in amendments to the proposed policy being circulated to Academic Board members in advance of the meeting. He had stated that: "Fully informed consent is not necessary for research to be ethical. For example, people taking a survey do not need to know all the research questions being considered. There is no doubt it is relevant in medical situations, but the question is whether it is necessary, or possible, in sociological or psychological situations."

The circulated revisions, set out below, addressed the points of concern, but Professor Watts had a further suggestion on replacing the word "strong" and commented that the requirement within the policy to respect values was unqualified in a way that it could hinder research or prevent publication. Professor Al-Hashimi had sought legal advice on the words used, and while it was agreed that Professor Watts would suggest minor revisions to wording, Academic Board would be asked to approve the policy. The focus could then be on embedding the practice and on how the policy was implemented.

Reworded point 2:

2. Primarily, this principle implies that researchers should obtain the informed consent of all participants in their research. 'Informed consent' requires that the potential participant should be given all information relevant to making an informed decision about participation and that once the

participant has reached a decision, no information should be given which has the potential to materially change that decision (see further details under 3.7).

New points 3.7 & 3.8

3.7 It is recognised that the determination of the information required to obtain 'informed consent' is a matter of judgement. Provision of some information may be burdensome to participants and/or detrimental to the integrity of the research. In all cases researchers must provide a strong justification, in their ethics application, for the degree of information provided, to demonstrate that the process they propose is appropriate and ethical. *This justification would then be considered by the relevant Research Ethics Committee or Panel to ensure its use is appropriate and will not place participants at any undue risk, with appropriate safeguards and mitigations in place.*

3.8 For research categorised as minimal risk where participation is completely anonymous, the researcher is responsible for determining the level of information that should be provided to participants to qualify as informed consent. This should be measured against the complexity of the project and the time commitment of participation and must not discount any additional risk as a result of limited information being provided to participants. In such cases, at a minimum, participants should be informed about the purpose of the research and that their anonymous data, which cannot be withdrawn once submitted, will be used for a King's College London research output. Justification for this determination must be documented when registering a project as minimal risk.

Decision:

That the Policy on Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Participants, be approved.

The remaining items in the CRC report were noted on the Unanimous Consent Agenda:

- (i) *Research Capability Fund*
- (ii) *Establishment of King's Doctoral College*
- (iii) *Financial Sustainability of Research*
- (iv) *Multidisciplinary Institutes Call*

9 Report of The Dean

9.1 Report of The Dean [AB-23-12-13-09.1]

The Dean took her report as read, and stated that lectures and podcasts on freedom of expression were available on line for all members of the community to listen to.

9.2 Election of Associates of King's College (AKC) [AB-23-12-13-09.2]

*Item **approved** on Consent.*

Decision: That those students and staff listed in the report be elected as Associates of King's College.

10 Report from Council [AB-23-12-13-10]

The report from Council was presented by staff Council Member, Professor Kim Piper. Issues considered at the most recent meetings had included approval of the Financial Statements, and the external audit report as well as discussion of a Board Assurance Framework. Academic Board members were encouraged to contact any of the elected members of Council outside of the meeting if they wished to talk further about Council's work.

A question was asked about Council decision making in terms of the paper discussed earlier on communications and geopolitical emergencies: Council approvals were for governance and not for operational issues. Council approval was not sought for decisions on the daily management of the University. However, it did act as a critical friend when advice was sought, and it could be argued that a discussion paper such as "In defence of value-based impartiality" should be discussed and endorsed by Council.

11 Any Other Business

None.

The meeting adjourned at 16:15.

Irene Birrell

College Secretary

December 2023