

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Teaching Sustainability Project Taskforce**  
**29 April 2025**

**1. Welcome and apologies**

**Attendees:** Fiona Devine (Chair), Fiona Smyth, Emma Rose, Lexy Cummins, Anna Goatman, David Boyd, Rory Stanton, Hannah Cousins, Camden Reeves, Ben Cawley, Thomas Schmidt, Jenny Knights, Peter Green, Claire Ung, Jayne Hindle, Kathryn Howard, Emma Hollenberg, David Spendlove, Craig Best, Amanda Grimshaw, Mario Pezzino, Helen Dunning (Secretary).

**Apologies:** Peter Kahn, Manuel Lopez-Ibanez, Tania Smith, Julia Dobson, Sarah Dyer, Juup Stelma, Katie Jackson, Fiona Keenan, Jennifer Hallam, Kate McNamee and Abigail Robinson.

**2. Minutes from the last meeting: for confirmation**

The [minutes](#) were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting

**3. Outstanding actions**

- Power BI – Ian Bradley has created an app within PowerBI to help us understand student choice. The first iteration of the app is now live (with some limitations) and is being used to support the course unit framework. Further information here: [PBI app to understand student choice.docx](#)

**4. Admissions: update**

- AG gave an overview of UG and PGT admissions for home and international students versus our competitors; including where we have potential for growth
- Discussion took place around whether we have any insight on fees/cost of living and how these and scholarships affect international applications. AG to look into the success of the UCL programmes launched at Olympic Park, and the Imperial programmes being launched this year.
- Following a trip to India, AG noted the importance of considering how we communicate and promote student support at Manchester to parents and guardians of prospective students and a single source of information on these resources would be helpful. CB to contact Bernard Strutt. AG's team are also working on setting up fact sheet to give this key information.
- Concerns were raised about whether course titles accurately reflect the curriculum, and if there is a disconnect between course content and student expectations. RS is currently reviewing pathways to ensure the SEED offer aligns with market demand.
- Discussed the use of pre-requisite qualifications for some of our courses (e.g. History, English Literature) and whether these are still required.
- The need to think about how we can use our external examiner networks to learn about other institutions was highlighted.

**5. Non-admission pathways: for discussion and confirmation**

- CR has engaged with colleagues to explore ways to simplify exit pathways (cultures and society pathways) within SALC and has prepared a short paper ([SALC Cultures and Society Pathway.docx](#)) which outlines a set of proposed simplifications:
  - a) Following the meeting on 2 April, SALC is now exploring an umbrella model for all MLC provision. This decision needs to be made holistically in terms of overall cost/benefit, vision and strategy for MLC, rather than with respect to 'exit pathways' in isolation. But if this is adopted, the cultures and society pathway would be revised along with that, and the current challenges with that generating numerous combinations would be minimised. This is at present the preferred option.

- b) If the umbrella model is not adopted, it is difficult to see how having a single *Cultures and Society* pathway could be further simplified within the present structure. But we could significantly simplify things in practice by removing unused combinations from the system, only opening them when needed and closing them afterwards. Whilst this would increase PS workload, it would have the benefit of significantly reducing the number of programmes live on the system at any given time.
- Cultures and society pathways will remain as is for now but will be reviewed next academic year.
- SALC will continue to explore the umbrella model.

## 6. PGT programmes designed for part time: for discussion

- FS gave a presentation outlining the principles of shaping part-time Masters programmes.
- The need to have minimum threshold for courses to justify running them was highlighted.
- There is no current process specifically for timetabling and developing part-time programmes.
- Part time programmes should be looked at separately and in their own right, as opposed to running alongside full-time programmes.
- The Taskforce agreed with the principles but that it is unlikely to be able to run with many face-to-face part-time programmes due to a current lack of market interest – FD asked if efforts should be focused on the flexibility of online learning instead.

## 7. Portfolio plan/vision: update

Representatives from Schools updated as follows:

### SoSS

- Discussions on TS are ongoing – MP has met with half the departments in SOSS, with the remaining departments to be met over next month.
- Smaller departments are engaging more with the portfolio.
- Social Statistics are keen to engage more with CPD and are talking to potential employers
- Contributing to the BASS review – year 1 will be almost exclusively compulsory, with guidance on compulsory sections thereafter to fit certain themes, however this approach will offer an increase in choice for students.
- PPE are open to distance learning across the school.
- Law are looking at portions of distance learning becoming CPD.
- In Data Science, there are gaps in knowledge around AI limiting the offer at the moment, and conversations are needed at Faculty and University level to ensure AI offers are not duplicated.
- There is a need to clarify which courses will be online and which will be in-person and prioritise new proposed programmes.

### AMBS

- Not anticipating significant change for the UG and PGT portfolio. This is being discussed at SLT.
- There is a sprint running on the development of online units, which may go down the route of Exed Ed. Currently looking at where in the school opportunities are.
- Looking at better identification within the specialisms and curating specialities, and new opportunities in new and digital spaces.
- How AI affects business needs to be considered.
- Target of digital transformation has been reduced.

### SEED

- RS has met with each of the HoDs, and is working with JS on a submission for 27 May.
- Promoting Sustainability at SEED and group focusing on AI, both as an offering and its usage within SEED.
- There is an opportunity to look at CPD within GDI – RS to ensure this feeds into developments for Manchester Online. **Action: RS**

### SALC

- All but one meetings of FD with HoDs have now taken place – the feeling is that these meetings have been reassuring and constructive.
- TS will be coming forward with a number of proposals for closures of MAs.
- BA programmes that are growing will be nurtured, those that are shrinking will be proposed for closure.
- There is a proposal to close the majority of on campus part-time Masters programmes, with the exception of Library and Archive Studies where there is a clear demand.
- Moving to the structure of single BA Modern Languages and Cultures degree is being taken forward.
- A BA in Global Film is being developed.
- The school will move from 5 degrees to 3 in Music.
- Digital Media will be looked at as numbers are still growing – AI is a part of this.
- The need for all schools to be mindful of constantly refreshing webpages for courses to ensure they are up to date and relevant was highlighted. KH to develop prompt for colleagues to review. **Action: KH**
- FD flagged the need for a regular cycle of looking at websites.

#### **8. Course unit framework: update**

- FS is continuing to progress work, looking at whether we move to 20 credit course units and away from one-to-one dissertation supervisions.
- The next meeting will look at agreeing a model for PGT.

#### **9. PS Advisory Group: update**

- HC advised that the group have been doing a lot of thinking around our Learning Design Service and have started considering different, more scalable approaches to our ways of working. Initial ideas have been shared with FS and DoTLs for comment. A meeting with the Learning Design team from The University of Leeds will take place w/c 5 May to understand their approach and particularly around their learning design 'sprints' which sound interesting from their website and from discussions with Jenn Hallam.
- A meeting is also being set up with Liverpool's learning design team to learn how they manage this in their institution. A business case is in flight which should help reshape the Learning Design arm of the eLearning team and provide leadership in line with the needs of Teaching Sustainability and also the new Teaching Academy.
- The PS advisory group have gathered info and data relating to time/resource spent on current NPP and Programme Amendment processes, and a draft of the findings has been shared with the group.
- The central task and finish group reviewing the programme amendment matrix, paperwork and associated deadlines is still underway. The aim is for the updated process to be in place by 2025/26.
- LC and HC met with the Continuous Improvement team last week to explore the possibility of them supporting the group with some processes and are waiting to hear if we meet the benefits criteria.
- The group continues to review and implement other actions which have come from the TS taskforce such as agreeing adjusted mode of study for UG students, removing directed reading and independent study units and removing the capping of units where possible. The group regularly revisits these actions for updates.

#### **10. RAID log**

- No changes reported in the meeting. Updates to be submitted to LC if required.

#### **11. Summary of actions and decisions**

<b><u>Action</u></b>	<b><u>Owner</u></b>	<b><u>Deadline</u></b>
CB to speak to Bernard Strutt about the provision of information on student support resources at UoM from a 'one stop shop' perspective.	CB	Next meeting
Amanda and Tania to look at the Leeds entry requirements for FT taught PGT.	AG, TS	Next meeting
There is an opportunity to look at CPD within GDI – RS to follow up.	RS	Next meeting
KH to develop annual prompt for colleagues to review subject and programme webpages.	KH	Next meeting

## **12. AOB and date of the next meeting**

- FD flagged that a paper had been brought forward to Senate to propose an additional task and finish group on Teaching Sustainability – there will be an extended discussion at Senate on 4 June. A paper is being prepared.
- The next meeting will take place on 10 June at 2:00pm in the Ken Kitchen committee room, John Owens building.