

Meeting Minutes

Teaching Sustainability Languages Subgroup

13 January 2026

1. Welcome and apologies

Attendees: Fiona Devine (Chair), Julia Dobson, Huw Twiston Davies, Fiona Smyth, Cristina Collier, Elizabeth McCullough, Tom Woerner-Powell, Ben Cawley, Emma Rose, Lexy Cummins, Thomas Schmidt, Gemma Gaffney, Emma Wilson, Hannah Jordan (Secretary)

Apologies: Jayne Hindle, Isobel Morgan

2. Minutes from the last meeting: for confirmation

BC noted that the action relating to the Marketing Insight Report, previously assigned to him, is more appropriately aligned with Elizabeth and her team following discussion. HJ will update the action accordingly. Elizabeth confirmed that work has commenced on implementing recommendations from the Market Insight Report. Once the amendment is made, the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Outstanding actions

Lexy reported that all actions are currently in progress, with none outstanding. No further updates on actions were provided at this time.

Action Number	Action Description	Update
95	EM to engage with School Communications Coordinators to discuss recommendations on enhancing schools' marketing and advertising strategies, informed by feedback and insights from the report.	In progress – some recommendations have already started to be implemented.
97	EM to investigate options for incorporating additional details and improving visibility of exit pathways during the revision of course portfolios.	In progress
98	ER is developing a paper that outlines the resources required to offer a programme and share with this group.	In progress – this is an action from the Taskforce.
99	EM to obtain and share Ofqual data to identify the A Level subjects taken by students who are more likely to take Politics than Sociology.	In progress

[Action Log - Languages Subgroup.xlsx](#)

4. Chair's Update

Normative Criteria

- Fiona Devine updated that there are ongoing discussions regarding normative criteria with a deadline of 15th January for feedback. This feedback is being collated by Jenn Hallam, VP for TLS.
- A report will be prepared for the AQSC meeting in the last week of January; outcomes from that discussion will be considered at the Senate meeting on 11 February.
- Paperwork for the umbrella model is progressing.

- Decisions remain pending on the eight programmes proposed for closure.

N8 discussions on Languages

- The first face-to-face N8 meeting is scheduled for early February. A short online meeting to shape the agenda took place in December. The opening meeting will explore opportunities for collaboration across language provision within N8. Duncan Ivison will act as the formal sponsor and provide an introductory briefing.
- Initial discussions for agenda topics included potential data sharing requirements and key issues to be considered with collaboration activities. Future work will include engagement with other regional universities outside N8 (e.g., MMU, Lancaster) and consideration of institutions with varying entry tariffs. Potential involvement of external stakeholders such as the British Academy and other key organisations for presentations and advice. Early thinking suggests there could be regional clusters for collaboration.
- Julia Dobson noted there needs to be careful consideration taken on any external communications.
- The Northeast already has established collaborative practices, particularly around widening participation activity.

5. RAID log

Lexy confirmed there were no additional updates to the RAID log but reminded all risk owners to review their risks regularly. She noted to Emma Wilson that she would follow up with Amber regarding risks associated with the umbrella model, now that it has progressed through QSDE. Emma requested to be copied into all related correspondence.

6. Umbrella model: update

- Faculty QSDE has considered the umbrella model. Further responses are required to provide feedback to the group by 26 January for progression, but approval is not subject to this information.
- Significant work has been undertaken by School and Faculty TLSE teams and the SMR team.
- Julia and Elizabeth updated there is extensive new webpage content which is ongoing. There are new programme specifications, programme amendments, overarching ILOs, new HEAR statements, mapping of all pathways and they have reviewed entry requirements.
- New webpages will focus on subject-level content rather than course-specific details, aiming to provide clearer information for students on course outlines and combinations. An alternative approach to providing course unit information has been developed for enquirers due to challenges encountered with the current course unit publishing system and the umbrella structure. Elizabeth updated that this is all compliant with CMA requirements, though presentation differs from the norm.
- Offers are made on the specific pathway a student applies to. Once the offer is accepted, changes cannot be made, there is no flexibility post-application although there is the opportunity to change languages once here at Manchester.
- Programme combinations are fixed, not “pick and mix.” Elizabeth noted this is clear on the webpages.
- Marketing content for 2027 entry is in good shape but will need ongoing evolution. Plans include integrating course unit descriptions into existing systems and creating coherent narratives across disciplines (e.g., Politics and Modern Languages and Cultures).

- Elizabeth and Julia to share information with Huw regarding admissions processes for the umbrella model and Huw can review and feedback on this. **Action EM/JD/HTW**
- Resource requirements for TLSE were queried at the QSDE meeting. These are signalled in the paperwork and the plan to resource this, needs to be clear.
- Next milestone will be to seek Senate approval.
- School Executive is aware and supportive of the umbrella model, as confirmed by Thomas.
- Communications planning for existing students' needs to be considered in advance

7. **Communications**

- Key stakeholders need to be identified for upcoming communications and FD said she would liaise with Kate Camden regarding major donor engagement to ensure all parties remain informed. **Action FD**
- EM talked about communication and delivery around the umbrella model noting that short videos used on previous topics have shown high student engagement compared to written content. When thinking about communications, Reels (Instagram) and TikTok videos will be considered.
- FD raised the recent articles covering a question asked to Jacqui Smith in the House of Lords around increase in tuition fees going towards Languages. BC to add the information to the Teaching Sustainability webpages. **Action BC**
- BC reported a new dashboard has been introduced which can display student numbers and offering multiple data views, like British Academy mapping.
- It was noted government's Post-16 Education paper (published November) and research on access to Art History study are available on StaffNet pages.
- Discussion took place on targeted communications for younger students to highlight the value and importance of studying languages. EM noted there are existing videos on benefits of language study and student experiences can be adapted for social media reels. JD also flagged that the Market Insight Report highlighted that we should be targeting younger audiences (Year 9 – 10).

8. **AOB**

- Extended discussion on LEAP to be scheduled for the next meeting. HJ to plan this in. **Action HJ**
- Julia to provide a presentation on LEAP's alignment with languages and the new Director can add potential opportunities and long-term planning. **Action JD**
- It was noted LEAP has technology limitations as Canvas is currently unsuitable for delivery due to there being no license for online provision. Teams is currently used. FS will seek to influence discussions on support and technological opportunities for LEAP, contingent on JD providing details of the barriers to using Teams for LEAP delivery. **Action JD**
- Market intelligence indicates significant variation in LEAP-equivalent offerings across institutions:
 - Some provide free access but struggle with retention.
 - Limited availability outside working hours.
 - UoM has the biggest provider nationally and other institutions have scaled back due to resource constraints.
- JD updated on her action from last time to contact Head of Languages for All and has a meeting scheduled for 23 January. JD should be able to report back at next meeting. **Action JD**
- TS updated that Power BI applications for home and overseas students are looking positive and ER confirmed the UCAS deadline is 14 January.
- FD requested an admissions update (UG and PGT) at the next meeting. HJ will schedule for February meeting and coordinate with HTD. **Action HJ/HTD**

9. Summary of actions and decisions

ACTION/DECISION	DESCRIPTION	OWNER	DEADLINE
Action	EM and JD to share information with Huw regarding admissions processes for the umbrella model and HTD can review and feedback on this	EM/JD/HTD	Next meeting
Action	FD to liaise with Kate Camden regarding major donor engagement to ensure all parties remain informed.	FD	Next meeting
Action	BC will add the article on question in House of Lords regarding tuition fee increase and Languages to the Teaching Sustainability webpages	BC	Next meeting
Action	HJ to schedule an extended discussion on LEAP for the next meeting	HJ	Next meeting
Action	JD to provide a presentation on LEAP's alignment with languages and the new Director can add potential opportunities, without committing to full implementation	JD	Next meeting
Action	JD to provide FS with details of the barriers to using Teams for LEAP delivery.	JD	Next meeting
Action	JD to report back at next meeting following conversation with Head of Languages for all	JD	Next meeting
Action	HJ will schedule an admissions update for February meeting and coordinate with HTD	HJ/HTD	Next meeting