University Education Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 March 2026 at 9.30am in Harry Fairhurst Building, LFA/204 & 205 and via Zoom.

Meeting Attendance

Members present:
Tracy Lightfoot, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students (Chair)
Steve King, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students (Deputy Chair)
Duncan Jackson, Head of Academic Quality and Development (Secretary)
David Barrett, Associate Dean for Education and Students (Sciences)
Sam Hellmuth, Associate Dean for Education and Students (Arts and Humanities)
Jan Ball-Smith, Head of Student Success
Tom Banham, Academic Registrar; Director of Student Education and Experience
Claire Ball-Smith (representing Social Sciences)
Daniel Keith (representing Social Sciences)
Louise Thurston, Associate Director for Careers and Employability
Michael Bate (representing Sciences)
Paul Bishop (representing Sciences)
Iain Brennan (representing the International Pathway College)
Jen Wotherspoon, Deputy Director: Student Services
Petros Kefalas, Vice-President Learning and Teaching, University of York Europe Campus, CITY U.L.E
Gabby Morgan, York SU Student Voice and Insight Manager

In attendance:
Becky Lloyd-Jones, Academic Quality and Development (Minutes)
Andy Hunt [UEC.25-26/66]
Bidyut Baruah [UEC.25-26/67]

Apologies:
Aya Haidar, York SU Academic Officer,
Jill Webb, Associate Dean for Education and Students (Social Sciences)
Kirsty Lingstadt, Director of Library, Learning, Archives and Wellbeing,
Lucy Ambrose (representing Hull York Medical School)
Richard McClary (representing Arts and Humanities)
Michelle Alexander (representing Arts and Humanities)

Standing Items

Welcome

25-26/179 The Chair welcomed the Committee and noted that this would be Gabby Morgan's last day on the Committee. The Chair thanked Gabby for her contributions to the Committee and wished her all the best for the future.

Declarations of interest in items on the agenda [oral report]

25-26/180 Members were invited to declare any potential conflicts of interest relating to the business of the meeting; none were declared.

Minutes of the meeting of UEC held 12 February 2026 [UEC.25-26/64]

25-26/181 The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2026 as an accurate record.

Action tracking and matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

25-26/182 No updates were noted. The Chair noted that there are a lot of ongoing actions on the log and asked the Secretary to review and clean up the log.

ACTION: Secretary

Report of Chair's and Deputy Chair's Action taken since the last meeting [UEC.25-26/65]

25-26/183 The Chair (Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students) has taken the following action on behalf of UEC:

1. **Approved** a new University-wide exchange programme with University of Maryland, Baltimore County for 5 years from 2026/27, initially for 2fte students to come to York, and 2fte York students to go to UMBC.
2. **Approved** the progression requirement from stage 2 to stage 3 for the integrated Masters Programme MSocW (Hons) in Social Work in the School for Business and Society to be lowered from 55 to 50 to bring it in line with the requirements of incoming MA Social Work students.
3. **Approved** a minor amendment to UEC's Terms of Reference to account for the Committee's responsibility to monitor and, where appropriate, respond to, regulatory requirements and data related to those requirements.
4. **Approved** an amendment to the Academic Misconduct Policy available on the Assessment Policy webpage, following SCA's recent decision to include the offence of false authorship within the offences to be managed differently in probationary modules.
5. **Recommended** to Senate that 'Professional Graduate Certificate in Education' (ProfGCE)' is added to the University's list of award titles. The VC has approved this by Chair's Action on behalf of Senate.

25-26/184 The Deputy Chair (Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students) has taken the following action on behalf of UEC:

1. **Approved** a proposal from the International Pathway College for the multi-module approach on the three-term Foundation and International Year One programmes to move to the single-module setup in the format used by the Pre-Master's programme, to take effect for the summer 2026 intake.

Chair's report [oral report]

25-26/185 The Chair **reported**:

1. Heather Stout has been appointed as project manager for the Teaching Efficiency Project. Heather will hopefully be able to attend a later UEC meeting and present an outline of what is intended to be delivered as part of the project. With workload considerations in mind, the plan is to identify a small number of clear actions for each project theme, whilst retaining the flexibility to respond to external demands as they arise..

2. The School/Department Education Committee (S/DEC) pilot undertaken by 13 schools/departments will be evaluated over the two months. The intention will be to bring a paper to UEC in June, which will then go to Senate in July to approve the transition from BoS to S/DECs. The deadline for all schools/departments to transition to S/DECs will be September 2027, but non-pilot schools/departments can implement the change in 2026/7 if they wish. The Chair thanked Sam Hellmuth and Duncan Jackson for their work on the pilot.

3. The University Grant Commission (UGC) inspection of the Mumbai campus is scheduled for the end of April. Once this is completed, Mumbai can begin to accept offers..

4. The University's Strategy refresh is underway and an update will be given under agenda item UEC.25-26/206.

Deputy Chair's report [oral report]

25-26/186 The Deputy Chair **reported**:

1. An internal quality inspection of University of York Mumbai (UoYM) took place between 23/03/26 and 24/03/26 and will be reported upon at the 23rd April UEC meeting before progressing to Senate on 28th April.

2. In regards to module evaluation, there has been good feedback from a number of different departments, and tweaks are being made for the Semester 2 evaluations, including implementing a plan for earlier communication. There are plans to review the new approach at the end of the year in advance of 2026/27.

25-26/187 The Chair thanked the Deputy Chair and Adrian Lee (Academic Quality and Development Policy Manager) for all their work to ensure the UoYM QA inspection went smoothly.

Student Representative's report [oral report]

25-26/188 Gabby Morgan, York SU Student Voice and Insight Manager, **reported**:

1. York SU have recently completed their elections with a 15% turnout. Aya Haidar has been re-elected as Academic Officer with a manifesto focusing upon: ensuring a student-led approach to AI, developing a student consultation framework, and developing a single unified rep system for next academic year. A paper on this system will come to UEC in May.

2. The York SU Excellence Awards are currently open and will close on 27th April. All those who are nominated will receive an invitation.

25-26/189 The Chair mentioned that York SU's International Student report will be launched on 27th March in the Roger Kirk Centre. It will be shared with the Committee once available; however, the Chair is pleased to say that a number of the recommendations align with the work already underway at the University.

AI update

25-26/190 In his capacity as Chair of the UEC AI Working Group, Steve King **reported**:

1. Ongoing development of the student AI tutorials, including useful contributions by IT Services and the Library team. Work is also underway on staff AI literacy, and there have been talks with Google about the possibility of supporting staff training.

2. The Working Group has considered draft guidance for staff about using AI in marking and feedback. This is currently being revised and will come to UEC in due course.

3. At the last meeting of the Working Group, Careers gave an interesting presentation about AI and employability, with a focus on preparing students for the workforce.

Update from the NSS Steering Group

25-26/191 David Barrett, as Chair of the NSS Steering Group, **reported**:

1. The current NSS response rate is 64%, tracking 5% higher than at the same time last year. Based on previous years' data, an overall response rate of around 75-80% is possible. Of the 28 departments listed by Ipsos, 26 have met the 50% return threshold, and the remaining 2 departments are expected to reach the threshold soon (this includes HYMS, whose response rate historically increases later than other departments due to assessment timings).

2. The NSS leaders meeting in May will focus on reflecting on the actions taken by the university and schools/departments during the 2026 survey period, looking at what went well, where improvements can be made, and what needs to be done differently.

3. A significant change in the analysis of data for NSS 2026 relates to open comments. Rather than comments being reviewed centrally for redactions, they will be forwarded to schools/departments as early as possible, who will decide whether redactions beyond those undertaken by OfS are required. Discussions are also underway in regard to how comments will be analysed, including the possibility of using AI tools.

25-26/192 The Committee **observed**:

1. Once the NSS results are in, the Steering Group should look at which departments embedded awareness raising and opportunities to complete the survey during contact sessions, and what impact this had on response rates.

ACTION: AD E&S, Sciences

2. A SWAN survey looking at Student Mental Health was being undertaken at the same time as the NSS. Establishing a Student Survey Group to monitor the issue of student surveys should be considered.

ACTION: UEC Chair

Programme Approvals/Modifications

BEng/MEng Engineering with Audio Technology [UEC.25-26/66]

25-26/193 The Committee considered a proposal for a new BEng/MEng Engineering with Audio Technology in the School of Physics, Engineering and Technology (PET), which had been reviewed in advance by Paul Bishop, Jan Ball-Smith, Sally O'Connor and an external assessor. The proposal was presented by Andy Hunt, who reported:

1. This is a new programme in music technology but is based on the School's engineering programmes, and uses existing modules. The School intends to retire their Music Technology Systems programme, which will be too similar to this new one.

2. The programme was developed due to numerous prospective students expressing an interest in this type of programme at open days. The introduction of the programme will allow students to enter onto two routes depending on their interests; one will be focused on music technology with traditional electronics, the other will have an engineering module focus.

3. The inclusion of BEng Engineering was a clerical error which will be corrected and that the programme will have the standard exit routes with the same title of 'Engineering Studies in Audio Technology'.

25-26/194 The Committee **approved** the programme subject to the following conditions, to be met prior to marketing:

1. The Statement of Purpose is updated to clearly reflect the MEng level of the programme as well as the BEng.

2. The BEng PLOs are reviewed to make them comparable to the MEng in their level of specificity and remove any specific technology references that might jeopardise the future-proofing of the programme. For example, the reference to 'PCB' in PLO 4 being replaced with the more generic 'circuit design'.

3. Remove the additional Year Abroad option, but keep the additional Year in Industry which is standard on the School's programmes.

4. Follow up with SBS regarding their AACSB accreditation and confirm that there is no issue with the introduction of this programme.

25-26/195 The Chair noted the importance of ensuring SBS has been consulted about programmes with management in the title or management content before the programmes come to UEC due to their accreditation requirements. To ensure this is done in the future, the Chair has asked that:

1. The Academic Quality (AQ) team captures and checks that this has been done as part of the programme development review.

ACTION: AQ & Secretary

2. AQ updates the Programme Approval Form to make this requirement clearer.

ACTION: AQ & Secretary

MSc Project Management [UEC.25-26/67]

25-26/196 The Committee **considered** a proposal for a new MSc Project Management in PET, which had been reviewed in advance by Iain Brennan, Tom Banham, Becky Lloyd-Jones and an external assessor. The proposal was presented by Bidyut Baruah, who reported:

1. PET currently has a very successful MSc in Engineering Project Management programme, but this programme is aimed only at engineering students who want to have some management focus. This new programme is aimed at students with a wide range of foci, who are wanting to learn project management and develop consultancy skills, which can be applied to any industry.

2. The programme is formed of existing PET and SBS modules only.

3. Students will have the opportunity to gain industry-recognised certifications through some of the modules, however, they will have to pay extra for this. This will be cheaper than undertaking the certification outside of the programme, and students will need to be made aware that the certifications are not included in the tuition fees.

4. After the current proposal is approved, the intention is to develop the programme further to introduce a suite of specialisms such as in Health Care and Cyber Security, each with a capstone module that would sit in the school/department supported by a supervisor linked to that particular subject area.

5. The reason for some of the discrepancies between the assessment details on the programme approval form and the module descriptors is that PET has put forward a major modification for their existing programme. The details on the programme approval form reflect the changes being proposed as part of this major modification.

25-26/197 Jen Wotherspoon confirmed that the programme proposal had been discussed with Timetabling, and they had no issue to raise with it.

25-26/198 The Committee **considered** whether:

1. The PGCert and PG Dips should be offered as entry routes. These offerings can add a lot of work onto the Central teams for only a small handful of students. David Barrett confirmed that there is a market for the part-time PGCert, so it was agreed to keep this as an entry route, but that the option of a PGDip entry route should be removed.

2. With the intention for the introduction of a wide range of Specialism on the programme, PET might want to consider also introducing a MA award for those subject areas with a less direct science focus.

3. Whether it would be best to introduce a new capstone module designed for the programme, which was focused on the project management, but had a broad scope to allow for students to do a research focus or applied project, and be supervised by someone linked to the student's particular subject area or specialism. It was noted that there are challenges with financial compensation when teaching is delivered outside of the students home department. However, the Chair was clear that this should not drive programme design. . Concerns were also raised about ensuring students from different departments/schools undertaking capstone modules in other departments had the appropriate prior experience/skills, and also which assessment criteria would be used as this again may disadvantage a student..

25-26/199 The Committee **required** the following conditions to be met with approval delegated to the Chair of UEC:

1. Full details of the MSc Engineering Project Management major modifications and how these changes affect this new programme are shared with UEC and looked at by a sub-group in more detail. The sub-group will consist of Tracy Lightfoot, Iain Brennan, Tom Banham and David Barrett.

2. The 20-credit PET module descriptors and MLOs are revised to move the focus away from engineering and ensure they are suitable for all students on the programme.

3. The PGDip is removed as an entry award.

4. Add the details for the generic PGCert and PGDip exit awards, including the PLOs.

5. A new bespoke capstone module is developed, within which there is optionality.

25-26/200 The Committee **made** the following recommendations:

1. If the details of the planned specialisms are ready, these should be shared with the Committee sub-group.

2. Decide, with input from MRAO, whether an MSc Project Management with Engineering should replace the MSc Engineering Project Management from 2027/8 onwards.

Section A

Annual report on the Access and Participation Plan (APP) [UEC.25-26/68]

25-26/201 The Committee **considered** the report, which included the latest APP data released and interventions that are being implemented. The Committee was asked to give feedback on the content of the paper, and to consider whether the format of the paper was appropriate and if additional information would be useful in future reports. It was **noted** that:

1. There has been positive progress with reducing awards gaps for Black and IMDQ1 students.

2. There are still concerns about the Asian awarding gap, but work is being undertaken with students to look at possible interventions to close this gap.

3. As this is a four-year plan and its implementation has just started, every action is currently ongoing. The APP team are tracking the progress of interventions.

25-26/202 The Committee **recommended** that:

1. More information regarding the activities around closing the awarding and progression gaps should be included in future reports.

2. It would be advisable to check what Senate, UEB, and Council would like from this paper as it will be presented to them as well.

   ACTION: Head of Student Success

3. Once they are published, the evaluation reports should be circulated to the Committee.

   ACTION: UEC Secretary

Summary PGT External Examiners' Reports 2024-25 [UEC.25-26/69]

25-26/203 The Committee **considered** the summary report and four proposed actions for SCA. The report confirms that the University is meeting sector standards and highlights examples of excellent practice, particularly in authentic, industry-aligned assessment and developments in inclusive teaching practices. The main calls to action raised by the examiners were to move to more AI-resistant assessment design and to review the removal of second marking.

25-26/204 The Committee **observed** that:

1. There is a typo in point 1.1 a on the paper which refers to 'undergraduate' and in the 4th SCA recommendation the word 'provided' is missing.

2. External examiners' recommendations are always taken into consideration, but this does not constitute a requirement to implement changes based. For example, there are comments about second marking, but the plan is not to approach the agreed position on marking of modules or capstone projects, except for those instances already agreed ie a new member of staff.

3. There are many challenges with introducing AI-proofed assessments, not least in light of the "Abrahart" ruling that requires the University to provide reasonable adjustments. Further exploration of published research, alongside a review of the strategies being adopted by other universities (for example, Newcastle's 'progression gates'), would be useful.

ACTION: Head of Academic Quality and Development

25-26/205 The Committee **recommended** that:

1. The actions for SCA be approved, aside from the action to 'Review the current policy on marking which moved away from second marking (except temporarily for CPMs) to single marking with moderation'. The meaning of this proposed action needs further clarification.

2. SCA comes back to the Committee in May 2026 with a revised list of priorities and timelines.

ACTION: Chair of SCA

Strategy Refresh Discussion

25-26/206 The Committee **discussed** the following three questions from the strategy refresh:

1. How much space in our curriculum should there be for work-related learning and skills as we adapt to a changing graduate labour market and changing student expectations?

2. How will we need to adapt and develop our partnership with our student body amid the changes we are set to face?

3. How different will our physical and digital infrastructure need to be in ten years' time?

25-26/207 The Committee **observed** that:

1. As a priority, Careers and Placements are looking at how a baseline for employability can be built into every programme. So far, an audit has been completed, with programmes RAG-rated. It was agreed that Careers and Placements would share a summary paper of this work with UEC at an appropriate time.

ACTION: Associate Director for Careers and Employability

2. It would be appropriate to link the work on University's apprenticeships with employability projects.

3. There may be an opportunity for departments with more experience and connections with professional-facing employment to support those with less experience.

4. Currently, a significant number of rooms that could be used for teaching are not available for central Timetabling to allocate. This exacerbates timetabling pressures, and a review of teaching space is required to address this.

5. There are challenges in effectively tracking student engagement which extend to monitoring attendance at face-to-face sessions.

6. There are ongoing issues with the siloed nature of various digital systems, which IT Services are currently exploring a solution to through the employment of Data Architects and a new strategic relationship with the company 'Snowflake'.

25-26/208 Careers and Placements highlighted that they have funding for interns to undertake projects in schools/departments, but for which they are struggling to receive applications. It was suggested that they should advertise this opportunity to the Faculty groups.

ACTION: Associate Director for Careers and Employability

Section B

No items.

Section C

[Secretary's Note: With regard to its Section C agenda, UEC was provided with the following agenda Items which were provided for: [a] information only, where UEC discussion is not required or anticipated, unless a request is made to escalate an item is from Section C to Section A or B for consideration OR as [b] supplementary information and data for items on the Section A or B agenda.]

25-26/209 Standing Committee on Assessment summary
a. 13 March 2026 [UEC.25-26/70]

25-26/210 Faculty Learning and Teaching Group minutes:
a. Arts & Humanities, 10 November 2025 [UEC.25-26/71]
b. Social Sciences, 10 November 2025 [UEC.25-26/72]

25-26/211 Validated Provision Update [UEC.25-26/73]

25-26/212 Joint York Online Quality Review Group and York-HEP Joint Monitoring Board Report [UEC.25-26/74]

Becky Lloyd-Jones, Academic Quality
February 2026