



University of Exeter

JOINT SENATE AND COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES AND ACTIONS – APPROVED BY COUNCIL

29 April 2026

1pm-4pm

Holland Hall, Streatham Campus

NB text in BLACK for publication; text in BLUE has been redacted for publication

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COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Quentin Woodley	Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council
Professor Malcolm Skingle	Pro-Chancellor and Deputy Chair of Council
Professor Lisa Roberts	President and Vice-Chancellor
Professor Dan Charman	Senior Vice-President and Provost
Professor Liz Jones	Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience)
Dr Sarah Hodge	Senate Representative
Professor Karen Knapp	Senate Representative
Professor Maisha Reza	Senate Representative
Lauren Aste	Independent Member
Nigel Cain	Independent Member
Adrian Harris	Independent Member
Karime Hassan	Independent Member
Gareth Mostyn	Independent Member
Tim Weller	Independent Member
Glenn Woodcock	Independent Member
Professor Karen Knapp	Senate Representative

Dr Sarah Hodge Senate Representative
Professor Maisha Reza Senate Representative

Elaine Cordy Professional Services Representative

Seb Racisz Guild President, Exeter Students' Guild
Izzy Brinkley President Exeter, Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union

SECRETARY

Mike Shore-Nye Senior Vice-President and Registrar & Secretary

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Dave Stacey Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Executive Divisional Director of
Finance, Infrastructure and Commercial Services
Ali Chambers Chief Executive Officer, Exeter Students' Guild
Dr Jeremy Diaper Director of Governance Services (minutes)

APOLOGIES

Sally Cabrini Independent Member
Damaris Anderson-Supple Independent Member
Rebecca Boomer-Clark Independent Member
Salam Katbi Independent Member
Sarah Matthews-DeMers Independent Member
Imelda Rogers Deputy Registrar and Executive Divisional Director of Human
Resources

SENATE MEMBERS PRESENT

ATTENDEES (*listed according to the membership as detailed in [Ordinance 20](#)*)

Professor Martin Siegert, Vice-President & Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Cornwall
Stuart Brocklehurst, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Business Engagement and Innovation
Professor Beverley Hawkins, Dean for Taught Students
Professor Stacey Hynd, Dean for Postgraduate Research and the Doctoral College
Professor Alex Gerbasi (ese)
Professor Gareth Stansfield (hass)
Professor Sallie Lamb (hls)
Professor Konstantinos Chalvatzis (ese)
Professor Matt Collins (ese)
Professor Barrie Cooper (ese)
Dr Alex Fairfax-Cholmeley (hass)
Professor Ruth Garside (hls)
Professor Dave Hoskin (ese)
Professor Duncan Russel (hass)
Professor Adam Watt (hass)
Professor Anni Vanhatalo (hls)
Dr Ionna Kapantai (hls)
Clare Wydell, Divisional Director of Education and Academic Services
Professor Loukas Balafoutas (ese)
Professor Nicola Thomas (ese)

Professor Francesca Palombo (ese)
Professor Ion Sucala (ese)
Professor Fiona Cox (hass)
Professor Harry Pitts (hass)
Professor Lindsay Hetherington (hass)
Professor Naomi Sykes (hass)
Professor Rebecca Langlands (hass)
Professor Ivana Gudelj (hls)
Professor Joanne Smith (hls)
Professor Emma Pitchforth (hls)
Professor Barrie Cooper (ese)
Professor Tim Naylor (ese)
Dr Edvard Glucksman (ese)
Dr Raphaelle Haywood (ese)
Professor Alison Truelove (ese)
Professor Ben Zissimos (ese)
Professor Fabrizio Nevola (hass)
Professor Brian Rappert (hass)
Professor Laura Salisbury (hass)
Dr Birgul Yilmaz (hass)
Professor Maisha Reza (hls)
Dr Abby Russell (hls)
Dr Hope Gangata (hls)
Professor Katie Lunnon (hls)
Dr Genevieve Williams (hls)
Professor Mark Wilson (hls)
Dr Dominic Wiredu-Boakye (hls)
Sebastian Racisz, President Students' Guild, Exeter
Francis Steptoe, Education Officer, Students' Guild, Exeter
Gemma Veal, Societies and Employability Officer, Students' Guild, Exeter
Rose Arhin, Communities and Equality Office, Students' Guild, Exeter
Izzy Brinkley, President, Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union

SENATE APOLOGIES

Avery Bailey, Vice-President, Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union
Professor Jon Brown (HLS)
Caroline Chipperfield (HASS)
Professor Daniel Fountain (HASS)
Professor Richard Holland (HLS)
Professor Stacey Hynd
Professor Sallie Lamb (HLS)
Professor Fabrizio Nevola (HASS)
Professor Christine Parkin Hughes (ESE)
Dr Genevieve Williams (HLS)
Professor Jane Milling (HASS)

IN ATTENDANCE FOR ALL ITEMS:

Sarah Hicks	Deputy Head of Governance Services
Roscoe Hastings	Director of Teaching Excellence and Student Experience

Minute Item 95: Education Diversification

Daryl Wilkerson (Dean of Online and Postgraduate Education)
Rachel Johnstone (Dean of Professional Education & Partnerships/Director Degree Apprenticeships)
Chris Evans (Director of Innovation, Impact & Business and Director of Regional Engagement)

92. Chair's Welcome and Declarations of Interest

92.1 The Chair welcomed Council and Senate members to the annual meeting of Senate and Council.

a) Overview of Council (CNL/128/25-26 Open)

92.2 As part of his introduction, the Chair of Council delivered a presentation outlining the role, responsibilities and membership of Council.

92.3 Council was the supreme governing body of the University and were responsible for approving the mission and strategic vision of the University; the long-term academic and business plans, access and participation plans; key performance indicators (KPIs), the annual budget and financial statements;

92.3 The membership of Council currently comprised 23 members in total, with a majority of Independent members, who brought a diverse range of expertise from different sectors to provide independent insight and constructive challenge in order to ensure robust oversight, accountability and effective decision-making;

b) Insights from Senate Council Representative (Professor Karen Knapp) (CNL/128a/25-26 Open)

92.4 A presentation (CNL/128a/25-26) from Professor Karen Knapp was tabled, which has been filed with the record of the meeting.

92.4 It was highlighted that Senate Council Representatives were full members of Council with equal status and voting rights, but in a unique position to provide academic insight and valuable understanding into Council discussions and decisions

92.5 Council decisions were made collectively and taken in the best strategic interests of the University.

92.6 Professor Karen Knapp encouraged Senators to put themselves forward for nomination in the forthcoming Council Senate elections and noted that they had found serving on Council to be a rewarding and insightful experience, which had enhanced their understanding of governance, finance and the principles of effective-decision making.

93. Student Voice and Representation (CNL/129/25-26 Strictly Confidential)

The Chair invited Professor Liz Jones (Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience), Izzy Brinkley (Exeter President of the Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union), Seb Racisz (President of Exeter Student's Guild) and Roscoe Hastings (Director of Teaching Excellence and Student Experience) to provide a short presentation to introduce the session on student voice and representation.

- 93.1 As part of Strategy 2030 the University was committed to 'delivering a sector leading partnership with students'. The centrality of student voice to ensuring students feel a sense of agency and empowerment in relation to their own education was recognised. However, there were notable challenges across the sector including declining engagement in representative democracy and voting. These challenges were being exacerbated further by the cost-of-living challenges and time poor students.
- 93.2 In light of the sector-wide challenges surrounding the decreased student engagement, it had been important to reflect differently on how we effectively engage with a wide range of students across different modes of delivery (including Online, Degree Apprenticeships and in-person);
- 93.3 The enhanced approach to student voice and representation had been designed to build improved relationships between the Exeter Students' Guild, Falmouth & Exeter Students' Union and academic Departments; ensure consistency of experience across departments; and targeted data collection, insight and analysis to drive change;
- 93.4 The vision of the Exeter Students' Guild was to be a strategic partner of choice for academic departments, empowering students to drive meaningful change through a joined-up ecosystem of academic representation, course-based societies and community-building initiatives to develop a sector-leading approach to student voice;
- 93.5 Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union Vision for student voice, including:
- 93.5.1 The transition away from Student Staff Liaison Committees, to developing student voice action plans targeted to each department.
- 93.5.2 Ensuring that the student representative team worked together across Departments in partnership with staff. The student representatives would be tailored to the Department, including representatives for each programme per year and a dedicated PGR Officer for Cornwall;
- 93.5.3 A student voice co-ordinator based within the Advocacy Team would provide interim services and support to provide interim support for the remainder of the Academic Year 2025-26 and provide continuity for mobilisation in 2026-27.
- 93.5.4 The Students' Insights Group was co-ordinating the institutional approach to survey timings across the University, Guild and Students' Union, along with sharing survey results and data insights regularly to support embedding of best practice across the institution. This approach also enabled early insight and key indicators ahead of the NSS Survey to help identify where to put institutional focus;
- 93.6 The following was noted in group discussion:
- 93.6.1 Some Departments were worried about the loss of Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs), as they felt it had provided a valuable feedback mechanism, helped to ensure equal partnership between staff and students through jointly chaired meetings, and empowered Departments to make changes to enhance the student experience;
- 93.6.2 Whilst the approach of Guild and Students' Union representatives proactively seeking student feedback in Departments and Faculties was welcomed, it was also affirmed that it was important for academic staff to play a proactive role in speaking to students directly and listening to any concerns in informal settings to ensure they could provide a supportive

presence as part of their roles and hear first-hand any problematic issues;

93.6.3 That it was recognised that SSLCs had provided a less effective mechanism for students studying online or via Degree Apprenticeship placements and that there was an opportunity to enhance student voice and representation more broadly through different mechanisms;

93.6.4 To enable continue enhancement of the student experience it would be important to maintain a focus on ensuring that every student interaction mattered and helped to foster a sense of belonging and to empower the student voice;

93.6.5 That there were a wide range of examples of good practice across Departments and Faculties of utilising different mechanisms to engage with students and elicit feedback, ranging from cake clinics through to 'Your turn' feedback events, student academic societies, student staff liaison committees;

93.6.6 That it was also important to ensure there was clear succession planning in Departments to ensure smooth transition relating to any changes in key personnel, especially during induction to avoid losing of specific knowledge and expertise in supporting students;

93.6.7 That the as part of the development of student voice action plans there would still be a formal review meeting at the end of each term to ensure progress was had been made and there a clear mechanism for monitoring, oversight and closing the feedback loop. The transition to student voice action plans would provide greater flexibility in implementing actions in response to feedback but also ensure there was a clear framework of accountability.

93.7 The session concluded with a series of breakout group discussions reflecting on key questions circulated in advance. The feedback provided on Padlet during this session by the breakout groups has been filed with the record of the meeting (CNL/129a/25-26).

94. Graduate Outcomes, Employability and the Impact of AI (CNL/130/25-26 Strictly Confidential)

The Chair invited Professor Liz Jones (Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) and Roscoe Hastings (Director of Teaching Excellence and Student Experience) to provide a short presentation to introduce the session on Graduate Outcomes, Employability and the Impact of AI.

94.1 The University's KPI in relation to the Graduate Outcomes Survey had improved in the latest results. The current position demonstrated a continued upward trend from the previous 2 years, with the University performing 'above' TEF benchmarks (improving from 11th in the Russell Group to 4th).

94.2 Graduates in 2026 would be entering a labour market undergoing rapid transformation, with Artificial Intelligence reshaping organisational recruitment and assessment processes, alongside how work is undertaken and the specific skills that are valued.

94.3 The priority actions for the University, included: Curriculum Transformation; Assessment Reform; Careers and Employability Support; and Institutional Strategy and Investment;

94.4 The importance of the following:

94.4.1 Ensuring AI literacy was embedded across all disciplines and not just in technical fields;

- 94.4.2 Enabling students to develop transferable skills (including critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and ethical reasoning) and leveraging AI to support their employability;
- 94.4.3 Providing students with an opportunity to understand and discuss the ethical, environmental and human impacts of AI;
- 94.5 In February 2026, the Guild of Students published an insight report on Artificial Intelligence which highlighted that a majority of students (60%) reported that AI skills are an important part of their education, but more than 1/3rd indicated they lacked confidence in terms of how they can effectively deploy AI to their advantage
- 94.6 The session concluded with a series of breakout group discussions reflecting on key questions circulated in advance. The feedback provided on Padlet during this session by the breakout groups has been filed with the record of the meeting (CNL/130a/25-26)

95. Education Diversification (CNL/131/25-26 Strictly Confidential)

The Chair invited Liz Jones (Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience), Daryl Wilkerson (Dean of Online and Postgraduate Education) and Rachel Johnstone (Dean of Professional Education & Partnerships/Director Degree Apprenticeships) to deliver a presentation on education diversification.

- 95.1 The University was seeking to grow its Diversified Education portfolio from c. 9% of our overall portfolio to 16% by 2030.
- 95.2 This Diversified Education portfolio incorporated Degree Apprenticeships, CPD, executive education, online and TNE partnerships, with the University currently partnering with over 550 employers.
- 95.3 Significant progress had been made in establishing and expanding the diversified education portfolio and provided strong foundations to build upon, including:
- 95.3.1 4,500 students currently enrolled on Degree Apprenticeships (with 13,500 students in the last 10 years of delivering Degree Apprenticeships).
- 95.3.2 The University was now the largest HE provider of Degree Apprenticeships and had been recognised nationally and globally for the quality, innovation, and commitment to inclusive access. This included winning Gold in the Power of Partnership category at the prestigious QS Reimagine Education Awards 2025, which highlighted the University's commitment to co-creating curriculum with employers for degree apprenticeships, providing access and success for all.
- 95.3.3 Over 20 Degree Apprenticeship programmes, including: Digital and data, Accounting and Finance, Healthcare, Engineering and Mining, Leadership and Management;
- 95.3.4 Over 33 open programmes in Executive Education and CPD, including: AI and digital, data, environment, film, healthcare and leadership;
- 95.3.5 375 students currently enrolled online, with over 1,000 students enrolled since January 2022 and 8 full PGT programmes
- 95.4 Work had been undertaken on expanding the portfolio of PGT Programmes to create 4 new Masters programmes and re-design of other existing programmes spanning across all Faculties,

to be launched in 2026-27. Where possible, modules within these programmes were also being unbundled to make them available as flexible PGCert/Diplomas and standalone micro-credentials;

95.5 The Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) introduced a single, lifelong tuition funding pot for study at levels 4-6, replacing current HE student loans from 1 Jan 2027. It would cover full courses and individual modules at levels 4-6 for students living and studying in England. There was still further guidance expected on LLE from the government, but the University was continuing to monitor potential opportunities in the coming weeks and opportunities to pivot in response to market demand;

95.6 The University had brought together the Business Development teams supporting Degree Apprenticeships and CPD/Executive Education to work efficiently with businesses and partners

95.7 The session concluded with a series of breakout group discussions reflecting on key questions circulated in advance. The feedback provided on Padlet during this session by the breakout groups has been filed with the record of the meeting (CNL/131a/25-26)

96. Chair's Closing Remarks

96.1 The Chair thanked Senate and Council members for their contribution to the meeting and invited them to share feedback on the session via the QR code on the screen.