Senate: 11.12.2025
Paper Code: SE2025.29

Queen Mary University of London

Senate

Paper Title	Minutes of the last meeting of Senate held on 16 October 2025.
Outcome requested	Senate is asked to **approve** the minutes of the last meeting.
Points for Senate members to note and further information	n/a
Questions for Senate to consider	n/a
Regulatory/statutory reference points	n/a
Strategy and risk	n/a
Reporting/ consideration route for the paper	Senate to approve.
Authors	Jane Pallant, Director of Governance and Legal Services
Sponsor	Professor Colin Bailey, President and Principal

Senate

Draft Minutes of 16 October 2025

Present:

Prof Stephanie Marshall (Dept. Chair)	Prof Christopher Bray	Prof Liam Campling
Dr Livia A Carvalho	Dr Giorgio Chianello	Prof Mary Collins
Prof Martin Coward	Prof Ian Curran	Dr Giulia De Falco
Dr Jayne Dennis	Prof James Esson	Dr Lei Fang
Tushar Goyal	Dr Jürgen Groet	Samarth Lakhanpal
Prof Andrew Livingston	Dr Philippa Lloyd	Prof Biagio Lucini
Dr Michaela MacDonald	Prof Jo Martin	Dr Ali Nankali
Prof Simon Macklin	Prof Wayne Morrison	Dr Émilie Oléron Evans
Dr Anthony Phillips	Dr Sharri Plonski	Prof Thomas Prellberg
Prof Kathryn Richardson	Maria Rubbani	Prof Abhishek Saha
Diya Mary Selastin	Dr Melanie Smuk	Dr James Strong
Prof Elizabeth Tanner	Prof Daniel Todman	

In attendance:

Dr Bryony Butland	Danny Hassell	Kristian Hibberd
Jessica Jeske	Maggie Leggett	Sarah Molloy
Jonathan Morgan	Jane Pallant	James Patterson
Prof Richard Pickersgill	Prof Yossef Rapoport	Prof Alastair Robertson
Anna Semmens	Yasmin Smits (Secretary)	Prof Anastasios Tombros

Apologies:

Prof Amrita Ahluwalia	Prof Alp Atakan	Prof Colin Bailey
Prof Helen Bailey	Dr Oscar Bandtlow	Prof Adrian Bevan
Dr Georgia Black	Dr Erik Blair	Dr Marie-Luce Bourguet
Prof Caroline Brennan	Prof Rob Briner	Prof Sir Mark Caulfield
Prof Panos Deloukas	Dr Pedro Elston	Dr Timothy Fulton
Prof Elizabeth Gillow	Dr Abimbola Giwa	Prof Richard Grose
Dr Eleni Hagi-Pavli	Prof Michael Harker	Prof Martin Knight
Prof Ioannis Kokkoris	Prof John Marshall	Prof Rachael Mulheron KC
Prof Simon Rawlinson	Prof Nitzan Rosenfeld	Prof Hazel Screen
Prof Galin Tihanov	Prof Christopher Tredwin	Prof Steve Uhlig
Prof Fiona Walter	Prof Wen Wang	

Part 1: Preliminary items

Welcome and apologies

2025.01 The Chair welcomed the new members to Senate and **noted** the apologies received.

Part 2: Matters for Discussion

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education **(SE2025.01)**

2025.02 Senate **received** and **considered** the Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education paper.

2025.03 Senate **noted** the range of support that was in place for staff and students regarding the use of artificial intelligence in education, as well as key priorities identified for future development, recognising that this has been a transitional period during which AI had emerged as a significant disruptor. The strategic approach to AI in education would be consistent with the wider education enabling plan and Strategy 2030's commitment to promoting AI literacy among staff and students.

2025.04 Senate **endorsed** the ambition of the strategic approach to AI in education and highlighted the importance of distinguishing between AI in education and broader educational strategy in the context of generative AI. Members emphasised the need to ensure that staff and students were equipped with the skills to use AI tools effectively and appropriately.

2025.05 Senate **noted** the positive progress made and noted the following challenges that would require further consideration:

i. The ethical concerns and perceived environmental impact on the use of AI which had emerged as a key finding following a survey of first year students. Members were keen to understand if there would be a strategy to accommodate such conscientious objections, given that most research platforms and systems inherently incorporate AI, making it difficult to avoid complete engagement with AI.
ii. The importance of defining the University's position for the next five years for ongoing support and openness to innovation in light of the evolving workforce. AI had been framed as a technological technique rather than a pedagogical one and therefore it had prompted reflection on the skillsets required to adapt to the workforce.
iii. The need for instructions on the effective use of AI for both staff and students.
iv. The issue of equality in relation to AI, particularly in relation to the affordability of different platforms and levels of access to AI tools;
v. The importance of potential AI biases, including pre-programmed biases. It would be important to develop students' critical thinking skills and AI literacy to ensure they were aware of biases and could recognise and critique these in order to mitigate any negative impact on students' cognitive skills development.

Senate **noted** that the ongoing development of the University's strategic approach to AI in education would be underpinned by ongoing consultation and partnership with students. The upcoming Away Day hosted by the Centre for Excellence in AI in Education, involving professional services, QMSU, Deans and Faculties, had been identified as an opportunity to explore the critical thinking skills required when engaging with AI, including the development of intelligent prompts for AI tools.

2025.06 Senate **endorsed** the direction of travel of the strategic approach to AI in education.

QMUL Restrictions on Freedom of Expression regarding the State of Israel **(SE2025.02)**

2025.07 Senate **received** and **considered** the paper on QMUL restrictions on Freedom of Expression regarding the State of Israel

2025.08 Senate **noted** that the International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA) definition of antisemitism had previously been adopted by the University in 2020, subject to caveats recommended by the UK Parliament Home Affairs Committee to ensure academic freedom and freedom of speech were maintained at the University [see minutes SE2020.0041-044].

2025.09 Senate **noted** that the issues raised were both sensitive and important in the current climate, and it would be important to understand how the affected communities felt about the use of the IHRA definition. The paper offered alternative suggestions to the IHRA definition of antisemitism, including the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism (JDA), which had been adopted by the Students' Union (QMSU) in 2021.

2025.10 Senate **noted** the importance of University's commitment to protecting freedom of speech and academic freedom, supported by the work of the EDI Steering Group. Members **agreed** that an informed discussion of the issues would be required and further **agreed** that a small group should be established to discuss and explore this in greater detail. The group would provide recommendations on where the issue should be discussed within the University for further consideration by Senate at the December 2025 meeting.

ACTION: Executive Officer (Governance) to organise the meeting of the discussion group. The group's recommendations would be provided to Senate in December 2025.

Report of the External Member to the Degree Examination Boards **(SE2025.03)**

2025.11 Senate **received** and **considered** the report of the External Member to the Degree Examination Board.

2025.12 Senate **noted** that the report affirmed the overall robustness of Queen Mary's academic quality and standards: progression and award processes were sound and aligned with sector norms; results documentation was clear and supported effective decision making; improvements since the previous year were noted in the number and detail of discussion on consistency of outcomes and approach for different programmes leading to the same awards. The report identified some operational challenges, particularly around IT systems, and offered constructive recommendations to enhance governance, assessment integrity, and institutional oversight.

2025.13 Members **noted** the ongoing concerns in relation to degree outcomes within the School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science (EECS). Members noted that Education Quality and Standards Board (EQSB) had recommended an action plan which the Vice-Principal (Education) had communicated to the Head of School.

2025.14 Senate **noted** and **endorsed** the action plan proposed by the Education Quality and Standards Board.

Suspensions of regulations report 2024-25 (SE2025.04)

2025.15 Senate **received** and **considered** the report on suspensions of regulations report for 2024-25.

2025.16 Members **noted** that the number of requests for suspensions of regulations in 2024-25 was 69, the same volume as for the previous year. The analysis of the requests indicated that 92% of the requests could have been avoided. The Education Quality and Standards Board had reviewed the report and made a number of recommendations to reduce the volume of these requests for future years. EQSB had also considered the distribution of requests and tasked the Faculties with undertaking further detailed analysis and interventions in those schools or institutes with high numbers of requests.

2025.17 Senate **noted** that it was important for schools and institutes to make full use of IT systems to support curriculum management (SITS, curriculum management software) to secure version control of programme and module information. EQSB had also recommended that the Directorate of Governance and Legal Services should engage with schools with the highest suspension rates to help develop local strategies to prevent future avoidable suspensions.

ACTION: Quality and Standards team to engage with affected schools to collaborate in developing local strategies to prevent avoidable suspensions.

Code of Practice on Free Speech (SE2025.05)

2025.18 Senate **received** and **considered** the updated Code of Practice on Free Speech.

2025.19 Senate **noted** that following the recently published regulatory guidance on Freedom of Speech by the Office for Students (OfS), the University's Code of Practice on Free Speech had been updated. The primary changes included transposing the Code to a new template, refining and clarifying terms and responsibilities, and updating references.

2025.20 Members **noted** that the wording in section 4.2 in relation to other codes of practice, policies and regulations of the University was intentionally broad in order to highlight the importance of freedom of speech and academic freedom in relation to decision making.

2025.21 Senate **welcomed** the proposed amendments, noting these as positive developments. Members **noted** that a further review would be undertaken to ensure alignment with the University's events procedure, alongside an external legal review, before the Code of Practice was considered for approval by Council.

Part 3: Matters for Approval

Winter Graduation and Academic Year dates 2026-27 (SE2025.06)

2025.22 Senate **received** and **considered** the Winter Graduation and Academic Year dates for 2026-27.

2025.23 Senate **noted** the proposed adjustment to the academic calendar dates for 2026–27 to enable Winter Graduation to take place on the Mile End campus. The current semester dates did not allow sufficient time for graduation to take place on-campus, so the revised dates had been proposed to avoid disruption to education, student experience, and to mitigate the cost of delivering graduation at an external venue.

2025.24 Senate **noted** concerns regarding the proposed delay to Welcome Week and the potential impact on the student experience and the University's operations. These issues included visa and travel implications for international students, disruption to the School of Business and Management's first year intake, and adverse effects on the pre-sessional programme. Logistical constraints around accommodation availability, late summer exam boards, and student finance were also raised, alongside the mental health impact on students who would be uncertain of their progression status if boards were delayed. Staff workload pressures at the start of the academic year were also noted, with the proposed delay considered as potentially unhelpful to staff managing these key transition periods.

2025.25 Senate **noted** that the paper did not sufficiently address the availability and suitability of teaching spaces on campus and expressed concern that the proposed solution may not be workable. However, it was noted that there was no perfect solution that could eliminate all the risks raised, and it was recognised that holding the winter graduation ceremony the week before Christmas would also pose significant challenges, particularly for international students and their families facing high travel costs and logistical challenges.

2025.26 Senate **noted** that a revised paper would be provided to a future Senate meeting.

ACTION: Director of Communications to revise paper and submit to a future Senate for approval.

Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029 Code of Practice (SE2025.07)

2025.27 Senate **received** and **considered for approval** the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029 Code of Practice.

2025.28 Senate **noted** recent changes to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) process, including the requirement for the University to develop and publish the Code of Practice ('the Code') ahead of the release of final REF guidance.

2025.29 Members **noted** that the Code required further reference to the broader contextual framework for research, including Freedom of Speech. Further

revision would be made following an identified error in a section on protected characteristics.

2025.30 Senate **approved** the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029 Code of Practice.

Research Publishing Policy **(SE2025.08)**

2025.31 Senate **received** and **considered for approval** the Research Publishing policy.

2025.32 Senate **noted** that the policy outlined a consistent institutional approach to research output publication and aligned with open access requirements including that of REF2029. It had been noted that the policy had been modelled on practices from other Russell Group institutions. Guidance would be published alongside the policy.

2025.33 Senate **noted** a new section had been included following SET's review, with section 7.7 requiring researchers to identify and label outputs aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

2025.34 Members **noted** potential conflicts between section 7.11 and the University's Freedom of Speech policy. It was agreed that this paragraph was not required and would be removed from the policy.

2025.35 Senate **approved** the Research Publishing Policy.

Affiliation Acknowledgement Policy **(SE2025.09)**

2025.36 Senate **received** and **considered for approval** the Affiliation Acknowledgment policy.

2025.37 Senate **noted** that the policy would replace the existing citation policy with a broader scope to capture all students and staff in instances where they would report publicly on work and/or study undertaken at the University.

2025.38 Senate **noted** that the policy offered an opportunity to promote greater consistency and housekeeping within the University, however, would require an additional section addressing potential misunderstandings between academics and the media. In particular, instances where media representations of QMUL affiliations fell outside of the control of the academic/s involved

2025.39 Senate **approved** the Affiliation Acknowledgment policy, pending revisions made.

ACTION: Sarah Molloy and Anna Semmens to circulate revised policy to members for comment.

Joint Principles for the Investigation of Alleged Research Misconduct **(SE2025.10)**

2025.40 Senate **received** and **considered for approval** the Joint Principles for the Investigation of Alleged Research Misconduct and its Operational Guidance.

2025.41 Senate **noted** that the two documents formalised the communication process between Queen Mary and Barts Health in cases of alleged research misconduct involving jointly held interests.

2025.42 Senate **approved** the Joint Principles for the Investigation of Alleged Research Misconduct and its Operational Guidance, subject to the clarification in the title which should be 'alleged' rather than 'apparent'.

Approval of membership and terms of reference for Senate 2025-26 (SE2025.11)

2025.43 Senate **noted** the terms of reference and **considered** for approval the membership for 2025-26.

2025.44 Senate **noted** that several members had voluntarily extended their terms until December 2025 to support continuity during the academic governance review and the recommendations for Senate and its Boards.

2025.45 Senate **noted** that in the last Senate meeting in June it had been agreed that the elections would be postponed allowing for the membership structure to be reviewed. In response to a question from members, the University Secretary gave assurance that it was not the intention to halt elections to Senate indefinitely and that elections would be scheduled as needed once the membership of meetings going forward had been agreed.

2025.46 Senate **noted** the terms of reference and **approved** the membership for 2025-26.

Membership and terms of reference for Boards of Senate for 2025-26 (SE2025.12)

2025.47 Senate **received** the 2025-26 membership and terms of reference for the Boards of Senate.

2025.48 Senate **noted** that the terms of reference and memberships for the Boards of Senate would be an interim measure in light of the ongoing governance review. Members noted that the revised 2025-26 memberships and terms of references would be considered at the next meeting of Senate.

2025.49 Senate **approved** the membership and terms of reference for the Boards of Senate for 2025-26.

Indicative Annual Plan for 2025-26 (SE2025.13)

2025.50 Senate **received** the indicative plan of core business for the 2025-26 academic session.

2025.51 Senate **approved** the indicative plan of core business for the 2025-26 academic session.

Part 4: Matters for Report

Schools of History, Geography and SPIR re-alignment proposal update **(SE2025.14)**

2025.52 Senate **noted** the update report on the re-alignment of the Schools of History, Geography and Politics and International Relations

2025.53 Senate **noted** that following the discussions at June Senate, additional mitigations had been developed in response to the issues raised. Council had approved the creation of the new School of Society and Environment in July and the corresponding change to Ordinance 9.

Minutes of the last meeting **(SE2024.15)**

2025.54 Senate **confirmed** the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2025.

Education Quality and Standards Board* **(SE2025.16)**

2025.55 Senate **noted** the executive summary of minutes from Education Quality and Standards Board (EQSB) meeting held on 16 July and 17 September 2025.

Taught Programmes Board* **(SE2025.17)**

2025.56 Senate **noted** the proposals relating to programme and module academic developments by Taught Programmes Board (TPB) that had taken place between 23 May and 30 September 2025.

Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board* **(SE2025.18)**

2025.57 Senate **noted** the executive summary of business considered by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board (RDPEB) between June to September 2025.

Partnerships Board* **(SE2025.19)**

2025.58 Senate **noted** the executive summary of business considered by the Partnerships Board (PB) from 13 May to 22 September 2025.

Ethics of Research Committee* **(SE2025.20)**

2025.59 Senate **noted** the executive summary report of the Ethics of Research Committee (QMERC) meeting in June 2025 and action taken since the last meeting.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator Annual Statement* **(SE2025.21)**

2025.60 Senate **noted** the Office of the Independent Adjudicator annual statement.

Council Report* **(SE2025.22)**

2025.61 Senate **noted** the minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 July 2025.

Matters arising and Chair's actions* **(SE2025.23)**

2025.62 Senate **noted** the detail of Chair's actions and matters arising since the last meeting of Senate.

President and Principal's report* **(SE2025.24)**

2025.63 Senate **noted** the President and Principal's report.

Students' Union President's report* **(SE2025.25)**

2025.64 Senate **noted** the Students' Union President's report.

Part 5: Other matters

Dates of future meetings

2025.65 Senate **noted** the upcoming Senate meetings for 2025-26:

- 11 December 2025, 15:00-17:00
- 12 March 2026, 15:00-17:00
- 11 June 2026, 15:00-17:00

Any Other Business

2025.66 No other business was raised.