

# THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

## COUNCIL

11 February 2025

### CONFIRMED MINUTES

A meeting was held on Tuesday 11 February 2025 at 10:00am in hybrid format (in person and by electronic platform).

**Present:** Dr Susan Liautaud (Chair), Ali Nikpay (Vice-Chair and Senior Independent Director), Sir Masood Ahmed (Independent Member), Professor Pauline Barrieu (Vice-Chair of Academic Board), Dr Julia Biggane (Professional Services Staff nominee), Sonali De Rycker (Independent Member), Marie Fuchs (Students' Union nominee), Professor Tamar Gendler (Independent Member), Sir David Higgins (Independent Member), Dr Musimbi Kanyoro (Independent Member), Professor David Kershaw (Academic Board nominee), Professor Larry Kramer (President & Vice Chancellor), Tito Molokwu (General Secretary of the Students' Union), Professor Niamh Moloney (Academic Board nominee), Gavin Patterson (Independent Member), Dr Angela Spatharou (Independent Member), and Professor Wim Van der Stede (Academic Board nominee).

**In attendance:** James Aitken (Head of Executive Office and Strategy Delivery), Mike Ferguson (Chief Financial Officer), Professor Emma McCoy (Vice President & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education)), Professor Susana Mourato (Vice President & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research)) (*from item 4*), Louise Nadal (School Secretary), Professor Eric Neumayer (Vice President & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Planning & Resources)), Ben Plummer-Powell (Chief Philanthropy & Global Engagement Officer), Professor Charles Stafford (Vice President & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Faculty Development)), Dr Andrew Young (Chief Operating Officer), Hilary Hunter (Head of Governance Services, committee secretary), and Leena Begum (Lenura Consulting) (*for item 4*), Nick Gilbert (Chief Information Officer) (*for items 4 and 5*) and Dr Michael Muthukrishna (*for item 6*).

**Apologies:** Johannes Huth (Independent Member), Stuart Roden (Independent Member), and (*normally in attendance*) Joanne Hay (Deputy Chief Operating Officer).

*The running order during the meeting was revised from the order recorded in the formal agenda and minutes below so that items 7, 8 and 11 were considered between items 4 and 5.*

#### **1. PRELIMINARY**

##### **1.1 QUORUM**

1.1.1 The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate.

##### **1.2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

1.2.1 There were no declarations of interest in relation to matters under discussion.

##### **1.3 MINUTES**

**PAPER A**

1.3.1 Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2024.

1.3.2 Council also noted the Written Resolution by Council in December to approve the establishment of the Global School of Sustainability as a School research institute.

##### **1.4 MATTERS ARISING**

1.4.1 **Restricted and Confidential**

1.4.2 There were no further matters arising to report.

**2. 61 ALDWYCH** **PAPER B**  
**Restricted and Confidential**

**3. PRESIDENT & VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT** **PAPER C**

3.1 Council noted and discussed the paper and oral report from the President & Vice Chancellor, which provided an update on School matters, strategic progress and developments, and sector updates.

3.2 The President & Vice Chancellor also provided an update on the capacity of the Estates Division, including succession planning for the role of Director of Capital Development following the recent departure of the role holder to take up a post elsewhere. There were robust arrangements in place for the interim period and to make a permanent appointment.

3.3 Sir David Higgins provided an oral report on the progress of the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Policy Review. Council would be provided with the opportunity to review the outcomes before the final proposals were prepared.

**4. DEEP DIVE: OPERATIONS EXCELLENCE PROGRAMME** **PAPER D**

4.1 Council received and discussed a presentation from Leena Begum, providing a high-level overview of the Operations Excellence Programme, covering the why, what and how of the programme, the key critical success factors, the approach to change management and communications and the approach to process design.

4.2 Council discussion points included:

- a) consultation approaches to ensure needs were identified and addressed;
- b) potential blockers for success as well as the particular importance of culture to embed behaviours, noting that culture can take time to change and opportunities to address quick wins;
- c) drawing on best practice from the higher education sector and other sectors;
- d) value for money would be demonstrated through quantitative and qualitative outcomes;
- e) a data architecture, which provided a single version of the truth and improved user experience;
- f) the importance of creating agility to respond to an environment of quick pace change and/or uncertainty.

**5. DEEP DIVE: PLANS FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AT LSE** **PAPER E**

5.1 Council received and discussed presentations from the Chief Information Officer, the Vice President & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education), and the Vice President & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) covering plans at the School to become an AI enabled and AI sector leading organisation, focussing in particular on development of technology partnerships, education initiatives including the Digital Skills Lab and AI & Education Fellowships, and the Institute for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence.

5.2 Council discussion points included:

- a) the opportunities for AI to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of standard operations;
- b) communicating with the School community on the importance and scope of AI within the organisation;
- c) the role of the School in informing the external debate on ethical AI issues;
- d) enabling the School's ambitions through fundraising, external funding and collaboration opportunities.

## 6. FACULTY PRESENTATION: DR MICHAEL MUTHUKRISHNA

- 6.1 Council received and discussed a presentation from Dr Michael Muthukrishna, Associate Professor of Economic Psychology, providing an overview of his academic work and recent publication 'A Theory of Everyone'. This was the first in a planned series to provide Council insight into LSE research activity.

## 7. FORMAL BUSINESS: APPROVAL ITEMS

### 7.1 COMMITTEE AND ACADEMIC BOARD REPORTS

PAPERS Fi-iii

- 7.1.1 Council noted the reports covering recent meetings of:

- a) Finance & Estates Committee (Paper Fi),
- b) Governance Committee (Paper Fii, together with an oral report from the Vice President & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Planning & Resources) on the outcomes of the meeting discussion the previous day); and
- c) Academic Board (Paper Fiii).

### 7.1.2 **Restricted and Confidential**

- 7.1.3 Council noted the resolutions of Academic Board from the meeting held on 2 December 2024 and the motion adopted at the Academic Board meeting on 5 February 2025.

- 7.1.4 Council discussed requested changes to the Articles of Association and Council's Standing Orders by the University and College Union (UCU) and a number of academic faculty who had requested/attended an additional meeting of Academic Board in December 2024. In response to the points and requests made:

- a) Council noted that the changes made in 2022 to the Articles of Association, by moving provisions (including those for Council membership) to the Council Standing Orders, were intended to streamline governing documents consistent with common practice by having a clear distinction between a high-level governing document (the Articles of Association) and underpinning governing documents setting out more detailed arrangements, which were subject to less complex statutory requirements when making amendments (the Standing Orders). The lowering of the required approval threshold for making changes to the composition of Council as a consequence of this change was inadvertent (from 75% as required by Company Law to amend the Articles of Association to a simple majority to amend the Standing Orders). Given this, Council agreed that Council membership provisions would be restored back to the Articles of Association.
- b) Council recently agreed to allow staff members to serve two terms on Council. Council saw no reason to revise this recent decision.
- c) As regards of staff representation, Council noted that any member of Academic Board may apply to be an academic staff member of Council, a process overseen by the Academic Nominations Committee of Academic Board. The process was open and independently run by an Academic Board committee, and no one was precluded from

applying. Similarly, any member of Professional Services Staff could apply to an open call. Council had no plans to change these processes.

- d) Council decided that it would not change the current Council membership composition to expand the proportion of staff and student members. The changes made in 2022 were to address a risk in meeting quoracy and this reason remained valid. More specifically, the 2020 Governance Review undertaken by KPMG raised serious concerns about the low share of Independent members of Council among all Council members and the substantial risk the then-prevailing composition of Council posed for meeting quoracy given Article 4.5 of the Articles of Association, which required that Independent members be in the majority of those present at meetings. To mitigate this risk, Council unanimously agreed to add two more Independent members to Council in 2021 (which was formally implemented in 2022 when the Articles of Association were revised). The change proposed to Council was inconsistent with KPMG's advice and would increase the risks of inquoracy.

**7.2 DEGREE OUTCOMES STATEMENT PAPER G**

- 7.2.1 Council noted the report and approved the Degree Outcomes Statement as set out in the paper, prior to publication on the School website.

**8. FORMAL BUSINESS: ITEMS TO NOTE**

**8.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT PAPER H**

- 8.1.1 Council noted the Health & Safety Annual Report for 2023/24.

**8.2 RESEARCH MISCONDUCT ANNUAL REPORT PAPER I**

- 8.2.1 Council noted the report.

**9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 9.1 There was no further business.

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 10.1 6 May 2025.

**11. CLOSED SESSION OF COUNCIL**

- 11.1 There was a closed session of Council members only.