THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

COUNCIL

24 February 2026

CONFIRMED MINUTES

A meeting was held on Tuesday 24 February 2026 both in person and via Zoom.

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

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)), Elizabeth Messud (General Counsel), Professor Eric Neumayer (Vice President & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Planning & Resources)), Ben Plummer-Powell (Chief Philanthropy & Global Engagement Officer), Professor Alex Voorhoeve (Vice President & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Faculty Development)), Dr Andrew Young (Chief Operating Officer), Esther Munro, LSESU Chief Executive Officer (for item 3), Professor Jonathan Birch (for item 6), Katie Crystal (Governance and Ethics Manager, acting committee secretary), Meaghan Saunders (Governance Officer) and Loren Wulfsohn (Governance Consultant).

Apologies: Johannes Huth (Independent Member)

1. GOVERNANCE

1.1. The Chair noted that a quorum of the Council was present for a meeting permitted in accordance with article 4.5 of School's articles of association and accordingly that the Meeting was duly convened.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

1.2. The Chair noted there were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS **CL25-26.023**

1.3. Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2025.

MATTERS ARISING

1.4. There were no matters to consider.

2. PRESIDENT & VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT CL25-26.011
RESTRICTED AND CONFIDENTIAL (2.2-2.3, 2.5)

2.1. Council noted and discussed the paper and the verbal report of the President & Vice Chancellor (President), which provided an update on School matters, strategic progress and developments, and sector updates. In particular, the President highlighted that the search for a Chief Operations Officer had concluded and an announcement on the appointment would be made as soon as possible. Additional topics addressed included an update on the student levy fee, the School's brand review, the Operational Excellence Programme, and capital projects.

2.2. **Restricted and Confidential**

2.3. **Restricted and Confidential**

2.4. The School had recently held its first annual meeting on LSE's endowments with Council noting an overview of the event.

2.5. **Restricted and Confidential**

3. DEEP DIVE 1: LSE STUDENTS' UNION: STRATEGIC VISION CL25-26.024

3.1. Council received a presentation and noted the content of a paper from Tito Molokwu, General Secretary of the LSE Students' Union (LSESU), and Esther Munro, Chief Executive Officer of the LSESU, on the Union's key activities, achievements and challenges. The presentation highlighted the Union's work to deliver initiatives that enhanced the student experience, fostered community and belonging, and supported student wellbeing and representation. It also outlined strategic challenges shaping the Union's operating environment and set out its future priorities and strategic objectives.

3.2. In discussion, the officers raised the following points:

i. The ability of the LSESU to ensure continuity of projects and priorities despite the annual changeover of sabbatical officers: The LSESU had introduced several measures to strengthen continuity including the introduction of a model to ensure that each department had a consistent point of contact that remained in place beyond changes in executive leadership. In addition, it was noted that the appointment of a LSESU CEO would further support organisational continuity and longer-term strategic delivery.
ii. The ability of students to secure internships: The Union was working with academic departments to explore ways of strengthening support and identifying opportunities to help students access internships more effectively.
iii. Duplication between the School's central administration and services provided by the Student's Union: A reduction in duplication where possible could help minimise confusion for students when accessing support services. Inclusion in the School's Operational Excellence Programme would support this alignment.
iv. Variation in induction processes across departments: Work was underway to understand the nature and extent of these disparities, acknowledging that programmes reflected departmental resources and differentials in student fee levels. It was suggested that the introduction of a minimum baseline standard for induction could help reduce disparities and provide a more consistent experience for students across the School.

3.3. The Chair, on behalf of Council, thanked the LSESU representatives for their presentation.

4. RESEARCH STRATEGY: SPOTLIGHT ON INCOME FOR RESEARCH, IMPACT AND INNOVATION **CL25-26.025**

4.1. Council received a presentation and noted the contents of a paper from Professor Susana Mourato on the School's research, impact and innovation income ('the income'). The presentation addressed the strategic importance of the income for the School, the challenges associated with sustaining and growing this in a rapidly evolving funding landscape, and the actions being taken in response to these challenges.

4.2. It was noted that LSE had an above-average success rate in securing competitive research grants, a testament to the calibre of the School's academic community and the support it received. However, changes in the funding landscape meant that the Research and Innovation Division's funding infrastructure may need to be scaled to maintain and grow the level of research funding secured by the School.

4.3. In discussion, Council expressed support for the proposed targeted internal investment in specialist support capacity.

4.4. Council also discussed the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the delivery of research grants, particularly in relation to the potential to reduce the costs associated with certain project activities. It was noted that although AI tools could lower costs in areas such as coding and survey analysis, these efficiencies were being used by academics to pursue more ambitious research activities within the scope of their funding.

5. DEEP DIVE 2: PHILANTHROPY, ALUMNI AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT UPDATE **CL25-26.026**

5.1. Council received a presentation and discussed the contents of an accompanying paper from Ben Plummer-Powell, Chief Philanthropy and Global Engagement Officer. The presentation provided Council with an update on the progress made over the last two years following the Council's investment in and support for PAGE's growth, including fundraising and alumni engagement activity. Council noted PAGE's current priorities, advancing LSE's strategic objectives, and evolving to realise its potential and operate more efficiently, positioning LSE for the period beyond 2030.

5.2. In discussion, Council members raised matters which were addressed as follows:

i. A review had recently been undertaken of the processes surrounding the due diligence of potential donors which considered the implications of the planned expansion.
ii. The due diligence process for assessing potential donors identified and flagged information available in the public domain, which was reviewed and assessed against defined risk criteria.
iii. The remit of the School's External Funding Ethical Review Board (EFERB), with reference to its approach to assessing reputational risk, was considered. The framework used by the EFERB to assess reputational risk would be circulated to members for information.
Action: Secretary

6. FACULTY PRESENTATION: PROFESSOR JONATHAN BIRCH

6.1. Council received and discussed a presentation from Jonathan Birch, an LSE Professor of Philosophy and Director of The Jeremy Coller Centre for Animal Sentience. The presentation, entitled 'Chatbots and the Persisting Interlocutor Illusion', explored the work being undertaken by Prof. Birch on the topic of AI users crediting chatbots with a chance of being conscious.

7. FORMAL BUSINESS – APPROVAL ITEMS

7.1. DEGREE OUTCOMES STATEMENT CL2526.027

7.1.1. The annual Degrees Outcome Statement had been considered, and endorsed by, the School's Education Committee and Academic Board prior to its submission to Council. The Council was informed of the position expressed by the Office for Students regarding the use of "inherently inflationary" degree classification algorithms that may not accurately reflect student achievement. The School's use of algorithms as reported to the OfS was noted.

7.1.2. After due consideration, the Council approved the annual Degree Outcomes Statement, and its publication on the School's website.

7.2. OPENING OF NEW BANK ACCOUNTS – GLENGALL ROAD (GGR) SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES CL25-26.028

7.2.1. Council noted that the Robson House Residence Hall on the Glengall Road site had opened for the 2025/26 academic year and was generating a profit.

7.2.2. Council approved the opening of two new bank accounts for the School's Glengall Road subsidiary companies.

7.3. STONE CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF WEALTH INEQUALITY AT LSE – RESEARCH CENTRE APPLICATION CL25-26.029

7.3.1. Council noted the proposal to create the Stone Centre for the Study of Wealth Inequality at LSE to become a research centre within the Department of Economics. The proposal had been reviewed and endorsed by the Academic Board.

7.3.2. Council approved the creation of the Stone Centre for the Study of Wealth Inequality at LSE as a Research Centre within the Department of Economics.

7.4. COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP APPROVALS CL25-26.030

7.4.1. Council approved the following reappointment recommendations from the Governance Committee:

i. Sir Masood Ahmed for a second term as an Independent Council member and Chair of Audit Committee as well as a member of the Governance Committee for a second term from 09 May 2026 to 08 May 2029.[1]

ii. Professor Tamar Gendler for a second term as an Independent Council Member and Audit Committee member from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2029.

[1] Secretary's note: Correction to Masood Ahmed's term dates as approved at meeting on 23 June 2026.

iii. Dr Musimbi Kanyoro for a third term as an Independent Council member from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2029, and a second term as an Honorary Awards Committee member ending on 31 December 2029.[2]
iv. Professor Pauline Barrieu as a co-opted Academic member of Finance and Estates Committee for a further year from 1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027.

7.5. TEMPORARY AMENDMENT TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION: STUDENT COMPLAINTS **CL25-26.031**

7.5.1. Council noted that following the appointment of the General Counsel as the Interim School Secretary, action was required to avoid any perception that student grievances or misconduct matters were being treated as legal issues rather than being determined under School policy.

7.5.2. After due consideration, Council approved a temporary amendment to the Scheme of Delegation to transfer the responsibility for student complaints, as set out under the Scheme, from the Interim School Secretary to the Vice President and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Faculty Development). This arrangement would take effect from 16 March 2026 and remain in place until the arrangements for a permanent School Secretary were finalised.

7.6. RESEARCH CONDUCT: ANNUAL REPORT AND INTEGRITY STATEMENT **CL25-26.033**

7.6.1. Council noted the content of the paper tabled, including the statement which provided assurance on the School's measures to uphold research integrity. The report and integrity statement has been approved by the Research Committee at its 3 December 2025 meeting.

7.6.2. After due consideration, the Council approved the Annual Report and Integrity Statement.

8. FORMAL BUSINESS – ITEMS FOR NOTING

8.1 HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT **CL25-26.032**

8.1.1 Council noted the Health and Safety Annual Report which advised on developments relating to the management of travel risk, fire safety, health and safety, and food safety across the LSE. It was noted that a series of audits covering these areas had been carried out by KPMG with only minor areas for improvement flagged. It was further noted that the fire safety work that had been undertaken in the Marshall Building had come in on budget and had been signed off by the London Fire Brigade.

8.1.2 Council discussed the introduction of the Office for Student's mandatory E6 regulation in August 2025. The regulation required higher education providers to actively prevent and respond to student harassments and sexual misconduct. The Chair requested that an item on sexual harassment be included on the May agenda of Council, as well as an overview of how health and safety was being addressed in the School's large residence halls.

ACTION: Chief Operating Officer

8.2 THE BRITISH LIBRARY OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SCIENCE (BLPES): ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25 **CL25-26.034**

[2] Secretary's note: Correction to Musimbi Kanyoro's term dates as approved at meeting on 23 June 2026.

8.2.1 Council reviewed and noted the Annual Report from the British Library of Political and Economic Science.

8.2.2 It was noted that the Library had released a Minecraft game entitled 'Charles Booth's London', allowing players to explore Victorian social inequality.

8.3 UPDATE ON OUTSOURCED CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER CL25-26.035

8.3.1 Council noted that JP Morgan had been appointed as the School's outsourced Chief Investment Officer, a decision endorsed by the Finance and Estates Committee. The Chair noted thanks to the Investment Sub-committee for the work undertaken to finalise the appointment.

8.4 COMMITTEE REPORTS CL25-26.036

8.4.1 Council noted the content of the meeting reports from the Committees of Council.

8.4.2 It was reported that both the Audit Committee and the Finance and Estates Committee had received and reviewed the outcome of an internal audit on 35 Lincoln's Inn Fields. The Chairs of those Committees had agreed that the lessons learnt should be incorporated into the implementation plans for future capital projects, with particular focus on 61 Aldwych. The Finance and Estates Committee would consider and monitor actions being taken to remediate the issues identified with the Audit Committee to receive updates on progress. An internal audit of the 61 Aldwych project, including a focus on ensuring that lessons learnt were being incorporated into the project, would be undertaken at an appropriate time.

8.4.3 The Vice Chair of the Academic Board reported that a project to review academic governance at the School would commence in due course. This would include an assessment of the governance framework and governance documents to ensure they were fit for purpose.

8.4.4 The Chair requested that an update be provided at the May Council meeting on the progress of the review. The update should outline key priorities, highlight any potential areas of concern and draw attention to any other significant matters.

ACTION: Vice Chair Academic Board

8.4.5 The Chair requested that the draft financial plan be presented to Council for review at its May meeting prior to approval by Council in June.

ACTION: Chief Financial Officer

8.5 APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL SECRETARY VERBAL UPDATE

8.5.1 Council noted an update from the President and Vice Chancellor on the appointment of a permanent School Secretary.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Retirement of Chief Operating Officer (COO)

9.1.1 The Chair noted that Andrew Young, the School's first COO, was retiring. Given this was his last Council meeting, the Chair expressed gratitude on behalf of the School and Council to Andrew for his commitment and service to the School over a ten-year period in the role.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5 May 2026 (online)

11 CLOSED SESSION OF COUNCIL

There was a closed session of Council members only.