

Education Executive Minutes

Date & time	01/04/2025 17:00-19:00
Location	MOOREAX-034A
Attendance	Anna Blackman (Head of Events) Sarah Tridgell (Events Manager – Graduation) Tana Randle (Graduation Events Coordinator) Dominika Biel (LSE School Rep) Elise Eriksson (SBM School Rep) Matthew Paterson (LSS School Rep) Ewan Strangeways (PDA School Rep) William Cootes (EPMS School Rep) Matthew Searle (Head of Student Engagement and Insights) Madelaine Gray (VP Education – Chair) Lauryn Fleming (Academic Communities Coordinator – Secretary) Poppy Coates (LSE Academic Rep) Ruby Peresso (Humanities Academic Rep) Meenatchi Muthirulappan (EPMS Academic Rep) Emily Palmer (Humanities Academic Rep) Sameen Shahzad (EPMS Academic Rep)
Apologies	Mia Cavanagh Sharanyah Sivarajah

Item	Action	Responsible	Due
4. Student Journey: Summer Graduation	Follow up to see timelines before next meeting then follow up with exec to signpost members to graduation info on student intranet.	MG	27/05/25
5. Easter 26/27 Term Date Proposals	Ask whether study week has to be the week proposed or whether it can be moved.	MG	ASAP

Item	Notes	Action
1. Welcome	MG invites attendees to introduce themselves.	
2. Officer updates	NSS focus- involved in SU and uni campaigns. Working with reps to share updates and spotlight on work and manifestos of school reps. Women’s History Month and shout about it week as part of manifesto. Focus groups on curriculum framework, wider SU been busy with events,	

	congratulated Matthew and Dominika. Mentioned priority 8 and what its purpose was and how to find out more.	
3. Previous minutes	All accurate. Actions – held term 2 rep fair to promote reps and student voice to shout about what is being done to represent students. Shout about it week and student leader conference taking place for the first time this year. By-elections taking place	
4. Student Journey: Summer Graduation	<p>AB introduces the events team and what they are responsible for delivering as part of their roles. Planning Summer Graduation 2025 – needs to be sustainable given the current climate. Over the last few years they have evolved and changed so will discuss the key guiding principles, progress, timetable, student feedback, cost to students, opportunities and next steps and support of the exec.</p> <p>Guiding key principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student focussed • Graduands to share their day with closest supporters • Departmental focussed ceremonies, school focused days • Grad timetables based on predicted attendance figures • Accessible to all – DDA complaint student experience • Improve sustainability • Increase family offering • Improve efficiencies/reduce costs. <p>Links to RH2030s strategic enablers</p> <p>Graduation team considered every possible way to deliver graduation – off campus/on campus/simultaneous ceremonies etc, sustainability and cost and environmental impact. Windsor auditorium will be used but how can the rest of the experience be uplifted?</p> <p>Feedback (516 students) from summer 2024 graduation-students want enhanced reception, enhanced photo offerings, more food/drinks, enhance the hall, lower price.</p> <p>Graduation cost £41 – the price increased by £1 in 2024. Cost covers gown hire, student ticket and 2 guests, access to reception, complimentary drink reception, stage clip, free download of ceremony video. Discreet hardship provision is in place for those who may need it.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student orators – increase from 13 ceremonies in 2024 to 32 in 2025 – more opportunities for students to take on this role. Reviewing wider ‘on the day’ graduation experience. 	<p>Actions for MG-follow up to see timelines before next meeting MG to follow up with exec to signpost members to graduation info on student intranet.</p>

- Windsor auditorium set
- Continued collaboration with SU
- More food and drink options
- Instagram photo map
- Reviewing potential enhancements (Ed Exec and student ambassadors etc)
- Plus increased parity between summer and winter grads
- Future enhancements to cater for the needs of our diverse student audience.

Ed Exec members asked to encourage students to register, promote the student orator role/apply and help as plans are finalised.

Opens to questions for the Exec:

Actions for MG- follow up to see timelines before next meeting

MG to follow up with exec to signpost members to graduation info on student intranet.

EE – appreciates attempt at making it as good as possible for change but asks if inside Founders can be used for photos. AB - Students can go to South Quad steps for formal photos and back to Founders Square where there will be drinks reception. More guests can come and watch in Founders Square to see ceremony on screen rather than limiting numbers. ST says North Quad also open for day, picture gallery used and chapel, photo opportunities all over campus, EWD will be open, Boilerhouse open.

MP – asks about pricing – would the team be willing to show students what the cost breakdown is – similar to how the SU share breakdown for large events. AB- most of the cost is gown hire but is willing to break it down for students' transparency.

AB asks exec about gown hire companies – some unis charge differently depending on level of study ceremony, RHUL have never done this to help keep cost same for everyone but is this the right approach?

PC – would prefer a streamline model, MA, being self funded and receiving less of a loan at PGT would be challenging. If they were to charge more, they'd want to know why it costs more.

EE- Lots of 3rd year students sighing at graduations being held in Windsor – should there be an explanation to reassure students it will be a good experience? AB- in launch comms it was outlined that there will be more space and more opportunities for guests and in next phase of comms there will be a confirmation of structure used with marquees etc. TR- students should refer to

	<p>FAQs on student intranet as there is reasoning is in there if students want to know more.</p> <p>PC- questions about dates of graduation ST – appreciates it’s difficult for International Students to know their exact dates</p> <p>TR- if students defer and can’t come to summer ceremony, they can now go to the winter one rather than waiting a whole year.</p> <p>EW- lecturers seemed surprised by how late ceremonies are and there are concerns around not being able to attend. AB- the team are currently 5 or 6 working days between results and start so ceremonies – no time to add ceremonies the week before and instead have to add on a week afterwards to account for the additional ceremonies due to location change. Plans to alternate timings of departmental ceremonies so there’s fairness in lecturers attending if they’re later than usual.</p> <p>EP - Last year there was an option to buy extra ticket, will this be an option again? Depending on number of students wanting to attend.</p> <p>MP- 400 capacity in Windsor including students, guests, academics.</p> <p>EW- are extra tickets dependant on size of department? AB yes broadly speaking – if a big cohort it’s less likely that there will be spare tickets.</p> <p>EE- is it confirmed that there’ll be a stage in the auditorium? AB thinks better without a stage, raked audience so from guest perspective there’s a better view in an auditorium – preference for accessibility there’s no need to build a stage. More backdrop, screen, carpet.</p>	
<p>5. Easter 26/27 Term Date Proposals</p>	<p>MG- in 2026/27 year, Easter is really early and there are 2 bank holidays either side of easter Sunday, lots of options to consider before confirming term dates.</p> <p>Option 1 start spring term on 4/5 January -reduce time between end of Autumn and Start of spring, consideration of January exams but means longer Easter holiday, still having study week.</p> <p>Option 2 is having no study week in term 2 – acknowledges some courses don’t anyway. Keep January assessment week and teaching through from early Jan through to the Thursday before Good Friday – keeps Easter break the same length but term is compressed.</p>	<p>MG ACTIO N – ask whethe r study week has to be the week propos ed?</p>

	<p>Option 3 keep study and January assessment week. Teach 10 weeks which is even further condensed for taught content.</p> <p>Option 4 keep study week and January assessment week have 4 week Easter break and start Summer term a week earlier, so essentially the last week of Spring term at the start of term 3 instead.</p> <p>MG acknowledges no option is perfect but opens to Exec for questions and feedback.</p> <p>EE - prefers option 1, students won't be happy with no study week.</p> <p>ES- PDA already does option 2/3 for Spring as there are no exams and it works fairly well. First week is free but in Spring term there's no study week and already missing first and last week of teaching. 4th option is worst – there's not really much teaching in summer term either so lots of students are gone after easter until September.</p> <p>WC- courses already dense with lectures are going to have to cram more in.</p> <p>MP- option 1 is least disruptive, students won't like option 4</p> <p>EW- doesn't think option 3 will work for their course – students can barely get through content as it is. Thinks 4 is a good option but people won't turn up to the last week, 1 is a good option but not sure students will acknowledge extra week of teaching.</p> <p>RP – For International students, no reading week there would cause a lot of disruption. Lecturers are already stressed with delivering content so cutting it even further would be stressful. Option 1 best.</p> <p>DB- option 1 is best but not happy about it. LSE have in person exams so having to come back a week early and revise over winter break isn't ideal but would like to keep reading week.</p> <p>MS- option 1 start early January – would price of flights be higher in that week and would that prohibit students coming back? RP- as an international student, flights are usually the same price at any time of year so no major impact.</p> <p>EP- As an intercollegiate student, considerations need to be made for exam weeks.</p> <p>MP- does study week have to be the week proposed? Suggests option 1 but move study week to week before</p>	
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	<p>and everything will be the same as now but just a week earlier.</p> <p>MG – study week hasn't been suggested as an alternative week so unsure if it can be changed. MG ACTION- ask about this.</p> <p>DB suggests option 2 and 3 mix – during reading week lecturers online for help, nothing in person so people can go home. Current timetable is 4x 2 hr lectures each week but this won't work for more practical courses.</p> <p>EP- can there be another week added in term 1. MS- winter graduations and admin needs to take place at the end of the term so not feasible.</p> <p>MP – option 3 is especially bad if taking away an extra Friday for students who have teaching on Fridays.</p> <p>MS- the university haven't had January exams for very long so this issue hasn't happened before and not something they have needed to consider until now.</p> <p>PC- in that case, can jan exams be removed?</p> <p>MG- that would then require all modules to be revalidated so very unlikely for one singular academic year as it's too much work.</p> <p>EW thinks option 1 is best.</p> <p>EE asks what lecturers prefer – MG says it all depends on schools' size and teaching style.</p> <p>Emily – what are other Unis doing?</p> <p>MG unsure until they publish term dates, but this has to be approved in June so won't be able to find out.</p> <p>WC- option 1 is only starting 3 days earlier than it started this year so it's not making that much of a difference anyway – lots of students already back by then to study.</p> <p>Option 1 is overall most popular option – MG to feed back into conversations and asks exec to give any more feedback outside of meeting if necessary.</p>	
6. AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big Exec Feedback <p>MG asks those who attended the Big Executive in January for their feedback on the meeting,</p>	

	<p>EE- enjoyed the meeting, there was vibrant conversation and would be happy to go forward with the same layout in future.</p> <p>MP – useful and helpful to diversify opinion alongside other Executive members.</p> <p>EW – it was nice to see everyone from the different groups.</p> <p>PC- nice to be there from different execs, members of staff from Students' Union Senior Management were also present which was a nice addition. It was good to introduce themselves and put names to faces etc and for them to hear first hand what students are saying.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exam Timetables Feedback Report <p>MG – has anything been fed back from students since exam timetable release?</p> <p>DB- in LSE there were a few issues, students not able to access timetable due to system overload. Slight miscommunication in one department but that was easily fixed.</p> <p>EE not heard anything major and there is a phasing out of exams.</p> <p>WC – EPMS have the best timetable in a while. Maths used to have 4 exams per week over a two week period but now they spread across the entire term – nicely distributed.</p> <p>PC- Psychology sent a departmental wide email about when they'd be released with a follow up email apologising for a mistake with dates, comms error.</p> <p>EW- Classics didn't have much communication at all. Timetables very spread out, there aren't many exams so feels sporadic and people don't feel happy.</p> <p>ES – PDA don't have exams but lots of students are Joint Honours (JH)– hasn't heard much feedback but some JH students have one exam on the last possible day of the timetable.</p> <p>RP – in English. There has been lots of confusion about JH students. They weren't clear about which modules have exams or not. More communication from department would be helpful – lots of 1st years worried as it was the unknown, never sat exams and unaware if they did/didn't have exams.</p>	
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	<p>EW- Classics now have exams which is the first time since pre covid, the students weren't told until very short notice. Students weren't communicated with until it was brought to their attention after a rep found out via Moodle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student-led Education and Student Experience review and feedback <p>MG – over the last couple of months, MG and colleagues from SU and Uni have been involved in group to come up with new set of awards to recognize university staff work. Nominated by students via a short form which will go to a panel. Exec is asked to consider where staff are getting it right in terms of student experience and can they share best practice?</p> <p>Panel includes course reps, so MG asks interested reps to get in touch to show interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPZ survey <p>Students reminded to complete the CPZ survey.</p> <p>End of meeting – next Education Executive will take place on 27/05/2025.</p>	
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