Academic Council

DRAFT MINUTES

Wednesday 6th November, 14.00 Blackfriars Building

Present	Professor David Oloke (DO), Chief Academic Officer (Chair), James Newby Chair (JN), President and CEO Professor Gary C Wood (GCW), Academic Director Dr Patricia Xavier (PX), Elected Academic Member (items 1-11 incl) Mary Kenyon-James (MKJ), Director of Student Lifecycle (Items 1-9 incl) Dr Nadia Kourra (NK), Elected Academic Member Tierney McCann (TM) Student Union President Lucy Stonehouse (LS), Quality Assurance Manager
In attendance	Chib Alexander (CoSec) Company Secretary
Apologies	Jen Newton (JRN), Elected Professional Services member, Emma Lewis (EL), Head of Quality Assurance

1 Welcome

I. The Chair opened the meeting and confirmed it was quorate. The Chair welcomed the observers from the OfS. Apologies were received from Jen Newton.

2 Minutes and Actions Log I Lead **Co-Sec**

Received: AC.25.01.01a Draft Minutes July 2024

I. The minutes from 24th July 2024, 14th August 2024 and 25 September 2024 were deemed to be a true record and therefore approved.

II. Action log updates:
   a) MKJ provided an update on the review to student remuneration. Action closed

3 Chair's Report I Lead **Professor David Oloke**

Received: Verbal Update.

Noted:

I. Chair provided a summary of NDAPs, informed members that NMITE are still waiting for feedback on the Q4 visit and Q 1 submissions.

II. Members were informed of the change to the IET Advisory visit, which was rescheduled 2nd Dec.

III. DO provided an update on PAG noting that work in this area was being supported by upcoming changes in the staffing structure and roles to formalise the internal partnerships team. Quarterly meetings of an internal group to provide feedback into the PAG committee. NK questioned if the academic team could be provided with some initial information to support early feedback and involvement in the process. DO agreed that this could be reviewed and avenues for academic staff input discussed

4 Academic Affairs Committee Report (AAC) I Lead **Gary C Wood**

Received: AC.25.01.02 Report from AAC held on 16th Oct 2024

Noted:

I. Report taken as read, point raised in JRN absence regarding use of Donorfy to support tracking partners and if this could be used to track Academic partnerships. GCW noted that Donorfy was discussed at AAC but does not appear to benefit tracking for delivery partners. DO/GCW, bring together key stakeholders in this area to review options available that could support centralising the record of partners.

5 Quality Assurance Committee (QuAC) I Lead **Lucy Stonehouse**

Received: AC.25.01.03 Report from QuAC held on 9th October 2024

Noted:

I. QuAC discussed a number of annual reports

II. MKJ queried that information about NSS and outcomes, was not recorded within the QuAC meeting summary. LS noted that this was incorporated into the Annual programme monitoring report. MKJ cited concerns that this risked a lack of assurance and record keeping that the NSS actions were discussed. Council agreed for a sentence to be included in the overview to highlight where NSS was discussed.

III. GCW provided a verbal update to QuAC and informed council that a full written update will be provided to the next meeting but confirmed that the work was continuing to progress.

6 Widening Participation Steering Group I Lead **James Newby**

Received: AC.25.01.04 Widening Participation Steering Group update

Noted:

I. WPSG paper taken as read.

II. NK participation plan due for Submission to the OfS in Spring 25, questioned what plans were in place to achieve the outlined aims. JN noted that the committee is working on planning development and continuing to review funding available and staffing resources. JN confirmed the report was raised to AC to highlight that these aims have changed and are not duplicate of traditional unis. JN confirmed they are looking to tie the APP aims to institutional success.

III. DO agreed the aims need to tie into the NMITE KPI's and Benchmarking

IV. MKJ Research project into impact of cost of living (Query title) Personal support and tutoring initial meeting was cancelled.

7 **Assessment Board** I Lead **David Oloke**

Received: AC.25.01.05 Report from Assessment Board held on 2nd October 2024

Received: AC.25.01.05a Ratification of Awards

Noted:

I. A report from the Assessment Board (AB) was reviewed which noted the feedback provided by the External Examiners

II. Redacted [Not for Publication]

Confirmation of Award of Eight MEng (Hons) Integrated Engineering Degrees – APPROVED

III. LS introduced the proposed amendments to General regulations noting the items had been raised following feedback provided by the External examiners. LS stated the first amendment related to the issuance of Ordinary Degrees/Degrees without Honours and the second amendment related to the handling of repeated study at FHEQ Level 4. DO thanked LS for her diligence on this matter and speed in reviewing the correction.

IV. Amendment one: PX agreed this brings NMITE in line with other institutions. GCW recommended a format change to use brackets instead of a slash to increase clarity that the bachelor's degree without Honors is the same as an Ordinary Degree.

V. Redacted [Not for Publication]

*The Committee **agreed:***	Responsible	Deadline
Update/ monitoring on implementation of Level 4 restart approved Nov 24	GCW	TBC

8 **Annual Report of Academic Governance** I Lead **Lucy Stonehouse**

Received: AC.25.01.06a Annual report of Academic Governance
AC.25.01.06b AAC annual report 23-24
AC.25.01.06c QuAC Annual report 23-24

Noted:

I. LS introduced the report noting that it had been scaled down on previous years whilst keeping the required assurance around academic governance and OfS regulations for AC and the Board. It was confirmed the report outlines major milestones and reflections and recommendations for 2024-25.

II. MKJ raised a small clarification noting that 9.1 INTO has been subsumed into STEPS.

The Council approved the recommendation of the report to the Board of Trustees

III. AAC and QuAC Annual report were presented and taken as read. EL highlighted that Academic representation membership on AAC and QuAC was to be reviewed, ensuring that as NMITE grows to a multi programme institution that all programmes are represented where suitable. QuAC reviewing a vacancy for an academic rep, LS confirmed a person should be in place for the January meeting.

IV. LS highlighted the recommendations for QuAC for focus in 2024-25. GCW noted that NMITE needs to pivot towards more conscious data collect. Members agreed that current exploration has been undertaken as reactionary based on available data. It was highlighted that the implementation of a new student records system, could provide additional data collection opportunities.

V. PX stated the need for feedback for staff as well as students from module feedback. GCW noted the timeline of feedback available through the programme management board. Members discussed the potential for a more effective route to share information directly to programme leads and overarching issues to be identified by the programme management board. DO agreed that as NMITE becomes a multi programme ints, feedback needs to be targeted to induvial programmes. GCW raised that feedback needs to be handled sensitively and constructive feedback needs to be provided not just blind negativity.

9 **Admissions Review** I Lead **Patricia Xavier**

Received: AC.25.01.07a Revision of IELTS criteria
AC.25.01.07b Admission with Advance standing

Noted:

I. PX introduced the IELTS Scores proposed changes. "a reduction of IELTS required from 7.0 to 6.0 (with minimum of 5.5 in each component), *on condition of students having received English-medium instruction and passed a qualification at Level 2 or above;* ***OR*** a reduction of IELTS required from 7.0 to 6.5 (with a minimum of 6 in each component), *where students do not have English-medium instruction at Level 2 or above."*

II. GCW raised that the level 2 or above Qual must have been taught in English. The council agreed the clarification.

III. GCW queried the need for additional support available for English language support noting the NMITE differences and difference in changes with examinations. Members agreed there were risks inherent that students could be unable to cope that could increase attrition or costs attached to English language support.

*The Committee **agreed:***	Responsible	Deadline
PX to circulate revised wording (approval via chairs action with approval to amend the Admissions policy to reflect and allow for operationalisation	PX/CoSec	Dec- 24

IV. Admissions Policy changes for admissions with Advance standing: PX provided an introduction to the report, highlighting the number of HND and HNC level colleges in Local area, and stating that the policy changes would allow NMITE to take advantage of the limited further education opportunities available to these students.

V. GCW asked for clarification on what AC is being asked to do, PX clarified that AC is being asked to agree in principle but that the report allows for approval of change to the Admissions policy. Members reviewed and agreed that AC can't approve without further information on resourcing.

VI. GCW noted that this would need to be underpinned with agreements with particular feeder institutions and highlighted the additional resourcing that would be required to provide due diligence for a range of institutions. LS highlighted that the pathway and requirements for accreditation would need to be clear to students and that there would be PSRB mapping to undertake before they could be awarded an accredited degree.

VII. It was agreed for PX to work with GCW on resourcing requirements for implementation. The Council agreed to Adopt the Principle NOT THE CHANGE TO ADMISSIONS POLICY
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The Committee ***agreed:***	Responsible	Deadline
PX to review resourcing and implementation. Item to be added to Q3 AC meeting for review and approval.	PX	March 25

10 Student Lifecycle Reporting | Lead **Mary Kenyon-James**

Received: AC.25.01.08 Student life Cycle Annual report 2023-24

Noted:

I. MKJ introduced the annual report, second annual report covers registry admissions, student engagement and student services. MKJ noted that in the year since JH arrived the team has been able to settle into a more steady rhythm but MKJ noted that the volume of work remains challenging. They highlighted the outstanding vacancy for Data administration.

II. Redacted [Not for Publication]

III. NK queried the lower intake during clearing and asked was there anything that NMITE could have done to support additional applications. MKJ noted that clearing had been particularly challenging for all institutions due to financial challenges in the HEI Sector and informed members that, larger institutions had lowered tariffs below standard levels. NK queried if this is likely to repeat in 2025, JN confirmed they expect this to remain challenging as a smaller institution.

IV. Redacted [Not for Publication]

V. A proposal for how a new Guide for Student Representatives would be devised was presented for approval. Members discussed student feedback mechanisms and agreed that while there is a lot of opportunities for students to provide feedback, improvements need to be made on processing and responding to feedback. MKJ agreed that responses need to be multi layered with different routes for different issues, campus groups, newsletters and start of level feedback sessions etc to capture different concerns. MKJ confirmed that work is being undertaken to increase the transparency of the feedback process and new Student Reps will receive additional training to support student to student direct feedback through the SU and Student Liaison Group.

VI. Timescale discussed and start point in cycle, noted that foundation year would be without rep for initial start modules. TM noted that new students need time to get to know each other prior to an election. MKJ confirmed that feedback is possible through other routes prior to implementation of representatives.

Proposal for the creation of a new Guide for Student Representatives – APPROVED

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11 Student Records System I Lead **Mary Kenyon-James**

Received: Verbal Update

Noted:

I. Redacted [Not for Publication]

II. DO queried if there was an update given OP was due to be leaving noting their involvement in the process. Council remains aware of this element.

III. MKJ noted that once the initial record data is imported, the IT team will focus on configuration of interactions and case management, working directly with members of Student Services to ensure requirements are met and that any existing data is carried over. Work can then proceed on setting user permissions and profiles before a period of user testing with members of the Academic team and Student Services. Once the IT team are confident that all necessary features are complete and all information is available through Salesforce Education Cloud, Source will be made redundant and switched off.

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12 Attendance Policy I Lead **Mary Kenyon-James**

Received: AC.25.01.09 Attendance Monitoring Policy

Noted:

I. MKJ proposed a new Attendance Policy, noting that it would help monitor absence and identify students who are struggling and allow for a first intervention point. Members noted that the policy had been discussed at a number of committees and that a "Green button" was implemented as a pilot.

II. GCW agreed this was a good solution that does not involve taking a register. He suggested additional phrasing to increase the clarity under 2.2 and 2.3 on engagement vs attendance and proposed the "subject to absence only for medical reasons or other personal reasons agreed in advance with the module lead" was included under 2.2.

III. GCW raised the potential for students to find a loophole to the system. NK noted that this has been reviewed by IT department and that there is additional data collection in the background. GCW could be supported by new timetable software. MKJ confirmed that the portal shows the "green button" hits, but background data does show additional interactions from students.

IV. NK module leads do still need to highlight to tutors or student services when students are not showing up in person. NK queried the minimum of 80% target included within the proposed policy. MKJ noted that this figure comes from the student handbook/ programme specs.

V. The Council discussed how the policy would be implemented and noted that this does not fully remove the responsibility from the tutors and Module Leads to raise concerns

Attendance Policy – APPROVED

13 NMITE Benchmarks/KPIs I Lead **David Oloke**

Received: AC.25.01.10 NMITE Benchmarks and KPIs

Noted:

I. DO provided an overview of the proposed plan and timeline for development of NMITE Benchmarks and KPI's. Members asked for the KPIs that relate to academic standards, specifically, the KPI Aims 1 and 2 regarding "Academic quality and distinctiveness" and "Inclusive cohorts and successful students" to be brought to Academic Council for review prior to final ratification by the Executive Committee

II. DO to meet with Anthea to progress.

14 Programme Portfolio I Lead **David Oloke**

Received: AC.25.01.11 Programme Portfolio

Noted:

I. The project plan for NMITE's Programme Portfolio development from January 2026 onwards was presented to Council. Council discussed how the delayed implementation of LLE funding until January 2027 could impact NMITE.

15 Partnership working and Strategic Alignment Check I Lead **David Oloke**

Received: AC.25.01.12 Partnership working Strategic Checks

Noted:

I. DO introduced NMITE's Partnership Working and Strategic Alignment checks process, highlighting the changes made following initial review by the Council including the development of a Business process flow chart for partnership. DO detailed the chart outlining the routes available for credit bearing and non credit bearing courses as well as the development route for CPD courses with and without partners.

II. Redacted [Not for Publication]
III. DO confirmed there was currently no route of capturing the initial agreements but that the presented process is the outline and flow mapping of what would be developed after the initial check.

*The Committee **agreed:***	Responsible	Deadline
Update on early partnerships Spring 24	DO	May-25

16 Degree Outcomes Statement I Lead **David Oloke**

Received: AC.25.01.13 Degree Outcome statements

Noted:

I. DO introduced a proposal to produce NMITE's first Degree Outcome Statement, with the intention that it will be published in Autumn 2025 noting that this would et out the profile of results for bachelor's degrees (Level 6&7) over the previous years. As a new provider NMITEs degree outcome statement will not be as comprehensive as larger established institutions.
II. Point raised in EL absence, proposed that this is actioned by a working group of AC headed by CAO. Would allow for this to be actioned immediately not pending till the next QuAC in January. Council discussed the process required, and level of staff involvement. DO happy to co-ordinate and asked AC to support in identifying key contributory staff members. Council agreed the Degree Outcomes Statement is important to ensure that standards are being monitored and noted that the initial report would only contain data from three graduate cohorts and continue to be developed.
III. Council agreed for CAO to lead the process work and ensure opportunities for staff involvement

*The Committee **agreed:***	Responsible	Deadline
Update on progress Degree Outcome statements report	DO	Jul-25

17 Academic Council Annual enhancement project proposal I Lead **Emma Lewis**

Received: AC.25.01.14 Annual Enhancement project proposal

Noted:

I. Item to be moved to December 17th Meeting.

18 HE Landscape and Compliance Tracker I Lead **Emma Lewis**

Received: AC.25.01.15i HE landscapes paper

Received: AC.25.01.15ii OfS Conditions of Reg Tracker

Noted:

HE Landscape

I. Update on report from Skills England published in September 24.

II. MJK informed members that the National Student Survey for 2025 was set to be released to NMITE students on w/c 20th January2025 and that actions from 24 survey to be reviewed.

III. MKJ noted that NMITE will continue to opt out of additional optional questions for the time being. They informed members of the NSS pilot running to reduce the length of the survey period.

IV. MKJ noted that students would be invited to undertake an additional survey students separate from NSS but listed at the end to support work being undertaken by OfS on sexual harassment and misconduct, it was noted that this was not available for NMITE to opt in or out from but that it will not be mandatory for students to complete.

OfS Tracker

I. Members noted that the Executive Committee had reviewed NMITE's Student Sexual Misconduct Policy to ensure it would be in line with the OfS E6 Condition expected to take effect in September 2025.

19 Any Other Business I Lead **David Oloke**

Received:

Redacted [Not for Publication]

I. Redacted [Not for Publication]

Conferment of Awards/Degree in absentia process - approved

The Committee ***agreed:***	Responsible	Deadline
Proposal for Conferment of degrees	GCW/MKJ	March 25

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 17th December 2024, 5th March 2024

Appendix 1 – Confirmation of Awards ALL CHARTS REDACTED [Not for Publication]