

Key Messages from the Meeting of Senate on 17 September 2025

Strategic Items

Next Steps in AI	Senate received an update on the University's position in relation to AI, and noted significant progress made since the introduction of guiding principles for generative AI in education in March 2023, though ongoing work was required. As awareness and confidence in the capabilities of AI tools had grown there was a need to further define the University's position as to where and how the use of such tools may be acceptable. Senators discussed a proposed review of assessment to take place in Semester 2 of the current academic year. While colleague workload required careful consideration, it was recognised that AI is an area that is fast-moving and the risks of doing nothing or delaying a response were significant. Actions and mitigations included the development of a workstream to consider assessment within the Education for Life 2030+ strategy, mandatory assessment briefs and auto-enrolment for all colleagues on an AI for Educators course. AI in research is another equally important area that requires further consideration, institutionally and sector-wide.
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Monitoring of Academic Performance

Minutes from Committees of Senate	Senate received updates from Committee Chairs and Senate representatives from the below sub-committees of Senate: University Research and Innovation Committee: 13 May and 24 June 2025 University Engagement and Place Committee: 7 April, 16 June and 21 July 2025
Student Surveys	Senate received a summary of key metrics from this year's National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Survey (PTES) focusing on Russell Group and sector comparisons. Key results indicated that University scores had increased across all themes, but benchmarks in all themes had increased more, leaving the University in a weaker position in reference to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). A more substantial item on the institutional actions in relation to NSS and PTES would be submitted for consideration at the next meeting of Senate in November.

Reports

Senate received updates from:	Vice-Chancellor's Business: ▪ Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029 ▪ Athena Swan Gold Award ▪ Workforce Resizing and Next Steps ▪ Industrial Action ▪ National Institute for Health and Care Research Innovation Observatory ▪ Industrial Strategy ▪ Office for Students – Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom ▪ Universities UK Conference ▪ Senior Appointments
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Approvals

Academic Distinctions	Senate approved the conferment of the title of Emeritus/Emerita Professor on: <i>Professor Graham Farmer with effect from 3 October 2025</i> <i>Professor Richard Talbot with effect from 1 November 2025</i> <i>Professor Brian Walker with effect from 1 January 2026</i> <i>Professor John Whitworth with effect from 1 January 2026</i>
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