

ACADEMIC BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Information

Item	Details	Item	Details
Date	17 September 2025	Time	14:00 (1.5 hours)
Location	Microsoft Teams / Boardroom	Provision	Buckinghamshire New University foundation provision and related academic oversight
Chair	Waqas Mehmood	Meeting	Academic Board

Members

Members:	Title:
Waqas Mehmood	Dean of Academic Affairs (Chair)
Dr Muhammad K Rehman	CEO
Rafia Rehman	Head of Quality Assurance & IT
Allam Behbahani	Module Leader/Lecturer
Pankaj Kumar	Student Support Officer / TA
Hamza Shahid	Attendance & Engagement

Minutes

1. Welcome, apologies and quorum

The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed attendees to the first Academic Board focusing on planning ahead of the September/October 2025 intake, and confirmed that the meeting was quorate in line with the Academic Board Terms of Reference. No apologies noted.

2. Declarations of interest

No conflicts of interest were declared by any member.

3. Previous minutes and committee updates

As this was the first Academic Board meeting for the 2025–26 delivery cycle, there were no previous minutes to approve.



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The Chair noted that planning work had been undertaken through informal operational meetings and Programme Management/Programme Committee structures, and that any outstanding actions from those fora (for example timetabling, personal tutoring policy finalisation and classroom readiness checks) were captured in the papers presented to this Board.

4. Academic report: recruitment, performance and progression

The Chair presented a report focused on recruitment, readiness and risk for the first cohort starting in October 2025.

- **Recruitment and admissions**

The Board noted that the expected intake was 54 students, explicitly subject to final university approval and confirmation of enrolment lists from Buckinghamshire New University (BNU).

The pipeline of applications and offers was considered, with the Board noting that the majority of candidates meeting entry criteria had progressed to offer, and that a small number remained at verification stage (for example ID and qualifications).

- **Induction and start of teaching**

It was confirmed that induction would take place on 4 October 2025, with teaching commencing immediately, thereafter, following initial delays outside Oakwood's control.

The Board discussed risks associated with the compressed timeline, including timetable communication, enrolment completion and systems access, and agreed that clear pre-induction communications and staff availability on the day would be critical mitigations.

- **Staffing and preparedness**

The Board noted that lecturers for the foundation provision had been appointed and that initial briefings on programme structure, assessment expectations and quality processes had been completed.

It was confirmed that additional orientation on the personal tutoring and intervention policy would be given to teaching staff to support early identification and support of at-risk students.

- **Systems and classroom readiness**

The Academic Dean reported that module access on the university's VLE would be granted by BNU during the following week, in time for induction, with contingency arrangements in place in case of delay (pre-prepared materials and local VLE access).

Classrooms had been inspected and confirmed as ready for use, including IT equipment, projection, and capacity for the planned cohort size, with any minor issues identified during checks logged and addressed by the estates team.

- **Enrolment and data flows**

The Board noted that BNU would share enrolment lists with Oakwood to enable local support with enrolment, ID verification and student onboarding.

The importance of ensuring accurate alignment between BNU enrolment records, Oakwood internal registers and attendance systems was emphasised, and the Board agreed that Academic Support and Attendance teams would undertake daily reconciliations during the first teaching weeks.

- **Timetabling and operations**

The Board received confirmation that tentative timetabling had been completed and shared informally with staff, subject to final confirmation once enrolment numbers were known.

The Board discussed risks around last-minute timetable changes and their effect on student experience and attendance, and agreed that communication channels (email, WhatsApp, Blackboard) would be used consistently for timetable updates, noting the need to learn from experience documented in the March 2026 minutes.

The Board was satisfied that planning and readiness were broadly on track, subject to careful management of risks around the compressed start and timely systems access.

5. Student voice, support and risk

- Given that the first cohort had not yet commenced, the Board focused on frameworks rather than empirical student data.
- The Board endorsed the proposal to implement a Student Management / Student Risk Committee drawing on the personal tutoring and intervention tracker to identify and support at-risk students, feeding into Academic Board via the Academic Dean's report. Although members suggested that the meeting name and frequency may change subject to response from the 1st term.
- Plans for student representation such as class representatives, student-staff liaison meetings and involvement in Academic Board were outlined, and the Board agreed that elections or selection should be completed within the first teaching block.
- The Board considered wellbeing and engagement risks associated with the delay in course start and recognised the need for clear communication, early check-ins during the first fortnight, and clear signposting to support services.

6. Programme and curriculum matters

- The Board received a brief verbal update on the foundation programme structure and the alignment of modules with BNU requirements and the local context.
- It was noted that there were no proposed curriculum changes at this stage, but that any local contextualisation would continue to be reviewed by the programme leader before escalation to the Board.
- The Chair highlighted the need to ensure that programme documentation, module guides and assessment briefs were fully consistent with BNU approved materials. It was agreed that any module-level issues requiring change would be taken forward through Programme Committee/Programme Management Committee with recommendations brought back to Academic Board as required.

7. Quality assurance and enhancement

- The Board noted that, as this was the first intake for BNU, there were no annual monitoring reports or external examiner feedback yet.
- The Board endorsed the proposed quality improvement plan which linked readiness actions to forthcoming external requirements, including OfS application, BNU partner review and upcoming ATHE centre renewal.
- Internal observation processes and peer observation expectations were confirmed, with the Board noting that observation outcomes would be brought back once teaching had started.

8. Partnership and governance matters

- The Board received an update on liaison with BNU, including confirmation of franchise arrangements, communication routes for enrolment and assessment, and timing of any partner visits.
- It was noted that ATHE centre renewal would also require evidence of robust academic governance, and that Academic Board minutes would form part of that evidence base.

9. Policies, procedures and regulations

- The Board noted that the suite of local academic policies (including Personal Tutoring, Assessment, Academic Integrity, Attendance and Engagement) was in final draft, with cross-mapping to BNU and awarding body requirements.

- It was agreed that urgent policies required for the October start would be signed off by Chair's action where necessary, and retrospectively noted at the next Board10. Any Other Business.
- The Board also discussed requesting access to a policy resource folder from BNU which applies to BNU partners.
- No additional items were raised.

10. Any Other Business

Nothing to be noted

11. Next meeting

The Board agreed that its next meeting would take place on Wednesday 28 January 2026, to consider recruitment outcomes, early delivery, and any emerging risks.

12. Action Plan

Item/Ref	Action (summary)	Owner	Deadline
4.1	Induction schedule finalised and circulated	Academic Department	Before 30 September 2025
4.2	Monitor intake and report final enrolment	Admissions / Academic Support	Early October 2025
4.3	BNU enrolment lists and VLE access in place	Academic Department	Before induction
4.4	Classroom readiness checks completed	Facilities	Before induction
5.1	Personal tutoring and risk framework implemented	Academic Department (Attendance and engagement officer)	By end of first teaching block
5.2	Student representation structures established	Academic Department	By end of first teaching block
7.1	Quality improvement plan finalised and shared	Quality Department	Before January 2026 Board
9.1	Urgent academic policies finalised and published	Quality Department/ Academic Department	Before induction