



**Engineering Professors' Council
Minutes of the meeting of the
Recruitment and Admissions Committee (RAC)
held on 3rd March 2025 via Zoom**

Present via Zoom

Mike Bramhall (MB), Johnny Rich (JR), Jan Kowal (JK), Laura Justham (LJ), Martin Fiddler (MF), Simon Banks (SB), Holly Foss (HF) and Martin Eason (ME)

With

Rhian Todd (RT), Stella Fowler (SF) and Lisa Chilcott (LC)

Apologies

None

| | | Action ref |
|-----------|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. | <i>Apologies for absence</i> | |
| | None. | |
| 2. | <i>Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2024</i> | |
| | <p>The minutes of the previous meeting of the Recruitment and Admissions Committee held 2nd December were approved.</p> <p>Draft watermark to be removed and final minutes to be loaded to website.</p> <p>Action: RT</p> <p>2412-02 – LC said the Forum recordings are too large to load onto the website. JR suggested compressing the files or using Vimeo. JR asked LC to ask Ben Jordan for his slides for inclusion.</p> | 2503-01 2412-02 |
| 3. | <i>Matters arising (not covered elsewhere in the agenda)</i> | |
| | MB asked all committee members to introduce themselves for the benefit of newer members. | |
| 4. | <i>Chair and vice chair succession</i> | |
| | MB told the committee that Steve Bullock had taken a year out, so MB had temporarily taken over as committee chair. MB said Steve is not yet ready to return to committee duties so asked the committee if there are any volunteers to | |

| | | |
|-----------|---|----------------|
| | <p>become vice chair. JR reminded the committee that becoming vice chair would also mean becoming an EPC Board Member. MB asked committee members to contact him if they are interested.</p> <p>Via the meeting chat, LJ volunteered to become vice chair which the committee then agreed. JR thanked LJ and suggested MB and LJ have a discussion regarding the handover at a later date.</p> | |
| 5. | <i>Forum</i> | |
| | <p>MB said that the committee should discuss where this year's Forum should take place. JR suggested asking RAEng if they would host again. JR asked the committee for their thoughts on repeating the venue. SF said she recalls feedback suggesting the preference was for the Forum to move around the country. HF offered to see what she could accommodate at the University of Birmingham. Action: HF</p> <p>SF said November dates have better attendance than December. MB suggested the w/c 3rd or 10th November. The committee agree to pencil in Wednesday 5th November. MB told HF we would need a room set up cabaret style for up to 50 people with lunch and refreshments.</p> | 2503-02 |
| 6. | <i>Enrolment survey</i> | |
| | <p>SF said last year's survey went well with more responses than the previous year. SF will start planning in the run up to summer but does not anticipate any major changes.</p> | |
| 7. | <i>Admissions data reports</i> | |
| | <p>SF reminded the committee that last year the EPC undertook a study for the Royal Academy of Engineering on UCAS Admissions data, which resulted in a large report. SF is still waiting for permission to share with members. The findings can be released under the UCAS license at academic conferences, and so SF was able to facilitate sessions at the A&A Forum around some of the findings in the data. SF said at the last meeting, committee members discussed some of the interesting elements of the data and priorities from the report. SF said feedback suggested the first priority was information about supply and demand and provider financial sustainability so created the paper included in the meeting documents. SF asked how we might go about circulating the report in terms of what we would ideally do with it, and then how we can actually match that to what we are allowed to do with it under the data license. SF said some of the key findings were that demand for engineering is good, high tariff providers are becoming more aggressive, and there are particular findings about BTEC not looking so healthy. JK said as the high tariff institutions are becoming less picky on the prior qualifications of students he was thinking about prior attainment and how it relates to outcomes. JK said from the degree specifications, he thinks it would be worth following up whether that has a detrimental effect on the numbers of students getting better degrees and that should inform something about admissions, criteria, and add to that evidence. SF said she plans on looking at the qualifiers data further down the line.</p> | |

| | | |
|-----------|--|---|
| | <p>LJ said Universities are having to deal with massive diversity in student admissions that is affecting the outcomes, and also students have still got a Covid hangover resulting in a larger understanding gap which admissions find hard to factor in. ME said if we want engineers we need people to be able to contextualise information. SF said this may be something we want to address at the Forum. The committee discussed student employability and soft skills. Thank you. JK said he was reflecting on what an employer really wants from a student, and when you look to what the institutions are asking for in terms of accreditation, their emphasis is on the individuals and team student project work so maybe that should be more rigorously looked at. SB said there is a call out for contributions to a POSTnote, a parliamentary briefing into STEM skills in the UK workforce and an EPC response would be useful. SF said it is different to the DSIT submission that is in progress.</p> <p>Action: SF/JR JR said Chi Onwurah MP is speaking at Congress 2025 and he has offered to arrange a roundtable so this work could be discussed then. Action: JR JR suggested it should be a brief paper (2 sides of A4) that could be circulated before as a discussion piece.</p> <p>SF asked if the report should be published for members. JR suggested publishing a version of the report with a blog to summarise and point people to the paper.</p> <p>Action: SF</p> | <p>2503-03</p> <p>2503-04</p> <p>2503-05</p> |
| 6. | <i>Other business</i> | |
| | None. | |
| 7. | <i>Date of next meeting</i> | 17 th June 2025. |

Action log

| Reference | Agreed action | By |
|----------------|--|--------------|
| 2503-01 | Draft watermark to be removed and final minutes to be loaded to website. | RT |
| 2412-02 | LC to make A&A Forum recordings available to the membership. | LC |
| 2503-02 | HF to see if the University of Birmingham will host the Forum | HF |
| 2503-03 | SF and JR to submit to DSIT call and work streams pipeline. | SF/JR |
| 2503-04 | JR to arrange roundtable with Chi Onwurah MP | JR |
| 2503-05 | SF to publish a version of the admissions data report with a blog to summarise and point people to the paper | SF |