

**MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL COUNCIL**

**SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 29 JANUARY 2025  
IN THE DERBY SUITE**

<b>Present:</b>	Carmel Booth, President (Chair); Hans van Mourik Broekman, Vice-President; Professor Tim Jones, Vice-Chancellor; Professor Richard Black, Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor; Lucy Everest, Chief Operating Officer; Rowan Bradbury, President of the Liverpool Guild of Students; Cilla Ankrah-Lucas (via Teams); Dr Alison Campbell; Dr Mark Carawan (via Teams); Fiona Cullen (via Teams); Barry Flynn; Dr Kashmir Gill (via Teams); Vanessa Griffiths (via Teams); Mark Proctor (via Teams); Matthew Reed; Dr Diana Walford (via Teams); Professor Thomas Teubner; Kieran O'Sullivan; Professor Hazel Scott (via Teams); and Othman Ibrahim, Vice-President of the Liverpool Guild of Students.
<b>Apologies:</b>	Professor Julia Balogun.
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Professor Tariq Ali, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global Engagement and Partnerships (via Teams); Professor Gavin Brown, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education; Nicola Davies, Chief Financial Officer; Professor Anthony Hollander, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Impact; Rachel Parkes, Director of Strategic Change; Kevan Ryan, Clerk to Council/University Secretary and General Counsel; and Emma Leonard, Head of Governance and Deputy Secretary.

**1. University Grants Commission Application Proposal and Draft Initial Business Case for India Campus**

**RECEIVED:**

- i. A paper providing a draft business case for opening a branch campus in Bengaluru, India, to inform a Council decision on whether to proceed to submission of an application to the University Grants Commission (UGC) in India for a licence to operate in India.

**REPORTED:**

- ii. Council had agreed at its meeting held on 28 November 2024 that a recommendation to develop a business case for a new campus in

India should be approved and that the University should proceed with developing a Joint Venture (JV) with Daskalos Technologies Ltd.

iii. The strategic case for the proposal included:

- Takes advantage of new regulations for international HE institutions to operate in India
- Aligned to the University's goals of internationalisation and diversification, financial sustainability and brand expansion
- Limited competition from Russell Group competitors and significant early mover advantage
- Strong demand for HE in India, with a growing population of 18 year olds
- A JV reduces the financial risk to UoL.

iv. *Paragraph redacted due to commercial interest.*

v. The UGC application could be made solely as UoL, or jointly with the intended partner, Daskalos Technologies Limited. It was proposed to complete the application with Daskalos as a named partner. The application could take between 8-12 weeks to process. Once granted, the licence would be valid for a two year period. The licence did not constitute an obligation on the University to operate in India.

vi. Negotiations with Daskalos were ongoing and would need to be concluded to finalise the business case. These included the following:

- Heads of Terms
- Service schedules including partner responsibilities and SLAs related to academic (UoL) and operational (Daskalos) delivery
- Commercials including return on investment for each party and exit arrangements
- Tax implications (tax advice commissioned from KPMG).

vii. Full consideration was being given to potential risks and mitigations in the following areas: confidence in/suitability of partners; resourcing to develop the proposal and partnership; impact on UK student recruitment/attractiveness of pathway option; brand and reputation/quality control; market data confidence and financial viability; and regulatory environment.

- viii. The final business case would be submitted to the Council Away Day scheduled for 10 April 2025 to seek approval to proceed with a campus in India before any public announcements or formal agreements are made. The programmes would be launched ready for student recruitment to begin in September 2025, with the first student cohort to start in India in September 2026.
- ix. The proposal had the full support of the sub-group established by Council to provide an independent review and input into the consideration of the project. The sub-group would continue to meet to oversee the development of the final business case.
- x. KPMG had also provided an independent review of the proposal.

**NOTED:**

- xi. Making the application to the UGC was regarded as low risk, with minimal financial impact.
- xii. In finalising the business case, further detail should be provided regarding the following:
  - Bandwidth of UoL colleagues to deliver the project and subsequently provide sufficient oversight and input to make the branch campus a success
  - Governance, management and financial expectations and arrangements
  - Ensuring sufficient academic control and leadership, noting that the Provost would be a UoL appointment reporting to the Vice-Chancellor
  - UoL influence on the hire and management of teaching staff
  - Why Bengaluru, noting that Bengaluru was a hot spot for entrepreneurship, innovation and technology – the University already had good research and industry links there and it was considered to be an advantageous location for a branch campus
  - Expectations around research
  - What makes UoL attractive to the partners, noting that the University's success with XJTLU, Russell Group status, and already

being a particularly strong recruiter of students from India all played a part

- Key learnings from UoL's significant experience with XJTLU
- Breakpoints
- The innovative learning platform and how this might inform future provision
- Price sensitivity
- Ensuring appropriate business and industry connections, noting that many of these were already in train
- Protection of the UoL brand and ensuring the partner is not stretched above their own capability or commitment to the partnership
- Student number forecasts and the potential for market saturation, noting that the UGC was likely to implement additional controls that would prevent such an eventuality
- Portfolio fit and how the route to study at PG in Liverpool from India will still be attractive, noting that the focus was on UG students
- *Point redacted due to data protection*
- The risks associated with the timescales involved impacting on the integrity of the infrastructure and health and safety etc.

xiii. *Paragraph redacted due to commercial interest.*

xiv. There was a good level of confidence that the application would be approved by the UGC.

**AGREED:**

xv. The hard work undertaken to date by the team involved and the Council sub-group should be commended.

xvi. The proposal had the unanimous approval of Council members and the University should apply to the UGC India for a license to open a campus in India in September 2026.

## **2. Date of Next Meeting**

### **NOTED:**

- i. The next ordinary Council meeting would be held at 1.30pm on Wednesday 12 February 2025.