



LONDON ACADEMY FOR APPLIED TECHNOLOGY

LAAT

People and Culture Committee

Committee Handbook

Board of Governors

Version 1.0 | March 2026

Prepared by: Dedeepya Galla, HR Assistant / Committee Officer

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1. Overview

This handbook sets out the governance framework, operating procedures, and responsibilities of the People and Culture Committee (PAC) of the Board of Governors of the London Academy for Applied Technology (LAAT).

The PAC is a formal sub-committee of the Board of Governors, established to provide strategic oversight of all people-related matters including workforce planning, staff development, equality and diversity, wellbeing, and organisational culture. It was formally constituted in March 2026 as the inaugural PAC at its first meeting.

Committee Name	People and Culture Committee (PAC)
Parent Body	Board of Governors, LAAT
Version	1.0
Date Adopted	16 March 2026 (Inaugural Meeting)
Prepared By	Dedeepya Galla, HR Assistant / Committee Officer
Review Due	Annual – at first meeting of each academic year

2. Purpose and Remit

The Board of Governors delegates responsibilities related to organisational culture, equality and diversity, staff wellbeing, professional development, leadership pipeline, and cultural transformation to the People and Culture Committee.

The Committee aligns with the following external frameworks:

- CUC Code of Governance for Higher Education
- Office for Students (OfS) Regulatory Framework
- Public Interest Governance Principles – specifically Principle III (Equality) and Principle VII (Institutional Sustainability)

2.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

- Oversee the development, implementation, and evaluation of LAAT’s EDI Strategy
- Monitor staff and student demographic data to ensure alignment with institutional equality objectives
- Ensure legal compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant EDI legislation
- Promote a culture of inclusivity and equal opportunity across all campuses and levels of the institution
- Recommend initiatives and report on LAAT’s performance in advancing equality objectives

2.2 People Strategy and Organisational Culture

- Advise on the development and implementation of LAAT’s People Strategy
- Monitor organisational health, culture, and engagement across all staff groups
- Support strategies to improve morale, staff retention, and job satisfaction

- Review data from internal staff surveys and national datasets (e.g. NSS, staff wellbeing surveys)

2.3 Staff Development and Leadership

- Review policies and practices around professional development and staff upskilling
- Oversee talent development, leadership pipeline planning, and succession strategies
- Monitor compliance with training requirements, including safeguarding, Prevent, and mandatory CPD
- Advise on the performance management framework and appraisal structures

2.4 Wellbeing and Work Environment

- Oversee the institution’s approach to staff wellbeing and work-life balance
- Promote initiatives related to mental health, hybrid working, workload management, and healthy workplace culture
- Review and recommend improvements to grievance, disciplinary, and anti-bullying/harassment policies and procedures

2.5 Compliance and Risk

- Ensure compliance with OfS conditions, employment law, and collaborative agreements
- Identify, monitor, and escalate HR-related risks to the Board
- Ensure appropriate mechanisms exist for grievances, whistleblowing, and dispute resolution

2.6 Institutional Culture, Conduct and Staff Voice

The Committee oversees the institution’s approach to organisational culture - the values, behaviours and conduct framework that underpin how LAAT operates as an employer and learning community. This covers freedom of speech, anti-harassment and dignity at work, staff induction into the institution’s values and expected behaviours, and staff voice and engagement. A named Culture Officer within the HR Department is the designated owner of these culture obligations, responsible for ensuring the relevant frameworks are in place, approved, and known to staff. Through the People and Culture Committee, the Culture Officer’s work is overseen at Board level, providing a clear governance structure and assurance that LAAT’s culture obligations are actively embedded across the institution rather than documented in isolation.

3. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the People and Culture Committee were formally adopted at the inaugural meeting on 16 March 2026. The ToR establish the structure, roles, responsibilities, and operating procedures for the Committee.

Key provisions of the Terms of Reference are summarised below.

3.1 Composition and Membership

The Committee shall consist of at least three (3) members, including a Chair, two of whom must be Independent Governors appointed by the Board.

Role	Category	Status
Independent Governor	Governor	Chair

Role	Category	Status
Dean	Governor	Member
Independent Governor	Governor	Member
HR Manager / Head of People & Culture	Staff (In Attendance)	Member
CFOO	Staff (In Attendance)	As Required
Other Senior Staff	Staff (In Attendance)	As Required
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Staff (In Attendance)	As Required
Culture Officer	Staff (In Attendance)	As Required
EDI / Prevent Lead	Staff (In Attendance)	As Required
HR Assistant / Committee Officer	Secretariat	Member/Minute Taker

The Chair of the Board may be a member but shall not chair the Committee. Members of the Committee shall collectively possess experience in organisational development, human resources, equality and diversity, and higher education governance.

3.2 Quorum

Two (2) members will constitute a quorum, one of whom must be an Independent Governor.

3.3 Meetings and Procedures

- Meetings shall follow a written schedule and documented minutes
- The Committee may establish sub-groups or task-and-finish working groups for specific initiatives
- Committee members must declare any potential conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from relevant discussions or decisions
- The Committee shall operate transparently and maintain a record of its activities and decisions
- The Company Secretary / Committee Officer shall provide administrative support and ensure proper documentation

3.4 Reporting

- The Committee shall report formally to the Board of Governors after each meeting
- Minutes shall be circulated to all Board members, except in cases of confidential staff matters
- An annual report summarising activities, HR oversight, and compliance shall be submitted to the Board

3.5 Review and Amendment

These Terms shall be reviewed periodically by the Committee and submitted to the Board of Governors for approval to ensure they remain appropriate and compliant with evolving regulatory expectations and institutional needs.

4. Policies Owned or Overseen by the Committee

The People and Culture Committee holds oversight responsibility for the following policy areas. Policies are recommended by the Committee to the Board of Governors for approval, and the Committee monitors their implementation. This list is not exhaustive: the Committee has oversight of all people-related policies held in the LAAT HR Policy Locator. The policies set out below are those most material to the Committee’s remit and to LAAT’s Office for Students (OfS) registration.

Of particular importance for OfS registration are the Recruitment and Selection Policy, the Mandatory Training Policy (covering safeguarding and Prevent), the EDI Strategy and Equality Act 2010 Compliance Framework, the Whistleblowing Policy etc.

4.1 HR and Employment Policies

- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Flexible and Hybrid Working Policy
- Staff Benefits and Reward Policy

4.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- EDIB Policy along with Strategy and Action Plan
- Equality Act 2010 Compliance Framework

4.3 Staff Development and CPD

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Framework
- Mandatory Training Policy (Safeguarding, Prevent, role-specific CPD)
- Advance HE Fellowship Pathway Framework
- Career Pathways Framework (Academic and Non-Academic tracks)

4.4 Wellbeing and Culture

- Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy
- Annual Staff Survey Framework
- Whistleblowing Policy (people-related matters)

4.5 Risk and Governance

- HR Risk Register (monitored each meeting)

5. Reports Presented to the Committee

The following reports and documents are presented to the People and Culture Committee at each meeting or as specified. This list is not exhaustive, and further reports may be presented as required. All papers are to be circulated to Committee members at least five working days in advance of the meeting.

Document / Report	Owner	Frequency
People and Culture Committee: Terms of Reference	Chair / Gov. Manager	Annual

Document / Report	Owner	Frequency
Workforce Planning & Headcount Report	HR / Quality and Compliance Manager	Each meeting
CPD Update: Logs, Induction Plan & Advance HE Status	HR / Quality and Compliance Manager	Each meeting
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Performance Report	HR Assistant	Each meeting
HR Risk and Governance Assurance Report	HR Manager/ CFOO	Each meeting

Additional papers may be tabled at the discretion of the Chair where urgent business requires.

6. Frequency of Meetings

The People and Culture Committee shall meet at least three (3) times per academic year, or more frequently as determined by the Chair to support ongoing organisational and cultural development needs.

Minimum Frequency	Three (3) meetings per academic year
Format	In person (Tower Hill, London) with option of MS Teams for remote attendees
Duration	60 minutes (standard)
Quorum	2 members, including at least one Independent Governor
Papers Deadline	5 working days before each meeting
Minutes Deadline	10 working days after each meeting (draft to Chair for approval)

The Committee Officer is responsible for scheduling all meetings at the start of the academic year, issuing formal notices, circulating papers, recording minutes, and maintaining the action log.

7. Governance Role within LAAT’s Structure

The People and Culture Committee sits within LAAT’s governance framework as a formal sub-committee of the Board of Governors. Its role is to provide assurance to the Board that LAAT is fulfilling its strategic obligations in respect of people, culture, and equality.

7.1 Relationship to the Board of Governors

- The PAC reports directly to the Board of Governors after each meeting
- The Chair of the PAC presents a summary report and highlights at each Board meeting
- Matters requiring Board approval (e.g. new policies, Terms of Reference amendments) are recommended by the PAC
- The Annual People and Culture Report is submitted to the Board once per academic year

7.2 Relationship to Senior Leadership

- The PAC receives reports and presentations from the HR function, Operations, and Academic leadership
- The Dean is a committee member and represents institutional leadership
- The HR Manager and CFOO attend meetings in an advisory capacity

7.3 OfS Registration Context

As LAAT works towards Office for Students (OfS) registration within the 2026–2028 period, the PAC plays a critical governance role in ensuring institutional readiness in the following areas:

- Audit readiness: employment contracts, job descriptions, and staff files
- Formalised CPD and appraisal processes ahead of OfS review
- Workforce and HR infrastructure to support student numbers at registration stage
- EDI compliance and measurable equality targets

8. Committee Officer Responsibilities

The HR Assistant acting as Committee Officer is responsible for all administrative and governance support functions for the PAC. These responsibilities include:

8.1 Pre-Meeting

- Agree agenda with the Chair at least 15 working days before the meeting
- Issue formal notice of meeting with date, time, location, and dial-in details
- Chase, collate, and quality-check all papers from presenters
- Circulate the agenda pack to all attendees at least 5 working days in advance
- Prepare attendance register and declarations of interest form

8.2 During the Meeting

- Record attendance and confirm quorum at the start of the meeting
- Take accurate minutes of all discussions, decisions, and actions
- Note action owners and deadlines as agreed by the Committee

8.3 Post-Meeting

- Draft and circulate minutes to the Chair for approval within 5 working days
- Issue approved minutes to all Committee members within 10 working days
- Maintain and circulate the action log at each subsequent meeting
- File all papers and minutes securely in the governance records system
- Support the Chair in preparing the report to the Board of Governors

9. Document History and Review

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Version	1.0
Date	March 2026
Author	Dedeepta Galla, HR Assistant / Committee Officer
Approved By	Chair, People and Culture Committee
Next Review	March 2027 (or following any material change to the Committee’s ToR or membership)

Any queries regarding this handbook should be directed to the Committee Officer: Dedeepta Galla (HR Assistant).