

December 2025

Dear UKALTA members and colleagues

It was good to see so many of you at the recent Language Testing Forum (LTF) hosted in Southampton by LATU. Thank you very much to the Local Committee for organising a superb conference, and to everyone for your support and engagement. I hope you enjoyed the event as much as I did - especially the anniversary celebrations for LTF and UKALTA!

Our in-person AGM during LTF was well attended by UKALTA members and guests - thank you! The AGM is an important event: it keeps you up-to-date with UKALTA plans and activities and ensures organisational transparency and accountability. The Executive Committee's slide deck from that meeting will be available from our website in the near future.

From Summer 2025 onwards, I regularly invited nominations for the various Executive Committee positions that fall vacant on 31 December 2025. By the nominations' deadline of Monday 24 November, we were fortunate to have at least ONE (but only ONE) willing candidate for each vacant position. When only a single nominee is proposed for a given position, the election is uncontested and no ballot is required - as per normal electoral practice. We have therefore appointed new Committee members 'nem con' as follows:

Sathena Chan - President (2026-2028)

Nate Owen – Events & Liaison (2026-2028, 2nd term)

Shishi Zhang - Ordinary Member (2026-2028)

Leda Lampropoulou – Chair, Membership & Nominations (M&N) Committee (2026-2028)

Anna Whinnett - M&N Committee (2026)

Özgür Şahan - M&N Committee (2026)

Our grateful thanks must go to outgoing Ordinary Member John Pill for his faithful service over the past 3 years (having already served as UKALTA Secretary in previous years). As I too step down after 6 years as UKALTA President, I am both pleased and grateful that the new Executive Committee balances continuity and innovation. Some existing members (Sathena, Shishi and Leda) will be moving seamlessly into positions of increased responsibility; others will be serving the remainder of their term or a second term (Gemma, Muhammad, Nate, Nicky, Ozlem, Petra & Yasin); and we also welcome two brand new members (Anna and Özgür) to the team. Anna Whinnett works closely with the Norwich Institute for Language Education (NILE) and is also pursuing a PhD in language education at Lancaster University. Özgür Şahan is Senior Teaching Fellow at the University of Southampton and was a key member of the host team that organised LTF 2025 this year. Anna and Özgür strengthen our connections with other organisations involved in language and higher education in the UK.

I'm especially pleased that Dr Sathena Chan, Associate Professor at CRELLA, has stepped up to take on the role of UKALTA President. Sathena has already served on the UKALTA Executive Committee for the past 3 years – as both a member and a Chair of our Membership & Nominations Committee. She has been instrumental in progressing our work to establish new UKALTA Membership categories as mandated by the AGM as well as

initiating our 10th anniversary membership survey – both of which she can continue to steer with Leda as the new M&N Chair. Sathena has also worked closely with BAAL as the BAAL TEA SIG Convenor (2019-21) and more recently served on the BAAL Executive Board as the Coordinator for all BAAL SIGs (2021-2025). So she is well placed to strengthen existing and develop new collaborations with UK professional bodies and learned societies to promote LTA. I trust you will give Sathena your full support throughout her term of office. I have promised to support Sathena over the first few months as she settles into her new role as President, and I will continue to assist with writing up the history of UKALTA and the organisation's application for charitable status.

The new Executive Committee is likely to meet early in the New Year and 2026 promises to be another exciting year for UKALTA with various initiatives and activities which will be communicated to you in due course. NB: LTF 2026 is provisionally confirmed for Oxford, hosted by Oxford University Press (OUP). Conference theme, venue and precise dates are still to be confirmed but it is likely to be the 3rd (full) weekend in November as usual.

My heartfelt thanks go once more to everyone in UKALTA (and beyond) who has supported me as President throughout the past 6 years. As I step down, I am confident that UKALTA is in good heart and safe hands.

In a fast-changing world which often seems uncertain and precarious, I wish you joy and rest over the festive/holiday season, and an enduring sense of peace and hope as you embark upon a new year. Hamba gahle... go well!

Kind regards
Lynda