



HE Academic Board Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The HE Academic Board (Academic Board) reports to, and provides reports to, the UCP Council.

2. Standing Committees

- Academic Standards and Quality Committee
- Student Engagement, Learning and Teaching Committee
- Research and Scholarly Activity Group

3. Remit, Responsibilities and Duty

- 3.1 The Academic Board is the academic authority and as such operates to promote the academic and professional work of UCP across all its campuses and partners and safeguards the standards of its awards.
- 3.2 The purpose of the Academic Board is to provide oversight of academic activity and related activities, and the resources needed to support them. It has delegated responsibility from the UCP Council to monitor academic standards and the direction of academic matters in accordance with the UK Higher Education sector's regulatory requirements. Validating partners will be assured of maintenance of their academic standards and quality.
- 3.3 The focus of Academic Board business should be on academic enhancement. Routine monitoring of quality management should be undertaken by the academic administration and reported to the Academic Board via its Committees with specified delegated responsibility. Therefore, the Academic Board will:
- receive and approve updates from the following standing committees:
 - Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC)
 - Student Engagement, Learning and Teaching Committee (SELT)
 - Research and Scholarly Activity Group (RSAG)
 - receive reports from the Student Council and HE Student Officer to ensure the student voice is heard at all levels and acted upon ensuring student engagement mechanisms are sufficient and effective;
 - provide the UCP Council with detailed information on quality assurance, ensuring compliance with the academic standards of awarding bodies and maintaining the quality of the student learning experience;

- undertake enhancements and revisions as endorsed by the UCP Council
- 3.4 Responsibility for the enactment, implementation and monitoring of operational procedures is delegated by the Academic Board to its Committees. The following responsibilities, however, are retained by the Academic Board and not delegated:
- determination of academic strategy and strategic planning;
 - recommendation for the approval of new provision to the UCP Council;
 - approval of the Higher Education Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Student Outcomes Strategy and KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and subsequent HE Strategies monitoring progress against academic key performance indicators;
 - approval of policy and policy statements ensuring external reference points (HE Quality Code, Office for Students (OfS), Subject benchmark statements, Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and Frameworks for HE Qualifications) and updates are complied with, and appropriate policies are developed;
 - approval of regulations ensuring that all Higher Education provision is compliant with the baseline regulatory requirements and student protection measures are in place;
 - approval of documents prepared for institutional reviews;
 - approval of substantial revisions to any of the above;
 - approval of changes to terms of reference and composition of the Academic Board's committees;
 - exceptional circumstances, reports of complaints and academic appeals if escalation is required from ASQC to inform institutional change.
- 3.5 The Academic Board shall not normally consider proposals to change its adopted policies or substantially modify them, within two years of their adoption, except where it is demonstrated that:
- significant new matters or circumstances have arisen in relation to the policy;
 - exceptional circumstance reports of complaints and academic appeals if escalation is required from ASQC to inform institutional change.
- 3.6 To ensure governance and oversight of all higher education activity within the Company

4. Membership

- 4.1 The Academic Board will be comprised of:

Academic Director (Chair)
 Vice Principal Quality
 Franchise / Partnership Manager
 One Representative from the Academic Office
 UCP HE Managers x 4

Academic Staff (Course Leaders, Module tutors)
One HE Support Staff member
Student Officer (student)
Student Representatives x 4
Management Information Services Representative
Independent members x 2

Designated Observers

Assistant Principal of Quality
Partners

- 4.2 For training and audit purposes there may be occasions where additional staff will attend the HE Academic Board in the capacity of observers. Opinions may be sought by or from these members although they will not have the right to vote.

Co-opted members

- 4.3 On occasion when specific expertise is required, the Board will recommend to the UCP Council that additional co-opted members attend. This will be limited to 4.
- 4.4 The Chair of the Academic Board shall be a person of academic standing having knowledge and experience of the standards of degrees awarded in the United Kingdom.

5. Meetings

- 5.1 The Chair or any ten members of the Academic Board may at any time call a special meeting of the Academic Board, stating in writing the specific purpose of the meeting and signing their names on the summons.
- 5.2 A notice to attend, together with the agenda and full supporting information and appropriate documentation of items of business, shall be sent to all members of the Academic Board not less than six working days before an ordinary meeting and in any event not less than three days before a special meeting of the Academic Board.
- 5.3 The Academic Board shall receive at each ordinary meeting, a report from all sub-committees.
- 5.4 The HE Student Officer may submit reports to the Academic Board for its consideration in matters affecting students.
- 5.5 The Chair ensures that the committee acts in accordance with its Terms of Reference and that it does not make decisions when it is inquorate.
- 5.6 At every meeting attendance shall be recorded, and all proceedings minuted. The minutes, once verified provisionally by the Chair of the Academic Board, are published on the UCP intranet and website.
- 5.7 If the quorum is not achieved within 15 minutes of the formal start time of the meeting as indicated on the agenda, then the meeting can either be dismissed by the Chair or carried out on an informal basis. If a meeting is inquorate, decisions are not valid. Recommendations of inquorate

meetings can, however, be ratified at the next quorate meeting.

- 5.8 A report of the proceedings of the Academic Board is sent to the UCP Council and is included within the minutes of the UCP Council which is reported to the IEG Board. Specific quality improvement plans related to IEG Higher Education provision may be subject to additional review / approval by Curriculum and Quality.

6. Frequency

- 6.1 Meetings will be held at least three times each academic year.

7. Quoracy

- 7.1 50% of membership to ensure representation of all stakeholder groups. Must include at least 5 members of academic staff and 3 student representatives with at least 2 independent members.

8. Agenda items

- 8.1 All meetings of the Academic Board must include the following agenda items:

1. Welcome and apologies
2. Confirmation that the Board is quorate and therefore able to take decisions
3. Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting
4. Student support update
5. Report on current curriculum revisions, course revalidations and closures
6. Policy updates such as:
 - a. approve the Higher Education Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Student Outcomes Strategy
 - b. approve the Student Protection Plan
 - c. approval of policy;
 - d. approval of policy statements;
 - e. approval of regulations;
 - f. approval of substantial revisions to any of the above;
 - g. approval of changes to terms of reference and composition of the Board's committees
7. Quality update
 - a. reports on module and course performance inc. (Module Evaluation Survey (MES), National Student Survey (NSS), Graduate Outcomes)
 - b. End of academic year/exceptional report on Complaints, Compliments and Positive Comments
 - c. End of academic year/exceptional report on Academic Appeals
 - d. approval of documents prepared for institutional reviews
8. Update on teaching and learning strategy
9. Update on scholarship and staff development
10. Update on franchise and partner engagement
11. Update on Other Committees*
 - a. ***receive** minutes and action log from the Student Engagement Learning and Teaching Committee
 - b. ***receive** minutes and action log from the Academic Standards and

- Quality Committee
- c. ***receive** minutes and action log from the Research and Scholarly Activity Group
12. Feedback from Student Representatives and the HE Student Officer
13. Any other business
14. Date and time of the next meeting

*Starred items will be for information only. Members wishing to discuss a starred item are asked to request that items are 'un-starred' at the beginning of the meeting.

9. Attendance by Non-Members

- 9.1 The Academic Board may invite or require any person, not being a member of the Academic Board, to attend such parts of meetings when appropriate matters are before the Academic Board. Such persons shall have the right to speak on such matters but shall not have the right to vote.

10. Students' Representatives

- 10.1 The mechanism for the appointment of student members shall be determined by the student body and Student Council in discussion with the HE Student Officer. Student representatives and/or the HE Student Officer gather students' opinions and concerns and present them at the relevant committees, as well as giving a student perspective on higher education activities and the committee's discussions. They act as the primary link in communication between staff and students and count as full members of the committee; they have the right to vote and count towards the quorum.

11. Designated Observers

- 11.1 There shall be designated observers who have the right to participate in the deliberations of the Academic Board but not to vote. Designated observers shall be reviewed annually and must be identified as such at each meeting.
- 11.2 Any member of Higher Education staff who is not a member of the Academic Board may attend meetings of the Academic Board or its Subcommittees as an observer. Such an observer does not have a general right of audience or the right to vote but may address the Academic Board or its subcommittees by consent and must therefore identify themselves as observers. The number observing at any one meeting shall normally not exceed one-third of the total Academic Board membership. The Chair of the Academic Board shall have the right to restrict the attendance of observers.

12. Mechanism for Approval

- 12.1 Every proposition before the Academic Board shall be determined by a majority of the votes of those present and voting on the proposition and where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

13. Chair's Action

- 13.1 The Chair of the HE Academic Board or of a sub-committee of the Academic Board, may take action between meetings on matters of a routine character or which are of special urgency and shall report any such action to the next meeting of the Academic Board or the appropriate sub-committees.

14. Committees of the Academic Board

- 14.1 The Academic Board shall establish such subcommittees as is necessary to carry out its responsibilities, provided that the establishment of each committee is first approved by the Chair of the UCP Council.
- 14.2 The Chair of the Academic Board and its subcommittees should make every effort to ensure that the membership of their subcommittee is representative of the higher education community. Where necessary, Chairs have the option to appoint co-opted members to a committee to achieve diversity of membership.

15. Post Committee Processes

- 15.1 Draft minutes must be produced within 5 working days of each meeting and circulated to members, the Academic Office and to the Chair of the UCP Council.
- 15.2 Minutes must be confirmed and approved at each subsequent meeting.
- 15.3 The minutes, once verified provisionally by the Chair, are held by the Academic Office.

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| <i>Author:</i> | <i>Academic Director</i> |