

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**1. OVERVIEW**

- 1.1 The Committee is responsible to the Board of Governors for receiving and testing assurance that academic governance is robust and effective and for providing assurance to the Board of Governors on academic standards and the integrity of academic qualifications.

**2. DUTIES AND POWERS**

- 2.1. To satisfy itself that satisfactory arrangements are in place to enable the Board of Governors to discharge its duties relating to academic assurance and the Office for Students' Conditions of Registration relating to quality and standards and provide an annual opinion on the same.
- 2.2. In meeting the obligation set out in section 2.1 above the Committee will receive reports from Academic Board in relation to the following themes:
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Quality;
  - Undergraduate Outcomes;
  - Collaborations and Partnerships;
  - Postgraduate Taught Outcomes; and
  - Standards (including Degree Outcomes Statement).
- 2.3. In meeting the obligation set out in section 2.1 above, the Committee will also receive reports in relation to the following matters:
- An overview report of the academic assurance governance arrangements in place at the University;
  - Apprenticeship Provision;
  - Further Education Provision;
  - Periodic School reviews;
  - Periodic Collaborative Provision reviews;
  - Research Degrees: Annual Report from University Research Degrees Committee; and
  - Annual Reports on Notifications of Extenuating Circumstances, Complaints, Appeals, and Student Conduct and Discipline.
- 2.4. To receive for information such internal audit reports as may be appropriate relating to academic assurance following consideration of the same by the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

**3. REPORTING PROCEDURES**

- 3.1. The minutes (or a report) of the meetings of the Committee will be provided to all members of the Board of Governors.
- 3.2. The Committee will prepare an annual report covering the institution's academic year for consideration by the Board of Governors at its meeting in November each year. The annual report will give the Committee's opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the institution's compliance with the Office for Students Conditions

of Registration relating to Quality and Standards (Conditions B1-B5) as set out below:

- Condition B1 – Academic Experience: The provider must ensure that the students registered on each higher education course receive a high quality academic experience. A high quality academic experience includes but is not limited to ensuring that each higher education course: (1) is up-to-date; (2) provides educational challenge; (3) is coherent; (4) is effectively delivered; and (5) requires students to develop relevant skills;
- Condition B2 – Resources, Support and Student Engagement: The provider must take all reasonable steps to ensure: (1) students registered on a higher education course receive resources and support to ensure (a) a high quality academic experience for those students, and (b) those students succeed in and beyond higher education; and (2) effective engagement with students to ensure (a) a high quality academic experience for those students, and (b) those students succeed in and beyond higher education;
- Condition B3 – Student Outcomes: The provider must deliver successful outcomes for all of its students, which are recognised and valued by employers, and/or enable further study;
- Condition B4 – Assessment and Awards: The provider must ensure that: (1) students are assessed effectively; (2) each assessment is valid and reliable; (3) academic regulations are designed to ensure that relevant awards are credible; (4) academic regulations are designed to ensure effective assessment of technical proficiency in English language in a manner that appropriately reflects the level and content of the course; and (5) relevant awards granted to students are credible at the point of being granted and when compared to those granted previously; and
- Condition B5 – Sector-recognised Standards: The provider must ensure that, in respect of any relevant awards granted to students who complete a higher education course provided by, or on behalf of, the provider (whether or not the provider is the awarding body): (1) any standards set appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards; and (2) awards are only granted to students whose knowledge and skills appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards.

This opinion is to be based on the information presented to the Committee in the reports listed in section 2.2 and 2.3 of these Terms of Reference.

- 3.3. The Committee will report to the Audit and Risk Management Committee any areas of concern that it may raise on the Institution's compliance with the Office for Students Conditions B1-B5 that have not, in its reasonable opinion, been adequately addressed.

#### **4. CLERKING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 4.1. The clerk to the Committee shall be the clerk to the Board of Governors (or other appropriate independent individual).

#### **5. MEMBERSHIP**

- 5.1. Members of the Committee shall be drawn from the Board of Governors.

- 5.2. The Pro-Chancellor will be an ex-officio member of the Committee.
- 5.3. The Committee may also choose to appoint a lay (co-opted) member with appropriate experience in higher education academic matters.
- 5.4. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee shall be Independent Governors unless approved otherwise by the Board of Governors.

## **6. QUORUM**

- 6.1. The quorum for meetings of the Committee shall be either three, or one-third (whichever is the greater) of the currently serving members, rounded up to the nearest whole number where the calculation of one-third does not produce a whole number. The quorum should include at minimum the Chair or Deputy Chair and one other independent governor.

## **7. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

- 7.1. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and International) shall normally attend meetings; other senior officers within the University may be requested to attend where business relevant to them is to be discussed.

## **8. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

- 8.1. Meetings shall normally be held at least three times each academic year.

## **9. AUTHORITY**

- 9.1. The Committee is authorised by the Board of Governors to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee, and all employees are directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

2 July 2024