Board Regulation 1.1

ACADEMIC ASSURANCE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 PURPOSE

This Committee is responsible for:

1.1 Ensuring and providing assurance to the Board of Governors that the University's approach to the quality and standards of its academic provision complies with the regulatory expectations of the Office for Students (OfS) and the principles of the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Code of Governance.

1.2 The University's Academic Council complements the work of the Academic Assurance Committee but each has a distinct and differing role:

(i) The Academic Council and its delegated committees oversee and direct the academic activity of the University, serving as its decision-making authority on academic matters. It oversees and ensures quality, standards, and policies for teaching, learning, research and knowledge exchange activity, ensuring that these adhere to external academic conditions, regulations and standards.

(ii) The Academic Assurance Committee provides assurance to the Board of Governors that the University has effective oversight of the quality and standards of its academic activities and that associated policies and processes are effective. The Committee also provides assurance to the Board of Governors that the University adheres to external academic conditions, regulations and standards.

2.0 MEMBERSHIP

2.1 There shall be a minimum of six members of the Committee which shall include:

- Up to four independent governors of the Board
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- Student Governor
- At least one Staff Governor

3.0 QUORUM

3.1 The quorum shall be 50% of the membership rounded up to the next whole number.

4.0 CLERKING ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Clerk to the Board supported by Minuting Secretary.

5.0 NORMALLY IN ATTENDANCE

5.1 The following postholders will normally attend meetings to provide clarification, advice and guidance to the Committee:
A Provost
Executive Director for Students

6.0 BY INVITATION

6.1 Other members of the Board of Governors and other members of University staff may be invited to attend for particular items.

7.0 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

7.1 Meetings shall normally be held three times each academic year.

8.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Regulatory compliance

8.1 To oversee the University's compliance with the regulatory expectations of the OfS on access and participation ('A' conditions of registration) by monitoring the progress of the University's Access and Participation Plan, including performance against targets.

8.2 To oversee the University's compliance with the regulatory expectations of the OfS on Quality, reliable standards and positive outcomes for all students ('B' conditions of registration) and with required thresholds for quality assurance through:

(i) Monitoring performance and student outcomes data for all academic provision;
(ii) Receiving and considering assurances on the outcomes and integrity of the University's academic awards and student outcomes, including the reliability of degree standards.
(iii) Monitoring the University's maintenance of quality and standards at educational partners in the UK and overseas, including assurance of compliance with relevant regulatory requirements for subcontractual provision (Condition E10).

8.3 To oversee the University's compliance with the regulatory expectations of the OfS on protecting the interests of all students ('C2' and 'C3' conditions of registration) by:

(i) Considering and recommending the Student Protection Plan to the Board for approval.
(ii) Monitoring trends in student complaints and the University's processes for managing them, highlighting any risks to the Board as appropriate.

8.4 To oversee the University's compliance with the regulatory expectations of the OfS on ensuring the wellbeing of students and protections against harassment and sexual misconduct ('E6' condition of registration).

8.5 To oversee the University's compliance with its statutory and regulatory duties in relation to freedom of speech and academic freedom, drawing on advice from other committees as required, and to receive and consider the University's Annual Assurance report on freedom of speech prior to its submission to the Board of Governors.

8.6 To monitor the University's mechanisms for engaging and receiving feedback from its students.

8.7 To receive annual reports on research and knowledge exchange activity, to include coverage of income; recruitment; collaborations and student experience; regulatory and ethical issues; and to approve annual compliance statements for research concordats.

8.8 To be assured that the University has appropriate procedures for managing and addressing matters of governance, ethics and integrity arising from research and knowledge exchange activities.

8.9 To be assured of compliance with good practice and the statutory and regulatory requirements of relevant research and knowledge exchange frameworks, concordats, codes of practice and professional memberships.

8.10 To receive any relevant reports from other regulatory, professional and inspection bodies with a remit for Higher Education.

Strategy and Performance

8.11 To receive and monitor the University's key performance indicators for academic activity.

8.12 To receive updates and assurances from Academic Council that the University's academic governance is robust and effective.

Annual Report

8.13 To prepare an annual report each academic year for consideration by the Board of Governors that provides assurance to the Board that, based on the information considered by the Committee:

- academic governance is robust and effective;
- academic standards and the integrity of academic qualifications are being maintained;
- academic quality is subject to a process of continuous improvement;
- academic risks and ethical risks (related to research and knowledge exchange activity) are being effectively managed.

Strategic Risks

8.14 To monitor and provide assurance to the Board of Governors upon any strategic risks pertaining to its remit, ensuring that these are fully reported within the University's strategic risk register.

9.0 AMENDMENTS TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

9.1 Amendments to the membership and terms of reference may be proposed by the Committee at any time but shall only be formally approved by the Board of Governors.

10.0 REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

10.1 The membership and terms of reference of the Committee shall be formally reviewed on an annual basis by the Committee and any proposals for amendments submitted to the Board of Governors for approval.

Re-approved by Board of Governors 25 November 2026