

Academic Quality and Standards Committee 2020-21

Terms of Reference

Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) oversees on behalf of Senate the provision of all education delivered under the name of the University of Southampton.

1. To maintain, subject to the approval of Senate where applicable, the University's regulatory framework for all taught and research degree programmes, including regulations for admissions, recruitment and outreach and all forms of collaborative provision in the UK and overseas, and to regularly review the framework to take due account of external reference points such as the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
2. To own and maintain on behalf of Senate the University's quality assurance framework for taught and research degree programmes including all forms of collaborative provision in the UK and overseas and to review the framework to take due account of national developments. Consideration of quality for all postgraduate research programmes will be routed through the Postgraduate Research Quality Monitoring and Enhancement Subcommittee.
3. To develop policy and guidelines, subject to the approval of Senate where applicable, in the areas of quality, monitoring and enhancement.
4. To direct Faculties and Schools on the implementation of new policies and guidelines to agreed timelines.
5. To scrutinise and, where appropriate, approve new taught or doctoral programmes and major and minor modifications to existing programmes and to approve the Programme Specification(s) and Doctoral Programme Profiles for those programmes.
6. To approve the closure of programmes and implement the Student Protection Plan when programmes are at risk of closure.
7. To monitor, through a specified schedule of reporting, the compliance of Schools and Faculties with the requirements of the regulatory and quality assurance frameworks to ensure the standards of awards, the quality of the students' learning opportunities, the enhancement of students' learning opportunities and the quality of public information, providing feedback to enable Schools and Faculties to take action where necessary.
8. To consider and, where appropriate, approve on behalf of Senate any requests submitted by Schools for exemption from harmonised regulations.
9. To consider and make recommendations to Senate for the approval of new awards.
10. To ensure compliance with regulatory bodies and similar requirements, e.g. Competition and Markets Authority, when approving new and existing policy, procedures and guidance across the University's quality assurance framework.
11. To report to the Doctoral College Board on all postgraduate research matters, as appropriate.
12. To receive reports, as appropriate, from the External Research Degrees Committee, the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee, the Postgraduate Research Quality Monitoring and Enhancement Subcommittee, and the Admissions Policies Subcommittee.
13. To prepare responses to national quality exercises, (e.g. Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, QAA, Office for Students) in accordance with University strategy and policy.
14. To receive minutes from Faculty Education Committees and School Programmes Committees.

The committee may set up and disband from time to time such working groups and subcommittees as it decides are required to execute its business.

Chair's Actions

Between ordinary meetings of the committee, the Committee Chair shall have power to act on behalf of the committee on any matter requiring an immediate or early decision. Any decisions taken by the Chair under these delegated powers shall be reported to the next meeting of the committee. Matters requiring an immediate or early decision include such items as:

- a) routine business that would not normally merit discussion at a meeting of the Committee;
- b) matters relating to the implementation of policies that have already been approved by the Committee;
- c) where permission is given by the Committee to finalise approval on completion of specified actions related to an item previously scrutinised at a meeting;
- d) matters where delaying a decision would disadvantage the University or put it at risk;
- e) in an emergency, or unforeseen circumstances, provided that such action is taken only in exceptional circumstances and, where practicable, in consultation with selected Committee members with expertise relevant to the issue.

Membership

Chair: Vice-President (Education)		Professor Alex Neill
Deputy Chair: Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)		Professor Anna Barney
President and Vice-Chancellor (or delegate)		Professor Alex Neill (delegate)
Associate Dean (Education) (ex-officio)	Faculty of Arts and Humanities	Professor David Wheatley
	Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences	Professor Sarah Stevenage
	Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences	Professor Martyn Hill
	Faculty of Medicine	Dr Jane Wilkinson
	Faculty of Social Sciences	Professor Jim Anderson
Two further academic representatives (nominated by Associate Dean (Education) from each Faculty)	Faculty of Arts and Humanities	Professor Veronica Spencer Dr Clio Padovani
	Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences	Dr Shui-I Shih Dr Tom Ezard
	Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences	Dr Maurits de Planque Professor Anthony Bird
	Faculty of Medicine	Dr Ashley Pringle Professor Sally Curtis
	Faculty of Social Sciences	Dr Emanuela Lotti Ms Anita Krishnan

Director of the Doctoral College	Professor Christopher Howls
Representative of the CHEP	Dr Helen Carmichael
Representative from UoS Malaysia	Jo-Han Ng
Academic Registrar	Claire Atkins
Associate Director of Student and Academic Administration, Head of Quality, Standards and Accreditation.	Jennifer Arkell
Associate Director of Student and Academic Administration	Roz Stanton
Director of Library Services & Arts Strategy	Anna Hvass
Two representatives from SAA as nominated by the Academic Registrar	Susan Ponsford Jackie Ward
Students' Union: Vice-President Education & Democracy Two other student representatives	Avila Chidume TBC
Secretary	Sara Dixon
Chair of Postgraduate Quality, Monitoring and Enhancement Subcommittee	Professor Anna Barney
Chair of Collaborative Provision Subcommittee	Dr Clio Padovani
Admissions Policies Subcommittee	Leonora Onaran

The Chair may co-opt additional members as necessary (including to act as chairs of subcommittees).

Members who are unable to attend may send a substitute with permission of the Chair.

Frequency and Timing

At least three meetings per year.

Quorum

The Academic Quality and Standards Committee will be quorate with one third of the membership plus one in attendance.

Reporting Requirements

The Academic Quality and Standards Committee reports to Senate.