University Framework for Quality and Standards

Chapter 1: Context and Principles

The University's Framework for Quality and Standards provides a risk-based, transparent, robust and proportionate approach to quality management.
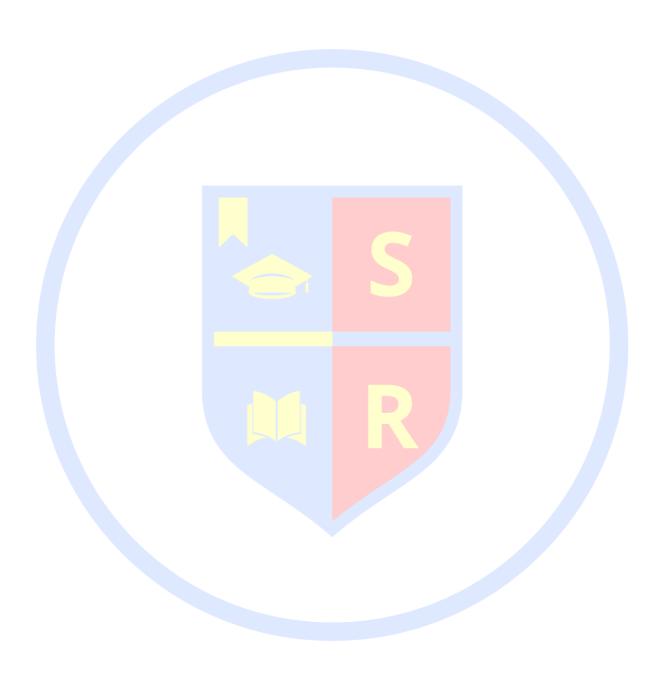
The University is responsible for the quality and standards of its academic provision. External expectations are that the University's academic standards must meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework, and that the value of qualifications the University awards to students, at the point of qualification and over time, are in line with sector- recognised standards. The Quality and Standards Framework outlines the main features of quality management within the University, with reference to the relevant frameworks, policies and processes.

The Framework for Quality and Standards applies to all credit and award-bearing provision, including research degrees and provision delivered by the University's collaborative partners. The University acknowledges that responsibility for the academic standards of all awards made in its name cannot be delegated and consequently remains responsible for those academic standards regardless of where the learning opportunities are offered or who provides them.

The Policy is guided by the following conditions to satisfy the expected standards of a University relating to quality and standards:

- **Condition B1:** The University must deliver well-designed courses that provide a high quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.

- **Condition B2:** The University must provide all students, from admission through tocompletion, with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from highereducation.

- **Condition B3:** The University must deliver successful outcomes for all of its students, which are recognised and valued by employers and/or enable further study.

- **Condition B4:** The University must ensure that qualifications awarded to students hold their value at the point of qualification and over time, in line with recognised standards.

- **Condition B5:** The University must deliver courses that meet the academic standards as

they are described in the Framework for Higher Education Qualification at Level 4 or higher.

Expectations for standards

- The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.

- The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.

Expectations for quality

- Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.

- From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support thatthey need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.

Chapter 2: Management Responsibilities for Quality and Standards

Governance Structure

Academic Board (AB) has overall responsibility for the University's awards, the quality and standards of the academic programmes, both taught and research, and the Framework for Quality and Standards. AB approves changes to the Academic Framework Regulations and Research Degree Regulations. AB delegates responsibility to the following sub-committees for formulating proposals for approval:

Education Committee (EC).
- Academic Planning Panel (APP).
- Recruitment Policy Panel (RPP).
- Faculty Education Committees (FEC).

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC).
- Validation and Review Oversight Panel (VROP).
- Collaborative Provision Panel (CPP).
- Faculty Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committees (FQAEC).

Research, Scholarship and Knowledge Transfer Committee (RSKTC).
- University and Faculty Research Degree Committees (U/FRDC).

Executive Responsibilities

The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive is responsible to the Board of Governors and has ultimate responsibility for the quality and standards of the University's awards and is supportedby the University Executive Leadership Team.

Chapter 3: Elements of the Framework for Quality and Standards

The Academic Framework

The University's Academic Framework is a common framework for its taught awards. The Academic Framework specifies those awards and their credit requirements, aligned with the FHEQ. The Assessment Regulations are integral to the Academic Framework. The University operates standard assessment regulations for taught awards that define progression, classification requirements, academic misconduct, and conduct of assessments and examinations. Variances from the academic framework are allowed in order to meet professional body conditions, or according to specific academic conditions, such as subject or disciplinary sector practice. Variances must be approved through Education Committee.

The Research Degree Framework

The University's Research Degree Framework provides a common framework for postgraduate research programme. The Framework defines the mandatory requirements for enrolment, registration, monitoring, progression, and assessment of all research programmes.

Chapter 4: Student Engagement in Quality Assurance

Students provide representation and feedback through a variety of quantitative and qualitative processes, for example:

- Students on taught programmes complete surveys at module, programme, and institutional level. Where possible, surveys allowing external benchmarking are used, for example National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES).

- Data from surveys informs the Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) and periodic programme review processes.

- Students are involved in periodic programme review through consultation during the development of the self-evaluation and at the periodic programme review event.

- Students are involved in the validation process during programme development and at the validation event.

- Student representative(s) are panel members at validation/periodic programme review events.

- Formal feedback from research students is via the national Postgraduate Research Student Experience Survey (PRES). Data from PRES is disseminated via University Research Degrees Committee (URDC), Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC) and reported to URDC and AB.

- Research students are members of FRDC and URDC.

Chapter 5: Revisions to the Framework for Quality and Standards

The elements of the framework are revised regularly to ensure their fitness for purpose, including:

- Alignment with developments in external requirements.

- Annual evaluation of processes through appropriate governance structures.

- Annual review of the Academic Framework.

- Annual review of Research Degree Framework.

Chapter 6: Key Quality Assurance and Enhancement Processes that Underpin the Framework for Quality and Standards

External Examining Process

The University values its engagement with External Examiners as impartial, independent critical friends in assuring the quality and standards of its programmes. The University seeks confirmation from External Examiners in relation to the academic standards of programmes, assessment of student progression, and achievement against these standards. External Examiners highlight opportunities for the enhancement of students' learning opportunities. The University makes use of External Examiner reports in the Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement processes.

Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement Process

Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) is a real time programme monitoring process, focused upon enhancement, which facilitates consideration of key information in a timely manner. This approach enables programme issues to be addressed as soon as they are identified.

The process is designed to enable programme teams, School Directors/Heads of Department and Faculties to evaluate achievement against institutional expectations for academic quality and to identify any potential enhancements. At one census point in the academic year Directors of School/Heads of Department, in conjunction with Programme Leaders, will complete a School/Department monitoring report. The timing of each stage of the monitoring process are aligned to the University's assessment periods. This approach effectively captures non-standard programmes (including collaborative) in the process.

Evidence used to evaluate academic standards and programme performance includes student progression and achievement data, External Examiners reports, student feedback, reports

from Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and other relevant externalbodies. CME is based on a series of reports on performance against threshold indicators, such as completion in time, retention, and module performance, using data derived from student performance at module and programme level.

The monitoring process, at every level, is proportionate, risk-based and reporting is by exception. This inclusive process facilitates opportunities to ensure that all stakeholders are fully engaged. Programme teams develop and then maintain a Programme Enhancement and Development Plan at each stage that details actions to address any identified issues. The CME process supports timely changes to programmes, where appropriate, to enhance the experience for the subsequent student cohort.

Programme Approval (Validation) Process

Validation of a new programme is the quality assurance process used to scrutinise a proposed new programme of study in order to assure Academic Board that it meets University and external expectations of quality and standards.

The validation of all taught programmes includes a summative (face-to-face) validation panel event. Students are involved in the process through consultation, a student meeting at the panel-based event, and student representation on the panel.

Periodic Programme Review Process

Periodic programme review is a reflective, evaluative quinquennial process. The periodic programme review process mirrors programme approval (validation), however, the focus is on self-evaluation rather than curriculum development and design.

The process allows for the identification of programme enhancement opportunities and these may result in changes to the programme. It is important to note that existing students will complete the extant version of their programme of study i.e. the programme of study aligned to the agreed terms of enrolment. This is to ensure compliance with Competition Markets Authority (CMA) Guidance.

The process for programme and module amendments aligns with external requirements, for example the CMA.

Programme Suspension and Closure Process

The processes of programme suspension and closure (for all taught programmes including collaborative provision) ensure that safeguarding the interests of students is paramount and any action must include an exit strategy that preserves the integrity and continuity of their education and the student experience. The University fully recognises, and accepts its responsibilities towards any students remaining on a programme and ensures that students can complete the award on which they originally enrolled.

The process normally includes a closure meeting that confirms the arrangements to secure the quality of both the provision and the student experience following complete withdrawal of a

programme. There must be explicit articulation of the strategy that will secure the quality of experience for continuing students and includes an external perspective.