



UK | DUBAI | MALAYSIA

## University Committee for Quality and Standards TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1. Constitution and Purpose

- 1.1 The University Committee for Quality and Standards is established as a Committee of the Senate.
- 1.2 The purpose of the University Committee for Quality and Standards is to be responsible, on behalf of the Senate, for **all aspects of academic quality assurance**: progressing or engaging with institutional policy development; monitoring and review; and oversight of the Quality Assurance Framework.
- 1.3 The Committee maintains oversight of the implementation of policies and procedures relating to additional assessment opportunities, amendments to registration (*including temporary suspension of studies*) and compulsory withdrawals, to ensure equivalence and fairness of treatment for taught students.
- 1.4 The Court has delegated to the Senate all of its powers in relation to academic work and standards so that, subject to the terms of the Charter and the Statutes and to the powers reserved to the Court, the Senate is the principal body responsible for the academic work and standards of the University and in relation to:
  - programmes of study;
  - teaching and research;
  - the granting of awards; and
  - the regulation and stewardship of the education and discipline of the students
- 1.5 The Senate reports to the Court on the discharging of these responsibilities.
- 1.6 Statute 5.4(b) permits the Senate to delegate any of its powers to any Committee which contains at least three of its members (at least one of whom should be an ex officio member of the Senate). Ordinance C4 permits the Senate to establish standing committees and to prescribe the terms of reference, including the remit and composition.

### 2. Remit

- 2.1 The Senate delegates authority to the University Committee for Quality and Standards, with regard to taught programmes of study, to:
  - a) consider and recommend amendments to Ordinances and Regulations; and to endorse or approve policies and procedures related to:
    - the University's Quality Assurance Framework;
    - academic and other entry requirements and the recognition of prior learning;
    - conditions of registration, periods of registration, and changes of registration;
    - assessments, examinations, feedback, and progression;
    - the appointment of internal and external examiners;
    - the granting of awards resulting from taught programmes of study;
    - the deprivation and revocation of awards resulting from programmes of study.

- b) consider and make recommendations, with an emphasis on quality assurance, with respect to:
- the academic conditions associated with the establishment, modification, or withdrawal of taught courses, programmes, and disciplines;
  - the academic conditions associated with the establishment, management, or termination of external academic partnerships for the delivery of taught programmes of study;
  - the University's programme of annual and periodic academic quality assurance reviews;
  - the findings of annual and periodic quality assurance reviews and action plans arising from them;
  - the University's participation in external quality assurance and enhancement activities, consulting as appropriate with the University Committee for Learning and Teaching;
  - the findings of external quality assurance activities and action plans arising from them, consulting as appropriate with the University Committee for Learning and Teaching;
  - reports from external examiners, ensuring that action is taken to address issues raised.
- c) approve, amend, or revoke the appointment of internal and external examiners;
- d) consult with other committees and persons on matters of mutual interest;
- e) to provide advice on such matters related to the Committee's purpose as may be referred to the Committee from time to time by the Senate;
- f) receive regular reports from all Schools, including the minutes of the relevant School level committees; and
- g) create and receive reports from such sub-committees and short life working groups as are necessary to fulfil the responsibilities of the Committee.
- 2.2 Where there are matters of quality assurance and quality enhancement that cannot be decoupled, a joint sub-committee of this Committee and the University Committee for Learning and Teaching can be established as and when required.
- 2.3 The Committee shall inform the Senate and the University Executive of the creation, ongoing work and disbanding of any sub-committees and short life working groups.
- 2.4 The Senate must approve the Terms of Reference of any standing sub-committees that are to exercise delegated powers of the Senate.
- 2.5 For the avoidance of doubt, and as outlined within the Remit, the Senate delegates authority in relation to **taught** programmes of study to this Committee. Commensurate responsibility for research programmes of study falls within the remit of the University Committee for Research and Innovation.

### 3. Composition and Membership

3.1 The Committee shall comprise:

Professor Fiona Waldron	Chair, appointed by the Senate	31 July 2026 (second term)
Dr Yvonne McLaren	Deputy Chair, appointed by the Senate (and Dean, Arts and Humanities)	31 March 2026
Professor Richard Williams	Principal and Vice-Chancellor	Ex officio
Professor Tadhg O'Donovan	Deputy Principal (Education and Student Life)	Ex officio
Dr Lousie Delicato	Director of Academic Quality (SOSS)	Ex officio

Dr Vrushali Mhatre	Director of Academic Quality (SOTD)	Ex officio
Professor Mehdi Nazarinia	Director of Academic Quality (EPS)	Ex officio
Professor Rabee Rustum	Director of Academic Quality (EGIS)	Ex officio
Dr Raqual Warner	Director of Academic Quality (Global College)	Ex officio
Dr Tessa Berg	Director of Academic Quality (MACS)	Ex officio
Professor Martin McCoustra	Senate member (EPS)	31 July 2028 (second term)
Dr Ryad Soobhany	Senate member (MACS)	31 July 2028
Dr Barbara Keating	Senate member (EPS)	31 July 2028
Dr Mohammed Saleh	Senate member (EPS)	31 July 2028
Dr Matthew Bonnett	Appointed by the Senate (Associate Professor at Edinburgh Napier University)	31 July 2027
Ms Holly McAdams, Student Union Either Mr Kevin Antony, Dubai Student Association OR the Vice-President Academic (Dubai) Either Ms Pearlynn Tee, Malaysia Student Association OR the Vice-President Academic (Malaysia)	Three members from the Student Representative Bodies, including one from Scotland, one from Dubai and one from Malaysia (attendance at meetings can be agreed between the three members)	Ex officio
Dr Alistair McConnell	Dean (Science and Engineering) ( <i>eligible to attend</i> )	-

#### 4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 4.1 The Committee will exercise its responsibility, as far as possible, to promote diversity of representation within its membership and the membership of any working group or committee established by the Committee. The Committee will also act to promote equality of opportunity for all colleagues who are involved in carrying out the business of the Committee.

#### 5. Quorum

- 5.1 The quorum necessary to transact business is five members, at least two of whom must be Senators, and at least three of whom must be School staff.
- 5.2 Members who are participating in a meeting by means of audio-visual conferencing or other means enabling them to communicate with all members present at the meeting simultaneously shall be deemed to be present at the meeting and to count towards the quorum.
- 5.3 Normal practice is that wherever possible decisions shall be reached through consensus. The Chair shall rule on instances where a vote is required and whether the matter relates to exercising delegated powers of the Senate, or whether it is under the purview of the University Executive.
- 5.4 All **members** of the Committee are entitled to vote in any vote of the Committee except:
- when the Committee is required to vote on the exercising of delegated powers of the Senate, those persons present who are not Senators shall abstain from voting.

- when the Committee is required to vote on a matter that is solely under the purview of the University Executive, only those persons who are members because of their executive positions shall be eligible to vote.

## 6. Chair

- 6.1 In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair from any given meeting, those members present shall appoint one of their number as Chair for that particular meeting.

## 7. Frequency of Meetings

- 7.1 The Committee usually meets at least four times a year.
- 7.2 Additional meetings, including strategy days or joint meetings with other committees, may be held in order to meet business requirements at the request of the Chair of the Committee.
- 7.3 Changes to arrangements, such as cancellation, rescheduling or additional meetings will be notified to members by the clerk as soon as possible, and normally within not less than five working days of the scheduled meeting date.

## 8. Attendance at Meetings

- 8.1 The following officers are expected to be in attendance at meetings:
- a) the Head of Academic Quality
  - b) the Deputy Head of Academic Quality
  - c) the Global Director of Student Experience and Academic Registrar
  - d) the Chair of the Learning and Teaching Academic Operations Committee
  - e) the Academic Quality Manager
  - f) the Quality and Academic Partnerships Manager
  - g) the Clerk
- 8.2 Other officers and members of the University community may be asked to attend when appropriate, with the agreement of the Chair.
- 8.3 The Committee maintains a record of attendance at each of its meetings and reports this information in accordance with the Attendance Policy.
- 8.4 The Committee may co-opt members as appropriate for a specified period of time and report such co-options to the Senate at the earliest opportunity.

## 9. Reserved Business

- 9.1 There may be occasions when the Committee's business is designated reserved and/or commercially sensitive. On such occasions, with the approval of the Chair, any persons in attendance may be asked to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of a particular reserved item of business.
- 9.2 The record of matters which the Chair and the Committee are satisfied should be dealt with on a reserved basis will be identified within the minutes.

## 10. Conflict of Interest

- 10.1 Where it is identified that a member of the Committee has a conflict of interest with respect to a matter, the Chair may request that the member in question withdraw from participation in relevant business. Depending on the nature of the business, this may allow for participation in discussions without taking part in decision making or may require complete non-participation and/or withdrawal from that part of the meeting.

10.2 All instances of identified conflicts of interest shall be recorded in the minutes.

## 11. Reporting Procedures

- 11.1 The Committee will submit regular reports to the Senate based on the Committee minutes. The Chair will approve the content of reports before release.
- 11.2 The Chair will report to the Senate on any matters which the Committee considers ought to be brought to the attention of the Senate and on any matters requiring the approval of the Senate. These matters will be highlighted in the Committee's report.
- 11.3 The Committee's records (agenda, papers, minutes) are included in the University's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. Information will be readily accessible on request to members of the public under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (FOI(S)A) with the exception of information which is deemed to be covered by a specific exemption under the Act. Minutes and reports of the Committee will denote those areas of reported business which are deemed to fall within the designation of information which is 'exempt' under the FOI(S)A.

## 12. Forward Planning

- 12.1 The Committee will maintain a forward agenda plan of its business.
- 12.2 The Committee will review its Terms of Reference and submit recommendations on these to the Senate annually for approval.
- 12.3 The Committee will set its meeting dates two years in advance, aligned to the schedule of meetings of the Senate.

## 13. Supporting Information

### **Groups feeding into the Committee**

- 13.1
- The University Studies Committee
  - The School Studies Committees

### **Effectiveness and lifespan**

- 13.2 This is an established Committee of the Senate and its lifespan is ongoing.
- An annual year end self-assessment is conducted, with a formal review of effectiveness every five years.

### **Actions that may be taken by the Committee**

- 13.3 Approve; Endorse; Recommend; Consider; Note; Reject

### **Minuting style**

- 13.4 Traditional/formal minutes in accordance with internal University guidance.

### **Resources**

- 13.5
- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Clerk</b>                  | Lisa Herlihy, Senior Governance Officer |
| <b>Administrative support</b> | Allocated from within the Secretariat   |

<b>Version</b>	<b>Amendments</b>	<b>Approved by</b>
V5	Minor amendments to incorporate the Head of the Heriot-Watt Global College as a new Primary Academic Unit into the membership of the Committee.	12 April 2023 (approved by SCIBE)
V6	Minor amendments to the Remit (in order to express the Committee's role in quality assurance activities more distinctly from the role of the University Committee for Learning and Teaching), Composition, and Quorum and Voting sections.	24 January 2024 (approved by SCIBE)
V7	Minor amendments to the following sections: Establishment, Remit, Composition, Remit and Voting, Actions that may be taken by the Committee and Resources.	26 September 2024 (approved by SCIBE)
V8	Minor amendments made to bring the ToRs into line with the new template and to simplify some wording.	25 September 2025 (approved by SCIBE)
V8.1	List of those expected to be in attendance updated to include the Academic Quality Manager and the Academic Quality and Partnerships Manager.	Change to those in attendance agreed by the Chair, November 2025