Section 1

Nottingham Trent University

# Quality Handbook

## Part A: Governance and approach

## Section 1: Academic quality governance

# Contents

## 1.   Overview

**The University's framework, procedures and processes for assuring and enhancing the standards and quality of academic provision are designed to ensure an integrated system, which has the student learning experience at its centre.**

1.1   The University has a mature and clearly articulated quality management framework, which resides under the authority of Academic Board.

1.2   Proportionate powers for aspects of maintaining standards and enhancing quality of taught courses are delegated to the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC), Sub-Committees, Schools (and course committees) and to Development and Approval Groups (DAGs).

1.3   Proportionate powers for aspects of maintaining standards and enhancing quality of research degrees are delegated to the University Research Committee (URC), University Research Degrees Committee (URDC), College Research Degrees Committees (CRDCs), course committees and to DAGs.

1.4   ASQC and URC have an important role in ensuring that the University's quality management procedures are operating in an appropriate manner, and the committees also seek to identify the need for, and to nurture, new academic development policy and practice.

1.5   Other important features of the University framework include:

   a. Bespoke task and finish groups that assist in shaping policy (see para. 13);

   b. A Validation Service Sub-Committee (VSSC) that oversees the University's collaborative provision with Validated Centres (see para. 5 and Quality Handbook (QH) Section 10C);

   c. A School-based Collaborations and Partnerships Sub-Committee which maintains oversight of the University's collaborations and partnerships other than those with Validated Centres (see para. 6 and QH Sections 10A and 10B);

   d. A Cross-School Standards and Quality Sub-Committee that maintains oversight of the standards and quality of all courses that are designed to work across several Schools (see para. 7);

   e. A robust process for the approval of new courses and major revisions to courses via DAGs. Each DAG's membership is tailored to the scale and scope of the specific proposal, and includes peers external to the University (see QH Section 5);

   f. A cycle of Periodic School Reviews (PSRs) and Periodic Research Degrees Review (PRDR), whereby, every five years, a School's quality assurance and enhancement strategies for its course portfolio are scrutinised by a team of trained internal reviewers and external peers (including a student representative) (see QH Sections 7A and 7B);

g. A cycle of Periodic Course Reviews (PCRs) which ensures the continued quality of the student experience by reflecting on stakeholder feedback and evaluation of course data in relation to appropriate University and sector benchmarks (see QH Section 6);

h. An annual reporting cycle that derives from critical reflections at course and School level, and well as central and local analysis of student data (see QH Section 6);

i. The expert oversight of the application and interpretation of data as it affects the quality of the student learning experience (under the stewardship of a Data Sub-Committee – see para 9);

j. Proportionate delegation of quality management responsibilities to Colleges (CRDCs), Schools (School Academic Standards and Quality Committees (SASQCs)) and course teams according to clear criteria (see para. 12 and QH Supplements 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D);

k. The inclusion of the student voice throughout the governance framework through the inclusion of students on key committees, and via the Student Engagement and Academic Representation Steering Group (StEAR) (see QH Section 8);

l. Principles and requirements for learning and teaching (see QH Section 14), and for enabling student development and achievement (see QH Section 2);

m. A systematic process for the approval and initial briefing of the University's external examiners, overseen by the External Examiner Appointments Panel (see para. 8 and QH Section 9);

n. School Standards and Quality Managers (SSQMs) who facilitate standards and quality matters within Schools, and who collectively meet to network on a regular basis.

## 2. Academic Board

2.1 Academic Board has ultimate responsibility for the standards, quality and enhancement of academic provision within the University. It is the senior academic committee of the University, with a range of responsibilities relating to the organisation of learning and teaching, research, scholarship, standards, students and courses, and advising the Vice-Chancellor on academic matters.

2.2 The principal responsibilities of the Academic Board are drawn from the Instrument and Articles of Government confirmed by the Privy Council in March 1993 and subsequently updated in 2011. Subject to these Articles (and to the overall responsibility of the Board of Governors and to the responsibilities of the Vice-Chancellor), the Academic Board is responsible for:

a. policy issues relating to the research, scholarship, learning, teaching and courses at the University, including criteria for the admission of students;

b. the appointment and removal of internal and external examiners;

c. policies and procedures for assessment and examination of the academic performance of students;

d. the content of the curriculum;

e. academic standards and the approval, monitoring and review of courses;

f. the award of, and the procedures for the award of, qualifications and academic titles, including honorary awards;

g. agreements with other validating and accrediting bodies, including professional institutions and other education providers;

h. the overview of all collaborative provision entered into by the University;

i. the procedures for the expulsion of students for academic reasons (such responsibilities shall be subject to the requirements of validating and accrediting bodies);

j. considering the development of the academic activities of the University and the resources needed to support them, and for advising the Vice-Chancellor and Board of Governors thereon;

k. advising on such other matters as the Board of Governors or the Vice-Chancellor may refer to the Academic Board.

2.3 The membership of the Academic Board shall comprise the Vice-Chancellor (who shall be the chair) and such other numbers of staff and students as may from time to time be determined by the Academic Board subject to approval by the Board of Governors. The Vice-Chancellor may nominate a Deputy Chair from among the members of the Academic Board to take the chair in his place. The period of appointment of members and the selection or election arrangements shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

### Academic Board membership

- Ex-officio members:

    Vice-Chancellor (Chair);

    Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (Deputy Chair);

    Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation);

    Pro Vice-Chancellor (Culture) and Head of College of Art, Architecture, Design and Humanities;

    Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) and Head of College of Business, Law and Social Sciences;

    Pro Vice-Chancellor and Head of College of Science and Technology;

    Chief Operating Officer and Registrar;

    Deans of School;

    Head of Doctoral School;

    Head of Governance and Legal Services (Secretary to the Academic Board);

Academic Registrar;

Executive Dean of Learning and Teaching;

Director of Libraries and Learning Resources (LLR).

- Two student representatives.
- One member of the teaching staff of each School elected for three years by the teaching staff of that School.
- Two members of teaching staff elected for three years by the teaching staff of the University.
- One member of the permanent professional services staff elected for three years by the permanent professional services staff as a whole.

2.4 In addition to the membership, other staff members may be invited to attend, including, but not limited to, the Head of Student Affairs, and two further student representatives (NTSU nominated).

2.5 The Academic Board will be serviced by a senior member of Governance Services who will act as the Officer to the Board.

2.6 Academic Board may establish and disestablish such committees as it considers necessary to enable it to carry out its responsibilities. The number and nature of members of any such committee, the method by which they are to be elected or appointed, and the terms of reference for the same shall be determined by the Academic Board.

2.7 Boards of Examiners (see QH Section 15 and Quality Handbook Supplement (QHS) 15B) have delegated authority from the Academic Board for determining academic awards and for decisions on the progression of students.

## 3. The Academic Standards and Quality Committee

3.1 Academic Board delegates powers for setting, maintaining and assuring standards and quality for taught courses to the Academic Standards and Quality Committee.

3.2 The powers delegated to ASQC are defined and exercised according to a set of clear terms of reference, an appropriate constitution and to regular reporting to the Academic Board. The terms of reference are as follows.

The principal functions of ASQC are:

a. To assure the Academic Board of the quality of learning opportunities and standards of awards.

b. To assure the Academic Board of compliance with the UK Quality Code, Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and other relevant external benchmarks.

c. To advise Academic Board on the strategic and deliberate steps that need to be taken with respect to the enhancement of learning opportunities and quality management processes.

d. To ensure institutional oversight of academic and academic-related functions which are governed, at least in part, by the UK Quality Code.

e. To ensure appropriate quality management mechanisms are in place to support good academic practice.

f. To develop, review and approve academic policy related to student learning opportunities and academic standards.

g. To advise Academic Board on the relevance and appropriateness of evidence to support decision-making.

h. To advise the Academic Board on the priorities of development work that needs to be undertaken for the forthcoming period.

Specific functions of ASQC include:

i. To oversee the approval of new courses and major revisions to courses, outcomes of Periodic School Review and periodic collaborative reviews.

j. To oversee the deliberate steps taken at institutional level to enhance the quality of student learning opportunities.

k. To ratify the decisions of sub-committees and working groups.

l. To support the appropriate function of School Academic Standards and Quality Committees.

m. To oversee data and actions related to student academic satisfaction.

n. To monitor the standards, quality and ongoing enhancement of courses on an annual basis.

o. To take appropriate actions related to outcomes of interim monitoring of quality, standards and enhancement.

p. To oversee the external examiner system.

### Operational notes

- ASQC meets seven times per year. One meeting will be an annual monitoring meeting and will take place in November.
- Oversight of School quality management is achieved through a Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) summary of key SASQC outcomes.
- Where ASQC needs to ensure that any decisions made will not compromise quality/standards of a particular discipline, the committee will specifically ask for confirmation from Schools via SASQC. This route will also be used for consultation purposes.
- The chair and the Executive Dean of Learning and Teaching will review ASQC membership on an

annual basis to ensure that it remains appropriate for the conduct of its business and to ensure that the overall membership is refreshed as necessary.

- At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.
- If a core member is unable to attend a meeting, they must seek an alternate.

### ASQC membership

3.3 The membership of ASQC is subject to confirmation by Academic Board.

3.4 Membership is constituted from the range of colleagues who represent areas of work and expertise related to the business of the committee.  An individual member does not represent their discipline or School.  Across the full membership, all Schools commit to at least one member.

3.5 Representation of these areas operates on a rotating basis over a two-year cycle.

3.6 Not all members are required to attend all meetings.  All members, are however, expected to read minutes and papers of all meetings.  Members who are not required to attend all meetings are welcome to attend any meetings that they feel would be useful.  CADQ will extend appropriate invitations after agreement of the agenda.

3.7 Membership of ASQC is as follows:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (Chair).
- Rotating representation from key roles in Schools, which will include at least two Deans, two Deputy Deans, two School Standards and Quality Managers and two academic colleagues with senior roles with expertise related to the management of quality and enhancement.
- Chairs of all ASQC sub-committees.
- Nottingham Trent Students' Union (NTSU) President.
- NTSU Vice-President Education.
- NTSU Vice-President Postgraduate.
- Executive Dean of Learning and Teaching (Deputy Chair).
- Head of Academic Quality (CADQ).
- Academic Registrar (or representative).
- Director of Planning.
- Head of Governance and Legal Services
- Head of Admissions (or representative).
- Head of Organisational Development (or representative).

- Head of Employability and Enterprise (or representative).
- Head of Estates (or representative).
- Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (or representative).
- Head of Doctoral School (or representative).
- Head of Information Systems (or representative).
- Head of Library and Learning Resources (or representative).
- Head of Student Support Services (or representative).
- Academic Administration Manager representative.
- Representative from NTU Global.
- Representative from Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies.
- Executive Officer (CADQ).
- Minute Secretary (CADQ).

3.8 ASQC has five sub-committees that carry out specific tasks associated with standards and quality management – the Validation Service Sub-Committee, the Collaborations and Partnerships Sub-Committee, the Cross-School Standards and Quality Sub-Committee, the External Examiner Appointments Panel and the Data Sub-Committee.

3.9 ASQC receives regular reports from the Student Engagement and Academic Representation Steering Group.

3.10 ASQC commissions expert working groups to undertake development work as necessary.

## 4. University Research Committee

4.1 Academic Board delegates powers for setting, maintaining and assuring standards and quality for research degree courses to the University Research Committee.

4.2 The powers delegated to the University Research Committee (URC) are defined and exercised according to a set of clear terms of reference, an appropriate constitution and to regular reporting to Academic Board. The terms of reference are as follows:

a. To oversee and support the development high quality sustainable research and associated translational activities, in accordance with the NTU Strategic Plan.

b. To monitor and regularly report to Academic Board on research activities and achievements associated with the NTU Strategic Plan Valuing Ideas theme.

c. To oversee the marketing and publicity of NTU research and translational activities.

d. To promote and monitor compliance across NTU with the Research Integrity Concordat.

e.  To promote and monitor compliance across NTU with NTU Publication and Data Management policies.

f.  To promote and monitor the development and engagement with the NTU Researcher Development Framework and to monitor NTU compliance with the Concordat to support the development of researchers.

g.  To advise Academic Board on policy relating to the management and enhancement of academic standards and quality of the University's research degree courses, wherever they may be delivered.

h.  To consider and, when appropriate, ratify the decision of the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC) and Development and Approval Groups for research awards.

i.  To ensure that the University Doctoral School discharges its responsibility for the monitoring of the quality and standards of research degree provision according to requirements of the URC and to liaise in this respect with URDC.

j.  To consider the Research Degrees Annual Report and to maintain oversight of any actions required relating to academic standards and quality enhancement.

k.  To oversee the appeals process for postgraduate research students.

l.  To consider the outcomes of periodic reviews of research degree provision, both at NTU and at collaborative partners.

m. To advise Academic Board on research policy and procedures and trends and developments in research.

n.  When appropriate, to receive and consider regular reports on the preparations of submissions to the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

## Operational notes

- The URC meets four times per year.
- The Chair will review URC membership on an annual basis to ensure that it remains appropriate for the conduct of its business and to ensure that the overall membership is refreshed as necessary.
- At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.

**URC membership**

4.3    Membership of URC is as follows:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), Chair.
- Three Associate Deans of Research (ADR).
- Head of Doctoral School.
- Three Deans, one per College.
- One Postgraduate Research Tutor.
- Two Professional Doctorate Course Leaders, one per suite.
- Three School Research Coordinators, one per College.
- Three Unit of Assessment Coordinators, one per College.
- Head of Organisational Development.
- Head of Business Innovation.
- Head of the Research Grant Capture Team.
- Head of Integrated Marketing.
- Head of Library and Learning Resources Research Support Team.
- Servicing Officer.
- Vice-Chancellor (observer).

4.4    URC has two working groups to support the further development of research and its translation, these are the School Research Co-ordinators Forum and the Unit of Assessment Co-ordinators Forum. Additionally it has three Steering Groups associated with the NTU Strategic Research themes.

a. The School Research Co-ordinators Forum – primary focus to support the development, delivery and reporting on the NTU Schools' Research Plans.

b. The Unit of Assessment Coordinators Forum – primary focus on REF related activities, supported by PVC (Reach), ADRs and others from the REF2020 Planning Group.

c. The Steering groups associated with the NTU Strategic Research themes – Health and Wellbeing, Low Carbon and Sustainability - primary focus on the leadership, coordination and development for each of these themes.

## 5.    The Validation Service Sub-Committee

5.1    VSSC has responsibility for overseeing the approval, review and monitoring processes of Validated Centres and their courses of study. It has the following terms of reference:

a. To advise ASQC and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on the maintenance and enhancement of the standards and quality of Validation

Service provision, and to make proposals to ASQC for policy or regulatory changes.

b. To monitor any potential academic risks associated with provision at Validated Centres, and to report to ASQC accordingly.

c. To ensure that University policies and approaches are embedded within academic provision at Validated Centres, and to promote to those partners innovative practice in the delivery and support of academic courses and the dissemination of good practice in learning and teaching.

d. To analyse Course Standards and Quality Reports (CSQRs), and centre-wide reports submitted for courses operating at Validated Centres.

e. To consider for ASQC the Validation Service aspects of the Collaborative Section of the Overview Report on Standards and Quality Management.

f. To receive and consider the outcomes of approval and review events at Validated Centres in order to ensure that the events have been conducted in accordance with the QH.

g. To consider and approve modifications and changes to courses at Validated Centres, and, where appropriate, new courses not requiring an approval panel.

h. To monitor, in conjunction with CADQ, compliance with conditions of approval.

i. To monitor the requirement for a signed agreement in respect of each Validation Service arrangement, and to ensure that a collaborative register of Validated Centre courses is maintained.

j. To ensure that new or revised Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Subject Benchmarks (and associated documents) are circulated to Validated Centres.

k. To report to ASQC on any specific issues of good practice or concern.

l. To consider and report on matters as may be referred from time to time from ASQC.

### VSSC membership

- A senior member of the University – who is also a member of ASQC (Chair).
- Nine members drawn from Schools.

  (A School may nominate an alternate to attend meetings when its regular member is unable to do so; a School may also (via the VSSC Servicing Officer) nominate an additional member to attend a VSSC meeting (as an observer) for staff development purposes).

- One member who is, or has recently been, an academic liaison to a Validated Centre (invited by the chair of ASQC).
- Representative of NTU Global.
- Head of Academic Quality (CADQ).
- Senior Standards and Quality Officers (CADQ).
- Executive Officer (CADQ).
- Minute Secretary (CADQ).

**5.2** The VSSC membership is subject to ASQC ratification.

### Operational notes

- The VSSC meets between four and eight times a year.
- CADQ supports the sub-committee in setting agendas and preparing covering papers to aid discussion and decision-making; the CADQ Collaborations and Partnerships Team communicates decisions to Validated Centres.
- CADQ organises appropriate induction and staff development for new sub-committee members.
- CADQ drafts an Overview Report on Collaborative Provision, which is considered by ASQC in November each year.
- VSSC submits all approval decisions to ASQC for formal ratification.
- At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.
- If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must seek an alternate.

## 6. The Collaborations and Partnerships Sub-Committee

**6.1** CPSC has responsibility for oversight of the quality and standards of School-based collaborative provision and partnerships across the University. It has the following terms of reference:

a. To advise ASQC, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Schools on the maintenance and enhancement of the standards and quality of School-based collaborative provision and partnerships.

b. To make proposals to ASQC for policy or regulatory changes.

c. To be cognisant of changes in UK and international policy for collaborations and partnerships, and to advise ASQC accordingly.

d. To contribute to the annual review meeting of ASQC in order to monitor the standards and quality of School-based collaborative provision and partnerships.

e. To receive and consider a synopsis of course development and approval groups, and periodic collaborative review activities for School-based collaborative provision, and to consider any themes or actions arising from that synopsis.

f. To consider and approve modifications and changes to approved collaborative frameworks.

g. To ratify the decisions of approvals and reviews of partnership arrangements undertaken by SASQCs.

h. To monitor, in conjunction with CADQ, compliance with conditions of approval.

i. To approve withdrawal and teach-out arrangements for School-based collaborative provision and partnerships, and to monitor standards and the quality of student learning opportunities for the duration of the teach-out period.

j. To monitor, in conjunction with the CADQ Collaborations and Partnerships Team, the requirement for a signed agreement in respect of each School-based collaboration or partnership.

k. To approve and monitor the register of School-based collaborations and partnerships.

l. To report to ASQC on any specific issues of good practice or concern.

m. To consider and report on matters as may be referred from time to time from ASQC.

### Membership

- A senior member of the University – who is also a member of ASQC (Chair).
- A School Standards and Quality Manager.
- A current School-based collaborative provision collaborative academic lead.
- A Head of Department.
- A Deputy Dean.
- A Course Leader.
- A member of a School Academic Standards and Quality Committee.
- Representative of NTU Global.
- Executive Officer (CADQ).
- Minute Secretary (CADQ).

6.2 The above is subject to a rolling (three-year) term of office.

**6.3** This membership is subject to ASQC ratification

**Operational notes**

- CPSC meets four times a year.
- CADQ supports the sub-committee in setting agendas, preparing covering papers to aid discussion and decision-making and communicating decisions to Schools.
- CADQ organises appropriate induction and staff development for new sub-committee members.
- The sub-committee submits all approval decisions to ASQC for formal ratification.
- At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.
- If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must seek an alternate.

## 7. The Cross-School Standards and Quality Sub-Committee

**7.1** X-SASQC has responsibility for oversight of the quality and standards of courses which are designed to work across several Schools. It has the following terms of reference:

**Strategy for standards, quality management and enhancement**

a. To advise ASQC on the maintenance and enhancement of the standards and the quality of student learning opportunities for courses taught across Schools.

b. To ensure that University policies and approaches are embedded within courses that span across Schools.

c. To assure the University of the currency and health of the provision.

d. To consider and report on matters as may be referred from time to time by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), ASQC and relevant SASQCs.

**Course monitoring and annual reporting**

e. To take responsibility for the continuing annual monitoring and enhancement of cross-School provision according to the University's requirements.

f. To ensure that review processes are informed by qualitative and quantitative evidence and have an impact on development and enhancement.

g. To monitor the mechanisms for student feedback on courses and teaching, the analysis of feedback received from students and the action taken upon such feedback.

h. To receive and monitor interim course reports and development plans within them in accordance with University requirements.

i. To provide an annual report to ASQC on the standards and quality of cross-School provision.

j. To receive external examiner reports for cross-School provision and ensure that external examiners' recommendations are appropriately considered.

k. To oversee the periodic review of cross-School courses in line with University requirements.

l. To receive reports from NTU Professional Services as appropriate.

**Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

m. To ensure that the University's requirements and expectations around learning, teaching and assessment are met for all cross-School provision.

n. To make recommendations to the University External Examiner Appointments Panel on the appointment of external examiners with sole responsibility for cross-School courses.

**Course development**

o. To consider and approve proposals for modifications to cross- School courses of study, including new and revised modules.

p. To retain oversight of cumulative changes to courses year-on-year.

q. To ensure that course development is informed by stakeholder engagement.

**Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies**

r. To monitor the involvement of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) with courses, ensuring action is taken on the reports and recommendations from those bodies, and notifying CADQ of changes to NTU's PSRB register on a quarterly basis.

### Cross-School Standards and Quality Sub-Committee membership

- A senior member of the University – who is also a member of ASQC (Chair).
- Two academics with cross-School expertise but not directly associated with courses coming under the committee's remit.
- Course leaders for cross-School courses.
- A School Standards and Quality Manager.
- A Deputy Dean.
- A School Employability Manager.
- A student representative.
- Two Professional Service representatives.
- Online and Flexible Learning Manager.
- A School Administrator.
- Executive Officer (CADQ).
- Minute Secretary (CADQ).

7.2 The above is subject to a rolling (three-year) term of office.

7.3 The membership is subject to ASQC ratification.

### Operational notes

- The sub-committee meets three times each year.
- CADQ supports the committee in setting agendas, preparing covering papers to aid discussion and decision-making and communicating decisions to Schools.
- CADQ organises appropriate induction and staff development for new committee members.
- The sub-committee submits all approval decisions to ASQC for formal ratification.
- At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.
- If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must seek an alternate.

## 8. External Examiner Appointments Panel

8.1 All external examiner nominations for taught courses and for phase one of professional doctorate courses are subject to scrutiny by the External Examiner Appointments Panel (EEAP). The panel has the following terms of reference:

a. To consider and approve external examiner nominations.

b. To submit all approval decisions, and recommendations to terminate a contract, to ASQC for formal ratification.

c. To receive an annual External Examiners' Overview Report for consideration by ASQC.

### EEAP Membership

- A Dean or Deputy Dean – who is also a member of ASQC (Chair).
- Five members of academic staff with appropriate experience.
- A member of the Validation Service Sub-Committee (VSSC).
- Head of Academic Quality (CADQ) (Acts as Deputy Chair, attendance only as required).
- Executive Officer (CADQ).
- Minute Secretary (CADQ).

8.2 The above is subject to a rolling (three-year) term of office.

**Operational notes**

- The panel normally meets between four and six times a year.
- The chair may co-opt other members for meetings where there are several apologies in advance.
- At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.
- If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must seek an alternate.

## 9. The Data Sub-Committee

9.1 This sub-committee has responsibility for the oversight of the quality and use of data relating to student outcome and experience. It serves three principal functions:

    a. Oversight of the quality and appropriateness of data being used to inform decisions about student outcome (including progression, achievement, continuation, employment) and academic experience (including NSS, Evasys, PRES, PTES, UKES);

    b. Oversight of the effectiveness of the use of these data to inform quality and enhancement;

    c. Identification of potential cross-institutional enhancements arising from the analysis of such data.

9.2 The terms of reference are as follows:

    a. To ensure appropriate oversight of the University's use of student data (including NSS, Evasys, PTES, PRES, UKES, DLHE), and other business and quality metrics (including course quality and health, Size and Shape, learner analytics).

    b. To oversee the quality systems which support the collation, access and dissemination of student data.

    c. To review cross-institutional data to inform the prioritisation of enhancement themes.

    d. To advise ASQC and other appropriate bodies on the relevance and appropriateness of evidence used to support decision-making about quality and enhancement of student learning opportunities.

    e. To review and enhance NTU's use of data to inform quality and enhancement.

    f. To oversee the effective use of data in internal monitoring, review and reporting for quality management and associated activities.

    g. To support the Success for All steering group in its use of data to evaluate the impact of initiatives designed to reduce the attainment gap.

h. To advise ASQC on the organisation, interpretation and submission of data for the purposes of external review (in particular the TEF and the Annual Provider Review).

### Data Sub-Committee Membership:

- Executive Dean of Learning and Teaching (Chair).
- Two School Standards and Quality Managers.
- A School Employability Manager.
- One School lead – learning and teaching.
- Head of Doctoral School (or URDC representative).
- Head of Academic Quality (CADQ) (Deputy Chair).
- Director of Planning.
- Student Engagement Manager.
- Strategic Data and Intelligence Manager.
- NTSU Vice-President Education.
- NTSU Vice-President Postgraduate.
- Academic Registry representative.
- Standards, Quality and Data Manager (CADQ) (Executive Officer).
- Minute Secretary (CADQ).

### Operational notes

- The sub-committee meets five times each year.  It is serviced by CADQ.
- Membership is reviewed on an annual basis. At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.
- If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must seek an alternate.

## 10. Student Engagement and Academic Representation Steering Group (StEAR)

10.1 The Student Engagement and Academic Representation Steering Group (StEAR) is a joint endeavour between the Students' Union and the University.  The group oversees the operation of the student representative system at NTU and the engagement of students in activities as described in the Joint Statement on Student Academic Representation (see QHS 8A) and the Quality Handbook Section 8. StEAR reports to ASQC and Student Council (through the NTSU Vice-President Education) on the health and continuing development of student engagement and academic representation at NTU.

10.2 The responsibilities of StEAR are as follows:

a. Facilitate information sharing between the University and the Students' Union.

b. Develop and review student representative training.

c. Support and promote the student representative system.

d. Undertake mapping and benchmarking to evaluate the effectiveness of student representation.

e. Produce an annual report to ASQC in January each year.

f. Identify improvements to academic representation practices.

g. Ensure the model for student voice at NTU is clear and cohesive.

h. Present policy change suggestions.

### StEAR Membership

- Students' Union Vice-President Education (Chair).
- Students' Union Vice-President Postgraduate.
- Students' Union Head of Membership Services
- Students' Union Student Voice Manager.
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).
- One Deputy Dean.
- Head of Academic Quality (CADQ).
- One Senior Standards and Quality Officer (CADQ) (Executive Officer).
- Four School Champions.
- Four School Representatives.

### Operational notes

- The Steering Group will meet four times per year.
- Other members may be co-opted for a specific purpose and defined term.
- At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.
- If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must seek an alternate.

## 11. University Research Degrees Committee

11.1 The University Research Degrees Committee has delegated responsibility from the University Research Committee to monitor the academic standards and quality of research degrees and oversee the conduct of MPhil/PhD and professional doctorate routes.  It has the following terms of reference:

a. To advise the Head of the Doctoral School on the development of strategy relating to the maintenance and enhancement of the standards and quality of research degrees wherever they may be delivered.

b. To assure the Head of the Doctoral School of the continued maintenance and enhancement of research degrees.

c. To take responsibility for the continuing annual monitoring and enhancement of research degrees according to the University's requirements.

d. To evaluate the success of research degrees, and for the purposes of equality and diversity monitoring, consider submission and completion times and rates; pass, referral and fail rates; withdrawal rates; appeals and complaints; recruitment profiles and subsequent career paths of research degree students.

e. To receive minutes of CRDC meetings and consider annual CRDC reports.

f. To ratify the decisions of CRDC relating to the quality management and enhancement of MPhil/PhD routes.

g. To receive minutes of professional doctorate progression boards and course committees and consider the annual standards and quality reports.

h. To ratify the decisions of professional doctorate progression boards and course committees relating to the quality management and enhancement of professional doctorate routes.

i. To monitor the mechanisms for student feedback, the analysis of feedback received from students and the action taken upon such feedback.

j. To produce an annual report for URC on research degrees (including those offered with collaborative partners).

k. To undertake (within the context of the annual report) a thorough analysis of feedback provided by students, examiners and any other key stakeholders.

l. To receive reports from NTU Professional Services as appropriate.

m. To consider for approval nominations of external examiners for phase 1 of professional doctorate courses.

n. To nominate members of DAGs for the consideration of new professional doctorate courses and major changes to existing courses.

o. To consider the outcome of DAGs and monitor the course team's responses DAG conditions and recommendations.

p. To consider and approve proposals for modifications to courses of study for professional doctorates.

q. To assure URC of the maintenance and enhancement of the standards and quality of the provision delivered by collaborative partners where the University is the awarding body, and the provision offered to students studying away from NTU.

r. To receive and consider the outcomes of approval and review events at validated centres, and of courses delivered in partnership and to monitor compliance with conditions of approval.

s. To monitor, in conjunction with the CADQ Collaborations and Partnerships Team, the requirement for a signed agreement in respect of collaborative provision.

t. To monitor the effectiveness, appropriateness and implementation of research degree regulations and make recommendations to URC for changes as appropriate.

u. To consider proposals for new research degree award designations and to submit recommendations to URC for final approval by Academic Board.

v. To receive new and revised QAA Subject Benchmark statements and ensure the University's regulations for research degrees are consistent with the requirement and guidance issued by QAA and other relevant external bodies.

w. To monitor the involvement of PSRBs with research degree courses as appropriate and ensure action is taken on the reports and recommendations from those bodies.

x. To ensure that changes to NTU's PSRB register are notified to CADQ on a quarterly basis.

y. To ensure the ongoing currency of the University's research environment statement.

z. To be responsible for the development and implementation of the NTU plan to promote and grow the research student cohort across NTU, reflecting the ambitions of the academic Schools.

aa. To proactively respond to calls by major funding agencies supporting cohort research, and participate in relevant Alliance DTA initiatives.

bb. Support the work of URC in relation to research student matters.

cc. To constitute working groups to inform the delivery of URDC business and to inform the NTU Doctoral School development and enhancement ambitions. To receive reports from these working groups.

### URDC membership

- Head of Doctoral School (Chair).
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).
- Deputy Chair of URDC / URDC representative on URC.
- Chairs of CRDC (Vice-Chair on rotation).
- Eight Postgraduate Research Tutors (1 per School).
- Professional Doctorate Course Representatives (from each School / suite of courses with this provision).
- Postgraduate Research Student Representatives (1 per campus).

- Doctoral School Standards and Quality Manager.
- Senior Standards and Quality Officer from CADQ with responsibility to the Doctoral School.
- Doctoral School Professional Support Team Leader.
- Chair of Southampton Solent University Research Degree Committee or nominee.
- Researcher Development Manager.
- Co-opted members: LLR, Employability and Marketing.
- Servicing Officer.

### Operational notes

- URDC meets six times per year.
- Research Student representatives are not to be present when the progression, appeal or complaint of another research student is being discussed.
- At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.

## 12. School Academic Standards and Quality Committees

12.1 The academic standards and quality of courses within a School are monitored and regularly reported upon by its SASQC (this includes all courses that a School offers in collaboration with an external partner). Each SASQC reports to ASQC and can make recommendations to the Dean and / or School Executive Team for strategic and operational change. The work of a SASQC is supported through the membership of a CADQ Senior Standards and Quality Officer.

12.2 SASQCs have the following terms of reference:

**Strategy for standards, quality management and enhancement**

a. To oversee all aspects of the quality management and enhancement of the School's courses, the strategies and policies relating to those courses and the overall student experience.

b. To consider, contextualise, and implement within the School, all University strategies, policies, procedures and regulations relating to quality management, quality enhancement and the student learning experience.

c. To ensure that all courses are subject to Periodic Course Reviews, and to identify any issues or good practice that may arise.

d. To formulate and monitor a School Quality and Enhancement Plan.

**School overview of course monitoring and annual reporting**

e. To manage the Interim Course Reporting cycle, ensuring that appropriate School-wide good practice and enhancements arising therefrom are shared.

f. To interrogate all aspects of student data relating to the School's courses and establish any actions for improving any aspects of performance that may be need attention.

g. To ensure that course committee and School arrangements for gaining student feedback are operating satisfactorily, to monitor outcomes arising and to identify and respond to any emerging School-wide issues.

h. Through its stewardship of e – g above, to ensure that the following are meeting University and school expectations across all of the School's courses:

- assessment practice and moderation;
- the application of assessment regulations;
- Assessment and Feedback plans;
- arrangements for gaining student feedback.

**External matters**

i. To consider external examiner nominations and to implement arrangements whereby annual reports submitted by external examiners are monitored on a School-wide basis to identify good practice, issues or themes.

j. To maintain oversight of the involvement of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) in the School's courses, and ensure any actions are undertaken at School level.

k. To ensure that courses provided in collaboration with external partners are subject to School policies and procedures in the same manner as non-collaborative courses and to ensure that University requirements in relation to School-based collaborative provision are fulfilled, e.g. the consideration of course coordinator reports by the course committee and SASQC.

**Course development and approval**

l. To nominate members to act on Development and Approval Groups (DAGs).

m. To receive DAG reports, ensuring that conditions and recommendations are addressed by the course committee or the School as appropriate, and that any transferable themes or good practice are disseminated.

n. To implement arrangements whereby the Committee can effectively consider and approve course changes that do not require a DAG, and keeping track of such changes in order to trigger a DAG if independent scrutiny of the course as a whole is needed.

**Registers**

o. To ensure that changes to NTU's centrally held Registers are notified to CADQ as requested.

**QAA Subject Benchmarks**

p. To receive new and revised QAA Subject Benchmark statements and ensure that they are acted upon by the relevant course committee(s).

### SASQC Membership

- Dean of School (Chair).
- School Standards and Quality Manager.
- Deputy Dean.
- College Academic Administration Manager or nominee.
- Senior Standards and Quality Officer from CADQ with responsibility to the School.
- Four Heads of Department or their nominees.
- Co-opted members in line with School requirements.
- LLR Learning and Teaching Team representative.
- School Employability Manager.
- School Internationalisation Coordinator or equivalent.
- School Sustainability Coordinator or equivalent.
- School Marketing Manager or their nominee.
- Representative(s) of other Professional Services as appropriate.
- Two student representatives (to include School Representatives).
- School Administrator or representative.
- Servicing Officer.

### Operational notes

- A SASQC meets at least four times a year.
- A SASQC may undertakes its business, where appropriate, with the help of sub-committees and working groups and will receive timely and regular reports from any such sub-committees and working groups.
- A member of another SASQC may be invited to attend meetings for staff development or other purposes.
- At least half of the membership must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate.
- If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must seek an alternate.

## 13. Task and Finish Groups

13.1 ASQC may establish task and finish groups (T&FGs) to take forward particular quality management and enhancements themes. Such themes will typically require

a detailed level of development and drafting that cannot be accommodated within the constraints of standard committee business.

13.2 T&FG themes may be identified at ASQC meetings, may arise from formal monitoring, feedback or reporting processes (at University, School or student level), may be prompted by external shifts in policy, or may stem from executive University decision making.

13.3 T&FG themes may be 'macro' in scope e.g. a complete review of a particular policy (involving consultation and implementation) or may be 'micro' in scope e.g. an update to an aspect of a procedure or process.

13.4 ASQC will establish the terms of reference and membership for each T&FG, which will include the expected outputs.

13.5 On occasion, a theme may be allocated to an existing University forum e.g. School Standards and Quality Managers, whereby that forum becomes, de facto, a T&FG for the purposes of taking forward that theme.

13.6 T&FGs will normally have at least one physical meeting, but may, particularly in the context of 'micro' themes, conduct business via electronic means.

13.7 T&FGs will have a fixed life. Those T&FGs with an extended life will report to ASQC on a regular basis, while short-term T&FGs may simply report to ASQC at the completion of their work.

13.8 ASQC will retain responsibility for approving, or otherwise, the outputs of T&FGs, which will be in the form of recommendations for consideration by ASQC.

13.9 As indicated above, each T&FG will vary in scope and timescale. Accordingly, the constitution and terms of reference for each will be bespoke. The following acts as a guide when formulating the constitution and terms of reference for a T&FG.

### T&FG constitution

- The chair should be a member of ASQC or a CADQ/Professional Service manager.
- There should normally be at least one other member from ASQC.
- For 'macro' themes: a representative from each School or College (as appropriate to the task), a Professional Service representative and a student representative(s).
- For 'micro' themes – a suitably qualified and experienced member of academic or professional staff (as appropriate to the task).
- CADQ Officer (Secretary).

**Terms of reference**

- A T&FG should report to ASQC upon completion of the task (the chair would normally present to ASQC).
- A 'macro'/long term T&FG should establish key milestones and provide a short interim report(s) to ASQC.
- A T&FG should consult with relevant stakeholders appropriately (including externally if the theme necessitates this).
- A T&FG may request an amendment to its terms of reference, or the appointment of additional members or experts, or a time extension for completion of the task (via the T&FG steering group in the first instance).

## 14. Consultation

14.1 The above committees and agencies conduct regular consultations with staff via task groups and other forums in the development of:

   a. standards and quality enhancement policy and procedures; and

   b. regulations relating to undergraduate and postgraduate awards and the assessments undertaken by students.

## 15. Exceptions

15.1 The University may modify its quality assurance framework in respect of courses leading solely to PSRB awards and for non-award bearing short courses (see Quality Handbook Supplements 5I and 5J).

15.2 The QH contains the policies, procedures and regulations governing all NTU taught and research courses (including those offered at collaborative partners). In exceptional circumstances, the Vice-Chancellor may – in consultation with the University Executive Team (UET) (and acting as Chief Executive and chair of Academic Board) – enact policies, procedures and regulations that fall within the spirit of the Quality Handbook, but outside the formal letter of the regulations. Such policies, procedures and regulations will be designed to ensure that the University operates to the best of its ability to maintain the quality of the student learning experience in such exceptional circumstances, and to seek to ensure that academic awards are conferred on the basis of the most secure data available. Effective communication will take place with staff, students, collaborative partners and external examiners to ensure that the contingency arrangements are understood by all within the University community. The contingency arrangements will only cover the period in which the exceptional circumstances prevail and the University will return to operate under the full extent of the Quality Handbook thereafter.

## 16. The Executive

16.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is responsible, in liaison with the Vice-Chancellor and other members of UET as appropriate, for executive oversight of the efficient and effective development of the University's academic portfolio and supporting systems and frameworks. To achieve this, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) works to ensure the continuing development and provision of efficient and effective courses and service, supporting and securing high academic achievement and satisfaction amongst students.

16.2 The key central agency which supports ASQC and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is CADQ. CADQ is led by the Executive Dean of Learning and Teaching together with a team of professional officers. CADQ's core function is to lead and support innovation and developments in curriculum design, teaching, assessment and learning, and quality assurance. CADQ administers ASQC, VSSC, EEAP, CPSC, X-SASQC, the Data Sub-Committee and Task and Finish Groups.

### Other NTU agencies provide additional support:

- **Academic Registry**

  focuses on student appeals, awards and titles; award ceremonies; timetabling; examination organisation; student records; and academic calendar.

- **Strategic Planning and Change**

  collates and interrogates national and international data and policy developments to inform NTU-wide academic direction. Academic Planning is also responsible for the coordination and further improvement of NTU Schools' academic planning cycle and identifies challenges and opportunities both in the external environment and within academic plans.

- **Organisational Development**

  provides a responsive staff development service to the University. This includes:
  - supporting colleagues in identifying learning and development needs and considering effective means of meeting these;
  - formulating and delivering staff development events;
  - creating strategy and policy in support of learning and development.

- **Doctoral School**

  is responsible for students undertaking research degrees and taught doctorates. The School provides services and support that stimulates and

secure high quality and successful outcomes (see QH Section 11 for full details).

- **Governance and Legal Services**
  is responsible for servicing the Academic Board.
- **Libraries and Learning Resources**
  provides and develops the resources that support learning: it is also responsible for the co-ordination of access to services for students to extend their study skills e.g. digital literacy, dyslexia support and in-sessional English language support.

## 17. Features of Framework

| Features of the University's framework | |
|---|---|
| **External** | Office for Students (OfS) |
| | QAA |
| | PSRBs |
| | Employers |
| | External examiners |
| | European Union standards and guidelines |
| **University structures and processes** | Academic Board/ASQC/URDC/VSSC/EEAP/DSC/CPSC/X-SASQC, Task and Finish Groups |
| | Development and Approval Groups |
| | CADQ/Academic Registry/Strategic Planning and Change/OD/Doctoral School/LLR/Student Support Services/Information Systems |
| | External examiners |
| | Periodic School Review/Periodic Collaborative Review |
| **School structures processes and roles** | SASQCs |
| | School Standards and Quality Managers |
| | School Quality and Enhancement Plans |
| | External examiners, PSRB, stakeholder inputs |
| | Analysis of student feedback |
| | Collaborative provision monitoring |
| | Data analysis |
| **Course structures and procedures** | Student evaluation |
| | Periodic Course Review |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Interim course reports and development plans |
| | Course committee / team meetings |
| | External examiner input |
| **Module analysis and evaluation** | Student evaluation (EvaSys) |
| | Module leader analysis |
| | Module team review and development |
| **Student involvement** | Trained student representatives |
| | Staff / student meetings |
| | School Forums |
| | Course committees |
| | Questionnaires / surveys |
| | Focus groups |
| | Student representation on PSR panels (and on DAGs) |

**Policy owner**

| CADQ |
| --- |

**Change history**

| Version: | Approval date: | Implementation date: | Nature of significant revisions: |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sept 2016 | 30.09.16 | 01.10.16 | Changes to Academic Board and ASQC constitution<br>Addition of Data Sub-committee of ASQC constitution and terms of reference<br>Change of title of the School-based Collaborative Provision Sub-committee to Collaborations and Partnerships Sub-committee<br>Inclusion of Academic Appeals Sub-committee constitution and terms of reference<br>Addition of quorate definition and requirement to nominate an alternate member for ASQC and its sub-committees<br>Revised terms of reference for SASQC |
| Sept 2017 | 12.09.17 | 01.10.17 | Changes to Academic Board, Data Sub-committee and URDC terms of reference and inclusion of responsibilities of StEAR<br>Changes to ASQC, Data Sub-committee, URDC, StEAR and X-SASQC membership<br>SASQC terms of reference update to include ensuring University requirements in relation to School-based collaborative provision are fulfilled<br>Removal of College Research Committees from URC terms of reference |
| Sept 2018 | 12.09.18 | 01.10.18 | Update to StEAR membership and ASQC terms of reference and membership<br>Addition of School Marketing Manager to membership of SASQC |

**Equality Impact Assessment**

| Version: | EIA date: | Completed by: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sept 2017 | 01.10.18 | CADQ |