



# **Academic Quality Framework**

## **Faculty Board Terms of Reference**

**Approved by University  
Programmes Board**

**24 May 2022**

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A Faculty Board is a sub-committee of the University Programmes Board. Faculty Board shall have responsibility for supporting and monitoring the implementation of University academic policies, the Education Model and the Quality Framework across the Schools and Programmes within the Faculty.

### 1. Responsibilities

1.1 Each Faculty Board has the following responsibilities:

#### Programme Portfolio Oversight

- a. Maintain oversight of the programmes (taught and research) delivered within the Faculty and programme provision statistics (number of programmes, number of students, NFQ levels, modes of delivery (e.g. part-time, full-time, blended, on-line), award type);

#### Student Profile and Performance Oversight

- b. Annually review student data and profile trends across the Faculty, including but not limited to:
  - i. Registrations;
  - ii. Progression and retention rates;
  - iii. Completion and graduation statistics;
  - iv. Diversity;
  - v. International participation.

## Student Experience Oversight

- c. Oversee student engagement and the student experience for programmes in the Faculty and make recommendations to Discipline Programmes Boards, Schools and University Professional Services in this regard;

## Assessment Oversight

- d. Approve external examiners for each taught programme within the Faculty, and submit the names of approved external examiners to the University Programmes Board for noting;
- e. Approve the nomination of all examiners, including external examiners and transfer / confirmation examiners for research students;
- f. Approve assessment results and submit a report on the major awards recommended to Academic Council and non-major awards recommended to the University Programmes Board;
- g. Oversee the implementation of the University's academic regulations, policies and procedures in the Faculty and report to the Academic Regulations, Policies & Procedures Oversight Committee of any matters in this regard;

## Implementation of Validations and Reviews

- h. Recommend members of programme review panels to the Academic Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee ([Programme Validation Process](#));
- i. Approve members of programme validation and review panels for noting at the University Programmes Board and the Academic Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee respectively ([Programme Validation Process](#));

- j. Approve documentation to be submitted by the Faculty and its Schools under the procedures for [Programme Validation](#), [Programme Review](#), [School Review](#) and [Faculty review](#);
- k. Consider validation and review panel reports, responses to such reports including revised documentation and submit responses to the relevant Academic Council committee in a timely fashion;
- l. Approve Type 2 amendments to programmes within the Faculty and endorse Type 3 amendments and submit to the University Programmes Board for approval, as per the [Making Changes to Programmes & Modules Process](#).
- m. Oversee module amendments approved by the Schools and ensure adherence to University policies, as per the [Making Changes to Programmes & Modules Process](#)

### Quality Framework Implementation

- n. Approve [Programme Proposal Forms](#) for programmes that are less than 30 ECTS credits and endorse proposals for programmes of 30 ECTS credits or greater and submit to the University Programmes Board for approval.
- o. Review draft policies and procedures issued by Academic Affairs, Academic Council or any of the sub-committees of Academic Council and provide considered feedback;
- p. Oversee the implementation of the University Quality Framework and the Education Model within the Faculty and report to the Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee of any matters in this regard;
- q. Monitor the functioning of all Discipline Programmes Boards for which it is responsible;
- r. Monitor and ensure the implementation of the Discipline Programmes Boards' Quality Enhancement Plans across the Faculty, as per the [Annual Quality Enhancement Process](#);

- s. Consider reports from each Discipline Programmes Board and identify common trends and issues that require further consideration by Heads of School or the University Programmes Board or other Academic Council sub-committees;
- t. Develop and continually update the Faculty Quality Enhancement Plan and oversee the implementation of actions therein, as per the [Annual Quality Enhancement Process](#);
- u. Provide a summary report on the issues, trends and actions that need to be addressed in the University Quality Enhancement Plan to the University Programmes Board, as per the [Annual Quality Enhancement Process](#);

### Other

- v. Carry out such other functions as are considered appropriate subject to the approval of the University Programmes Board.

## 2. Membership

2.1 The membership of each Faculty Board shall comprise:

- Faculty Dean (Chairperson) (ex-officio)
- Faculty Vice-Dean for Education (ex-officio)
- Faculty Vice-Dean for Research & Innovation (ex-officio)
- Faculty Vice-Dean for Engagement & Partnerships (ex-officio)
- Operations Lead (ex-officio)
- Head of School from each School within the Faculty (ex-officio)
- Discipline Leads from each School within the Faculty (ex-officio)
- Two academic staff members of any grade excluding HPAL, SL2 and SL3 grade from each School (elected)
- One representative of the Technical staff within the Faculty (elected)
- One representative of the Administrative staff within the Faculty (elected)
- Six student members (nominated)

- One Academic Affairs member (nominated)
  - One Library Services member (nominated)
- 2.2 The Academic Affairs representative will advise the Board in relation to the Education Model, Quality Framework and academic policies.
- 2.3 With the approval of the University Programmes Board up to two additional members may be co-opted and in addition other persons may be invited to attend by the Chairperson as considered appropriate. To propose new members to Faculty Board, the Chairperson should write to the Chairperson of the University Programmes Board with the names of the proposed additional members and a rationale for their membership.
- 2.4 The membership of Faculty Boards will be at least 40% gender balanced.

### 3. Representatives

- 3.1 It is expected that the representatives shall attend all meetings and convey the views of their colleagues in relation to all relevant matters raised. The representative will also ensure their colleagues are aware of any documents circulated for consultation.
- 3.2 Staff representatives will be elected through the agreed election process (see Appendix A).
- 3.3 The student representatives will be nominated by the Students' Union in accordance with its own procedures.
- 3.4 Other members are either ex-officio or nominated by the relevant Head of Function.

## 4. Term of Office

- 4.1 The term of office of the elected staff members (academic, technician and administrative) of Faculty Board shall not exceed 3 years and a member may not serve more than two consecutive terms of office.
- 4.2 Elected representative vacancies will be filled through the agreed election process (see Appendix A).

## 5. Removal or Disqualification

- 5.1 An elected or nominated member of Faculty Board who has been absent from three consecutive meetings, unless such absence has been approved by the Chairperson in advance, shall be deemed to have resigned from Faculty Board.
- 5.2 Where an elected or nominated member is absent for two consecutive meetings without explanation, the secretariat will communicate this to the member outlining consequential actions if the member misses the next meeting. If no satisfactory written explanation is received and the member does not attend the next meeting, this outcome will be communicated to the next Faculty Board meeting for removal of the member, with this vacancy filled in line with approved Faculty Board regulations and procedures. The replacement will fill this vacancy for the unexpired term of office remaining.



## 6. Resignation

- 6.1 An elected member of Faculty Board may at any time resign from membership of Faculty Board by written communication to the Chairperson, and the resignation shall take effect from the date of receipt of such communication.

## 7. Faculty Board Meetings

### Chairperson

- 7.1 The Faculty Dean will be the Chairperson of Faculty Board.
- 7.2 If and so long as the Chairperson is not present, meetings of Faculty Board will be chaired by the Vice-Dean for Education. If both the Faculty Dean and the Vice-Dean for Education are not able to attend a meeting of Faculty Board, the Dean will select a member of Faculty Board to chair the meeting.

### Secretariat

- 7.3 The secretariat will be provided by Faculty Office.

### Quorum

- 7.4 The quorum for all Faculty Board meetings shall be 50% of the complete membership plus one. Where the complete membership constitutes an odd number the quorum shall be 50% of the membership rounded up to the next whole number.
- 7.5 Faculty Board may hold or continue a meeting by the use of any means of communication by which all the members can hear and be heard at the same time (in this document referred to as an “online meeting”):
- A member of Faculty Board who participates in an online meeting is taken for all purposes to have been present at the meeting.

- A duly convened meeting of Faculty Board at which a quorum is present shall be competent to exercise all or any of the authorities, power and discretions vested in or exercisable by Faculty Board.

### Frequency of Meetings

- 7.6 Each Faculty Board shall hold at least two meetings per semester and such and so many additional meetings as may be necessary, as determined by the Chairperson, for the due fulfilment of its functions.

### Notice and Convening of Meetings

- 7.7 The dates of Faculty Board meetings should be determined by the Chairperson and published at the start of the Academic Year and aligned to the document submission dates of Academic Council and its committees.
- 7.8 Additional meetings of Faculty Board shall be summoned by the Secretariat of Faculty Board at the request of the Chairperson of Faculty Board.
- 7.9 The Secretariat to Faculty Board shall ensure that all members receive information and papers in a timely manner to enable full and proper consideration to be given to the issues.
- 7.10 Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date together with an agenda shall be forwarded to each member of Faculty Board electronically, and any other person required to attend, not less than five working days before the date of the meeting. Supporting papers shall be sent, or made available electronically, to Faculty Board members and to other attendees as appropriate, at the same time.

### Attendance at Meetings

- 7.11 Only members of Faculty Boards have the right to attend Faculty Board meetings. Other individuals from the University and external advisers may be

invited to attend, by the Chairperson, for all or part of any meeting, as and when appropriate.

- 7.12 Attendances shall be recorded as Present, Apologies (apology furnished in advance or at the meeting) or Absent (no apology furnished).
- 7.13 If a member cannot attend a meeting of Faculty Board, this should be communicated to the Secretariat in advance of the meeting, or alternatively it can be communicated to the Chairperson at the beginning of the meeting.

### Agenda Items

- 7.14 The agenda shall contain details of the matters to be put before the meeting for discussion.
- 7.15 Any member of Faculty Board may request a matter be placed on the agenda for discussion provided it is conveyed to the Secretariat in writing not less than ten working days in advance of the meeting to which it refers (not including the date of the meeting) and the matter falls within the terms of reference of Faculty Board. Such matters shall be considered by the Chairperson as to their appropriateness for inclusion on the agenda.
- 7.16 Any matter which has been accepted for discussion in accordance with the provision of these Terms of Reference shall be placed before the meeting by the Chairperson in the order in which it appears on the agenda.
- 7.17 The inclusion of the term “Any Other Business” (AOB) on the agenda shall be used by the Chairperson only to inform the meeting of any other items which are germane to the matters already discussed and for the elucidation of any other items of a factual or relevant nature. The Chairperson may permit a member to raise a matter under AOB provided this item has already been raised with the Chairperson prior to the meeting and the Chairperson has decided it was appropriate to bring it to the attention of Faculty Board members for the consideration under AOB.
- 7.18 Approved agenda items must be submitted in the correct format to the Secretariat ten working days before the date of the Faculty Board meeting to facilitate the timely distribution of papers to members.

- 7.19 The Chairperson has the delegated authority of Faculty Board to remove an item from the Agenda if it is not received in time to allow members due consideration of the matter or to a suitable standard.

### Proceedings at Meetings

- 7.20 Members who wish to speak at any meeting shall make their address to the meeting through and at the request of the Chairperson.
- 7.21 The first business of each meeting shall be the reading and approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting which, if approved, shall be signed by the Chairperson as proof of the accuracy thereof. The secretariat shall minute the decisions and resolutions of all meetings of Faculty Board, including recording the names of those present and in attendance.
- 7.22 The Minutes of the meeting shall be drawn up and approved at the next meeting of Faculty Board. No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy or where the Chairperson considers discussion appropriate.
- 7.23 Any amendment to the Minutes shall be recoded and agreed by Faculty Board at the next meeting. The Minutes of Faculty Board meetings shall be circulated to all members of Faculty Board.
- 7.24 Every question at a meeting of Faculty Board shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members present and voting on the question, and in the case of an equal division of votes, the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.
- 7.25 Any member of Faculty Board may, at any time during a meeting and without notice, raise a point of order. The Chairperson's ruling on the acceptability on the point of order shall be subject to a vote of the meeting if called for by the member raising the point of order.

### Duration of Meetings

- 7.26 Each meeting of Academic Board shall continue until such time as the business to be conducted thereat shall have been satisfactory dealt with.
- 7.27 In cases of extreme time pressure, the Chairperson may, at their discretion reasonably exercise the following:

- Either curtail discussion of any motion or other matter before the meeting and put the motion or matter before the meeting for a vote, or
- Adjourn agenda items (other than Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising therefrom) to a subsequent meeting. This may be either a scheduled meeting or at an extraordinary meeting convened specially to consider them.

7.28 The Chairperson's ruling shall be final in regard of either alternative.

### Procedures for obtaining decisions between meetings

- 7.29 In accordance with subparagraphs 7.30, 7.31 and 7.32 below, the Chairperson of Faculty Board, has the delegated authority of Faculty Board to deal with matters that in their opinion, are urgent and cannot wait until the next meeting of Faculty Board and are certified in writing. If the Chairperson is unavailable to act for any reason, the Vice-Dean for Education shall have the same powers and this procedure shall be read accordingly.
- 7.30 In all situations, the Chairperson shall endeavour to convene a quorate meeting, to consider urgent matters that arise between meetings and shall only utilise this procedure as a final option having made every effort to hold a quorate meeting.
- 7.31 In seeking Chairperson's action, the person making the request shall in all cases prepare a written report. The report shall be in accordance with the same procedures and shall require the same clearances from other parties with an interest in the issues as if the report was to be submitted to a meeting of Faculty Board. The report must specify the reason(s) for the urgency and the reason(s) why the matter cannot wait until the next meeting of Faculty Board
- 7.32 When submitted, the Chairperson shall, if practicable, also seek the views of the members of Faculty Board.
- 7.33 In respect of any decision taken by the Chairperson under this procedure, the Chairperson shall record their decision in writing and shall also certify in writing that in their opinion the issue is urgent and cannot wait until the next meeting of Faculty Board.

- 7.34 The Chairperson shall report every decision taken under this procedure in writing to the next meeting of Faculty Board for noting.

## 8. Reporting and Communication

- 8.1 The Faculty Dean, as Chairperson, shall be responsible for reporting the decisions and views of Faculty Board to the University Programmes Board and/or other Academic Council sub-committees, as appropriate.
- 8.2 Minutes shall be recorded and, when approved, submitted to the University Programmes Board.
- 8.3 Approved minutes shall also be available on the University intranet.

### Committees

- 8.4 Each Faculty Board shall have a sub-committee called the [Academic Quality Enhancement Committee](#) which shall undertake, on behalf of the Faculty Board, the Board's responsibilities associated with the Quality Framework.
- 8.5 Each Faculty Board may establish other sub-committees subject to the approval of the University Programmes Board or at the request of the University Programmes Board. To propose a new sub-committee, the Chairperson should write to the Chairperson of the University Programmes Board with the draft Terms of Reference, and a rationale for the establishment, of the new sub-committee.
- 8.6 Faculty Board may establish working groups at any time to undertake specific tasks on behalf of the Board. The establishment of working groups does not require the approval of the University Programmes Board.
- 8.7 Faculty Board may invite individuals from outside the University to become members of sub-committees subject to the approval of the University Programmes Board. To propose external members of sub-committees, the Chairperson should write to the Chairperson of the University Programmes

Board with the names of the proposed external members and a rationale for their membership.

- 8.8 Faculty Board sub-committees will normally be chaired by a member of Faculty Board.

## 9. APPENDIX A

### Election Process

Members of staff will be appointed using an election process whereby each member of staff will have the opportunity to be nominated and elected in one constituency only.

### School Academic Staff Representative

There will be two academic staff members elected from each School in the Faculty and eligibility to vote for the academic staff representatives shall be confined to members of the academic staff at the following grades: hourly-paid assistant lecturer (HPAL); assistant lecturer (AL); lecturer and senior lecturer 1 (SL1) grades. For the purposes of this election, academic staff shall be eligible to vote and to be nominated for election in the School in which they are based at the time of the election.

### Technician and Administrative Staff Representatives

There will be one administrative staff member and one technical staff member elected to sit on Faculty Board. Members of staff in the relevant categories within a Faculty are eligible to vote for these representative Faculty Board members.

## Returning Officer

The Returning Officer shall be the Assistant Head of Academic Affairs (Operations) and may authorise any person to exercise designated functions on their behalf.

## Nominations

A call for nominations shall be circulated at least two weeks before the election date. Nominations shall be made on the [Nomination Paper](#) available from Academic Affairs and submitted to the Returning Officer or nominee. The Returning Officer shall rule on the validity of each Nomination Paper and may rule that it is invalid if, but only if, it is not in accordance with the eligibility criteria above.

Every person in respect of whom a Nomination Paper has been determined to be valid and whose candidature has not been withdrawn, shall stand validly nominated as a candidate.

In the event that only two candidates are validly nominated, the Returning Officer shall declare such candidates elected.

## Poll

A poll will be conducted if more than two candidates are validly nominated in respect of a School (academic representatives) or a Faculty (administrative, technician) as appropriate. Voting shall be by secret ballot and on the basis of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote. Votes shall be counted by the Returning Officer or nominee in accordance with arrangement made by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall give due notice of these arrangements to the electorate.