

DOCUMENT DETAILS

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Applicability	Students		Staff
	Governors		Other
Summary	This confirms the Governance Framework which assures regulatory compliance with the Office for Students Conditions of Registration and enhances the standards and quality for HE provision.		

DOCUMENT CONSULTATION & APPROVAL

Consultation person / body	Date passed
NA	

Approval body	Date approved
HEAB	Oct 24
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IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A significant negative impact has been identified in the following area and a full impact assessment / risk assessment is available.

Equality & diversity	No
GDPR	No
Health & safety	No
Safeguarding	No

Friendly version of policy available	No
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POLICY CHANGES

Key updates	Impact	Section reference
2024 Update Job titles		
2024 Update Quality and Performance Centre Reviews to Business Reviews Removal of the HE Curriculum Group as part of the Governance Framework following the completion of validation activity in 2023-24 and integration of HE monitoring into Business Reviews	NA NA	2
2025- No amendments required	NA	NA

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1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1 Nottingham College's Higher Education (HE) Academic Governance Framework sets out process and procedure for monitoring compliance of the Office for Students Conditions of Registration and assuring and enhancing the standards and quality of provision. It is designed to offer an efficient and robust committee structure, which has student involvement and their learning experience at its center.
- 1.2 The Board of Corporation and Chief Executive Officer have oversight of the higher education provision at Nottingham College and consider the Office for Students Conditions of Registration and maintenance of academic standards for HE based on reports and recommendations from the Senior Leadership Team.
- 1.3 The Senior Leadership Team report to the Governing Body updates regarding the Office for Students Conditions of Registration and provisions from discussions and recommendations made at Academic Board.
- 1.4 **An Academic Board** is chaired by an Executive Leadership Team representative or by delegation to the Assistant Principal Higher Education. Members include Vice Principal Innovation and Improvement, Quality Manager HE and Adult, Assistant Principal Higher Education, Assistant Principals with Higher Education responsibility, Director of Finance (or nominee), Director of MIS and IT (or nominee), Vice Principal Curriculum and Student Support (or nominee), Vice Principal Marketing and Student Journey (or nominee) and Student representatives. The Academic Board leads on the monitoring of compliance in relation to the Office for Students Conditions of Registration and strategic direction of higher education within Nottingham College, and reports into the Executive Leadership Team who inform and update the Board of Corporation, and other Board committees where relevant through the Learning and Quality Committee (1.13).
- 1.5 **Business Reviews** are led by the College Quality Assurance team. This group discuss and communicate operational activity and decisions, which are then cascaded to curriculum teams. Participation in this process includes Assistant Principals that operationally manage higher education delivery and quality.
- 1.6 **Course Committees** are **jointly** chaired by Higher Education Course Leaders and by Assistant Principals, with a strong emphasis on student voice, external reviews, scholarship, and operational matters to resolve concerns.
- 1.7 **Centre Team Meetings** are operational meetings that deal with the specific running of the teams. As such, the Head of Faculty will set a relevant agenda.
- 1.8 **Examination Boards** are chaired by the Assistant Principal Higher Education and are the formal process by which student outcomes are confirmed and ensure that marks and classifications are awarded fairly and consistently in accordance with the Academic Regulations.
- 1.9 **An Ethics Committee** is chaired by the Assistant Principal Higher Education and is attended by Assistant Principals to scrutinize proposals for primary research by students and staff in accordance with discipline specific ethical guidelines; it reports overall to Academic Board.
- 1.10 **An Academic Misconduct Committee** is chaired by the Assistant Principal Higher Education and attended by relevant Course Leaders and other relevant staff members, to decide to uphold alleged individual cases on behalf of students before reporting decisions into HE Examination Boards.

- 1.11 **An Extenuating Circumstances Committee** is chaired by the Assistant Principal Higher Education and attended by relevant Course Leaders and Heads of Faculty as well as any other staff who are invited with just reason. This group meets to consider cases from students for special consideration where circumstances have adversely affected their ability to complete assessments.
- 1.12 **The Learning and Quality Committee** is a corporation sub-committee and the main college committee attended by Executive leadership and Governors providing oversight of Higher Education.
- 1.13 Other important features of the College's Higher Education Framework include:
- An annual reporting cycle at course and College level with student representation and student voice. Reports are submitted to the Assistant Principal Higher Education and Director of Quality who prepare overviews and action plans.
 - The Board of Corporation and Chief Executive Officer approve an annual HE report and action plan.
 - A three-to-five-year re-approval process through Partner Higher Education Institutions and other awarding bodies to consider the currency and employer need and student market need for courses. For new courses, there is a rigorous internal approval process. A business case is submitted for consideration by the appropriate Assistant Principal to the Academic Board who ratify agreement before commencing of formal development.

2. THE ACADEMIC BOARD (AB)

- 2.1 Academic Board has responsibility for the strategic monitoring and development of higher education, including oversight of the college's regulatory responsibilities to the Office for Students, the Designated Data Body, and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator and the standards, quality, and enhancement of HE provision within the College. Responsibilities include the development of learning and teaching, scholarship, standards, quality, student experiences, and business cases for new courses, maintaining academic standards, and informing the Chief Executive Officer, the Senior Leadership Team, and the Board of Corporation.
- 2.2 Subject to the overall responsibility of the Board of Corporation and the Chief Executive Officer, the Academic Board is responsible for:
- Monitoring regulatory requirements and responsibilities for the Office for Students Conditions of Registration.
 - Policy issues relating to scholarship, learning, teaching, and courses at the College, including criteria for the admission of students and terms and conditions.
 - Policies and procedures for assessment of the academic performance and behaviour of students.
 - Content and offer of curricula.
 - Academic standards and the monitoring and review of courses.
 - Agreements with validating and accrediting bodies, including professional institutions.
 - Advising on such other matters as the Board of Governors or the Chief Executive Officer may refer to the Academic Board.
- 2.3 The Executive Leadership member with responsibility for Higher Education chairs the Academic Board, with membership determined by the Academic Board, subject to approval from the Board of Corporation and Chief Executive Officer.
- 2.4 The Academic Board meets 3 times per academic year, or with exception when deemed necessary to review progress, present findings, recommendations and approvals to the

Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Corporation.

2.5 Academic Board membership:

- Vice Principal Innovation and Improvement (Chair)
- Assistant Principal Higher Education
- Quality Manager HE and Adult
- Assistant Principals with Higher Education responsibility
- Director of Finance (or nominee)
- Director of MIS and IT (or nominee)
- Vice Principal Curriculum and Student Support (or nominee)
- Vice Principal Marketing and Student Journey (or nominee)
- Executive Director of Employer Services (Optional)
- Deputy Principal Curriculum Quality and Student Experience (Optional)
- HE Business Manager
- Assistant Principal Apprenticeships (Optional)
- Director of Estates (Optional)
- Director of Bids, Projects, and Planning (Optional)
- Minute secretary
- Student representatives

3. BUSINESS REVIEWS

3.1 The Academic Board delegates powers for setting, maintaining, and assuring standards and quality of higher education courses to the Assistant Principals with responsibility for Higher Education courses.

3.2 Commitment to quality and standards is an integral aspect in the delivery of the college strategic aims and objectives. These objectives consider the external environment in which the college operates and defines the processes needed to ensure the achievement of these objectives. To achieve our objectives all quality systems and processes are embedded into the day-to-day functions of the college and clearly modelled and supported by managers and leaders.

3.3 College policies are set to articulate the strategy and framework to ensure procedures and processes operate consistently and effectively. Procedures are regularly monitored and evaluated to identify problems, for which corrective actions are implemented and they themselves are monitored and reviewed. Continual improvement is achieved by raising standards as performance targets are reached, reviewing objectives accordingly and benchmarking college performance against the strongest performing college in the country.

3.4 Nottingham College defines quality as the student journey and student experience, student achievement, student enjoyment and satisfaction, student progress (distanced travelled from starting point) student destinations, excellence in teaching, learning and assessment and stakeholder satisfaction.

3.5 Centre Accountability Benchmarks are the key internal drivers to achieve our ambition of outstanding student experience and outcomes. Closely monitored by the quality team and senior leaders, performance indicators are applied to every facet of the college's work to ensure an unrelenting focus on high quality teaching, learning and assessment and adding value to student outcomes and the student experience.

3.6 Curriculum area provision that falls below the 'good or outstanding' benchmark criteria enter a cycle of support and challenge based on risk. Led by Assistant Principals and

senior leaders, a forensic look at performance mapped against the accountability benchmarks.

3.7 Quality assurance measures are the practical procedures and systems that underpin the accountability framework and are fundamental in the achievement of high standards, they include:

- Self-assessment and quality improvement planning.
- Assessment boards and predicted achievement.
- Teaching, learning and assessment reviews.
- Student voice boards.
- Programme approval boards.
- Key performance indicators.
- Curriculum audits by internal and external stakeholders.
- Cross College Verification Groups.
- Student, stakeholder and employer feedback and surveys.

3.8 The key external drivers and processes fundamental to the quality framework include:

- The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).
- Requirements of relevant qualifications awarding bodies.
- External audit outcomes.
- ETF Professional Teaching Standards.
- Advanced HE PSF for teaching and supporting learning in HE.
- Requirements of existing or planned external quality awards.
- The Office for Students Performance Indicators and B Conditions.

3.9 To ensure understanding amongst staff, the strategy needs to be simple and easy to understand. Whilst there are measures and procedures in place to secure and maintain quality, three key drivers for improvement apply:

- The experience at Nottingham College is excellent for all.
- An innovative curriculum that supports all to secure a lifetime of sustained employment.
- All students make excellent progress and achieve their ambitions.

3.10 The powers delegated by the Academic Board to Assistant Principals are as follows:

- To advise the Academic Board on policy relating to the management, enhancement, and quality of HE courses focusing on academic standards, currency and health of all courses including characteristic statements and subject benchmark statements updates.
- To recommend improvements in teaching, learning, assessment, and scholarship on courses.
- To operate and monitor the systems for course development and approval of these.
- To ensure course review through committees is effective and address issues or raise concerns.
- To review the annual course review summative reports, and to raise issues relating to academic standards, quality matters, and resources.
- To monitor the progress of courses in the implementation of their rolling action plans and raise any areas of concern or lack of progress.
- Nomination of external examiners for validated courses.
- To work with student representatives in the development of systems to ensure the gathering, analysis, evaluation, and productive use of student evaluation of courses and learning and teaching.

3.11 Business Reviews form part of the overall College Quality monitoring and enhancement cycle, and meetings are convened three times per academic year. Participation will be subject to review and ratification by Academic Board, Board of Corporation, and Chief Executive Officer.

3.12 Business Review membership:

- Assistant Principal Higher Education
- Assistant Principals with Higher Education responsibilities
- Others by invite, subject to agenda

4 COURSE COMMITTEES (CC)

4.1 Course Committees are led jointly by the Higher Education Course Leaders and Heads of Faculty and are held three times per academic year. The key focus of the Course Committees is to consider the ongoing health of the course specially focusing on the student experience and are required to dedicate much of the agenda to their input and feedback. Part of the agenda for the Committees are linked to course reporting documents which will be used as a 'working' document to record discussions at actions at the Committees.

4.2 CC membership:

- Head of Faculty and Higher Education Course Leader (Joint Chair)
- Internal Assurance and Standards Manager / Assessment, Quality and Standards Manager
- Course teaching team
- Other staff involved in supporting curriculum team
- Student representatives
- Assistant Principal (optional)
- Assistant Principal Higher Education (optional)

4.3 The main functions include:

Course monitoring and annual reporting: To take responsibility for the annual monitoring and enhancement of courses of study per the College's requirements: with the completion of course reports or alternative reporting document and their action plans, input from students and employer engagement. These are analysed and used to inform academic developments, maintain academic standards and currency and for the purposes of equality and diversity monitoring.

Student assessment: To monitor the effectiveness, appropriateness, and implementation of regulations on student assessment and to make recommendations for changes as appropriate.

External Examining: To receive and analyse in detail external examiners' reports and action points ensuring that they are acted upon and result in quality enhancements.

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs): To monitor the involvement of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies with courses, as appropriate, and ensure action is taken on the reports and recommendations from those bodies.

Progression and attainment gaps: Monitoring of trends in progression and attainment gaps at module and course levels and the consideration of course development addressing any areas identified in relation to Widening Participation (WP) categories.

Course development: To consider and submit proposals for modification to courses to validating collaborates or to consider new courses. Proposals must consider the portfolio of courses at the College, the market and input from students and employers in the proposal.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS) and Sector Recognised Standards (SRS) (validated courses): To receive new and revised Quality Assurance Agency subject benchmark statements and sector recognised standards and to ensure that they are acted upon by the course team to maintain quality and currency. Any changes need to be recorded and sent to the Higher Education Business Manager. The Committee need to consider this review even if no changes are made in their reporting documents.

Public facing documents: to check for accuracy and ensure any changes are made and sent to the Higher Education Business Manager and Marketing team to replace.

5 CENTRE TEAM MEETINGS (CTM)

5.1 The appropriate Head of Faculty chairs team meetings. These are operational meetings that deal with the specific running of the teams. As such, the Head of Faculty will set a relevant agenda.

5.2 CTM Members:

- Assistant Principals (Chair)
- Course Leaders
- Course Teams
- Assistant Principals (optional)
- Other staff/managers by request

6 EXAMINATION BOARD (EB)

6.1 Examination Boards are the formal process by which student outcomes are confirmed and ensure that marks and classifications are awarded fairly and consistently in accordance with the Academic Regulations.

6.2 Examination Boards are convened at the end of the academic year and by exception approximately 2 months later to confirm outcomes for those referred or resubmitting assessments.

6.3 Examination Board Members:

- Assistant Principal Higher Education (Chair)
- HE Administration Team
- Examinations Team representative
- Assistant Principals
- Heads of Faculty
- Teaching Staff
- Quality Team representative
- External Examiners (or reports as required by regulations)
- University Partner representation in accordance with regulations

7 ETHICS COMMITTEE (EC)

7.1 These meetings are chaired by the Assistant Principal Higher Education and offer deliberative advice on individual research proposals for students. The Committee meets twice per year or by exception to ratify decisions that allow primary research to proceed by considering: the purpose of research; its methodologies; and implications for subjects and intended sample of respondents. As such, this committee can determine that research is not permitted on ethical grounds and seek to offer advice on more appropriate forms of

enquiry for students to proceed to undertake necessary activity as part of formal assessments. It is also an opportunity for members to share best approaches and theoretical understanding of research ethics in accordance with sector and discipline specific expectations.

7.2 EC Members:

- Assistant Principal Higher Education (Chair)
- Assistant Principals
- Course Leaders
- Teaching staff

8 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT COMMITTEE (AMC)

8.1 This Committee is chaired by the Assistant Principal Higher Education to hear cases of alleged academic misconduct brought by Course Leaders in accordance with Academic Misconduct and Irregularities Procedure. The panel will determine the extent and severity of allegations and notify HE Examination Boards of its decisions which instruct impact at Boards on the achievement for individual students. The Committee meets three times per year but also by exception if cases require more immediate consideration due to severity or scale.

8.2 AMC Members:

- Assistant Principal Higher Education (Chair)
- Course Leaders
- Other staff by invite or where necessary such as teachers, library support staff and welfare officer.

9 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES COMMITTEE (ECC)

9.1 All applications for special consideration for serious and unforeseen circumstances are brought to this panel who advise Examination Boards on whether cases are upheld or not in accordance with individual cases. The panel will seek consideration of all relevant evidence to make a judgement to perform equitable treatment for all students across HE courses and will notify Examination Boards of its decisions. The Committee meets three times per year but can meet by exception if deemed necessary where circumstances require immediate consideration of student(s) plight.

9.2 ECC Members:

- Assistant Principal Higher Education (Chair)
- Course Leaders
- Other staff pertinent to cases and fair decision making such as pastoral support/ welfare officer, wellbeing team including DSO and teachers where necessary.

Higher Education Academic Governance Framework

N.B. The HE Office retains responsibility for Business Operations and University Centre administration.

