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| **ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**  **TERMS OF REFERENCE: 2025/26**  **RATIFIED BY THE CORPORATION BOARD ON: June 30th, 2025**  **NEXT REVIEW DUE: July 2026** |

1. **CONSTITUTION**
   1. The Corporation Board hereby resolves to establish a Committee of the Corporation Board to be known as the Academic Committee. The Academic Committee has no executive powers, other than those specially delegated in these terms of reference.
2. **PURPOSE**

**Governance Assurance**

* 1. The purpose of the Academic Committee is to provide governance oversight, in matters relating to academic standards and quality, and student experience, relating to the School’s further and higher education provision. The Academic Committee may choose to rely on the work of the Academic Board and FE Academic Committee in forming a view, to be expressed to the Corporation Board, as to the academic standards and quality within the School
  2. The Academic Committee will, as a minimum, review the Annual Report (AR) in relation to the School’s higher education provision and Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) with respect to its further education operation. The Academic Committee will express an opinion as to the adequacy and sufficiency of these documents to the Corporation Board, and will endorse the Academic Board’s Annual Report to the Corporation Board.
  3. The Academic Committee will monitor the School’s progress in:
     1. Aligning the Schools academic activities to the Strategic Plan and key performance outcomes; and
     2. Meeting the targets set out in the School’s Access and participation plan (APP) agreed with the Office for Students (OfS) as a condition of registration
  4. The Academic Committee is authorised by the Corporation Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee and all employees are direct to co-operate with any request made by the Academic Committee. The Academic Board is authorised by the Corporation Board to seek the attendance of outsiders with relevant experience and expertise if it considers necessary.

**Academic Discussion**

2.5 Act as an opportunity for a more expansive discussion on academic issues than might otherwise take place under Corporation Board time constraints.

**Informal Advice**

2.6 Act as a forum for members of the Principalship to discuss ideas with those Governors who come from an academic background prior to determining an appropriate course of action.

1. **MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 The Academic Committee membership consists of the Corporation Board, the Principal, and five independent governors.

3.2. The Academic Committee membership is set out in Appendix 1.

3.3 The Corporation Board will determine the Chair of the Academic Committee.

3.4 Exceptionally, in the event that the Chair is unable to attend a meeting, he/she will nominate a Chair for the meeting.

**4** **ATTENDEES**

4.1 The Academic Committee may invite other persons to attend meetings in order to provide it with a range of expertise or specialist knowledge to enhance the decision-making process. In such cases, the invitee can engage in committee discussion, but will not be permitted to vote.

1. **ATTENDANCE**
   1. It is expected that each member attends a minimum of 75% of meetings and performance will be reported for each member in terms of attendance at the end of each academic year.
2. **QUORUM**

6.1 At least half of all members must be in attendance for a meeting to be quorate. For the avoidance of doubt, one of the governors may be the Principal. In addition, quorum is not established if the Chair (or nominated Chair) is not present.

1. **FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

7.1 The Academic Committee will meet twice a year. Additional meetings may be arranged as required. Meetings will be expected to last no more than 2 hours routinely.

1. **CHANGES TO TERMS OF REFERENCE**

8.1 Changes to the terms of reference excluding temporary changes to the Chair are matters reserved to the Corporation Board.

1. **ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS**
   1. The Chair of the Academic Committee will agree the agenda for each meeting with the Principal and the Head of Governance. The Academic Committee shall be supported administratively by:

* The Vice Principal (Higher Education);
* The Vice Principal (Planning & Strategic Implementation);
* The Vice Principal (Further Education); and
* The Director of HE Quality & Enhancement

9.2 All papers presented to the Academic Committee should be prefaced by a summary of key issues and clear recommendations setting out what is required of the Academic Committee.

1. **ANNUAL CYCLE OF BUSINESS**

10.1 The Academic Committee will develop an annual cycle of business at its last meeting of the academic year. The Academic Committee’s work plans inform the standing agenda items as described within the terms of reference, to ensure that all regulatory and legislative items are adequately reviewed and acted upon.

1. **REPORTING TO THE CORPORATION BOARD**
   1. The Chair of the Academic Committee will provide an annual opinion to the Corporation Board on the effectiveness of the School’s management of academic quality and standard at both further and higher education.
   2. The Chair of the Academic Committee will, where appropriate, highlight to the Corporation Board key issues from each meeting of the Academic Committee outlining key actions taken with regard to the issues, key risks identified and key levels of assurance given.
2. **STATUS OF THE MEETING**

12.1 All Committees of the Corporation Board will meet in private. Matters discussed at the meeting should not be communicated outside the meeting without prior approval of the Chair of the Academic Committee.

1. **DUTIES**

As discussed at July 2022 meeting and which continue now, the Committee will:

* Provide a forum for discussions about HE and FE Academic Governance
* Challenges going forward
* Independence from AUB
* Academic alignment to the Strategic Plan and Key Outcomes

**APPENDIX 1**

**ACADEMIC COMMITTEE BOARD MEMBERS**

Independent Governor Professor Robin Simmons (Chair)

Independent Governor Professor Jane Rapley

Independent Governor Gillian Miller

Independent Governor Kieron Goldsborough

Independent Governor Natalie Brett

Principal Dr Martin Raby

**In attendance:**

Head of Governance Lesley McLaren

VP (Planning & Strategic Implementation) Mike Wheaton

VP (HE) John Waddington

VP (FE) Rob Kane

Director of HE Quality & Enhancement Paul Braine