

Document Title: Terms of Reference for Academic Assurance Committee
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Terms of Reference for the Academic Assurance Committee

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1. Constitution

The Academic Assurance Committee (the “Committee”) was constituted upon the basis of these terms of reference at a full meeting of the Registered Members held on XXXXX in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Architectural Association (Inc.) These terms of reference replace any previous versions.

2. Purpose

The Committee shall be responsible to Council for ensuring that the quality and standards of the academic offer and student learning experience at the School are being monitored, maintained and enhanced.

The Committee is also responsible to Council for ensuring that the requirements of the validating partners, Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), and Office for Students are being fulfilled.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- a) Ensure that student progression and outcomes, are being monitored with trends and concerns identified, and action being taken to address those concerns;
- b) Ensure the external view or assessment of the quality of the education and student experience at the AA is being monitored, and concerns or risks identified, and action taken to address them;
- c) Ensure that student feedback on the quality of education and experience of the School are being monitored with trends and concerns identified, and action being taken to address them;
- d) Ensure external feedback on the quality of the programmes is being obtained from validating partners and external examiners with concerns or risks being identified and action being taken to address them;
- e) Ensure that the requirements of the PSRB, being the Royal Institute for British Architects (RIBA), and Architects Registration Board (ARB), are being adhered to;
- f) Ensure the School is fulfilling the conditions of registration with the Office for Students;

- g) Ensure the School is monitoring developments within higher education or architectural education, identifying any risks or impacts on the School and action is being taken to address those risks or impacts;
- h) Ensure that academic risks relating to research, and ethics are being identified and action taken to address those risks and impacts.

4. Committee Membership

- a) The Council will appoint the members of the Committee and its Chair from time to time as required, upon the recommendation from the Nomination Committee;
- b) The Committee will nominate as required, one of its members to be deputy Chair;
- c) The Committee will have at least three independent members of the Council, and a quorum of least two members;
- d) At least one member [or one of these two members] shall have senior or executive management experience in architectural higher education;
- e) The Committee will normally have at least one member with experience of academic quality assurance,
- f) The Student member of Council will normally be a member of this Committee and if not, a recent or former student will be invited to attend the Committee;
- g) The Committee may appoint non-members of Council to advise on particular specialist areas;
- h) Members of the Committee will not have executive responsibility for the management of the AA, unless an exception is agreed by Council.
- i) Appointments to the Committee will be for three years, renewable at the Council's discretion.

5. Reporting and Authority

- a) The Committee will provide at least an annual report to Council on the fulfilment of its responsibilities, and its assessment of the quality and standards of education offered and the student experience;
- b) The report will be made by the Chair, or other nominated members of the Committee;

6. Meetings

- a) The proceedings and resolutions of meetings of the Committee, including the names of those present and in attendance, will be minuted. Each meeting's minutes will be circulated with the next subsequent meeting's papers for review and approval by the Chair. Once approved, the minutes of each meeting will be kept on file by the Company Secretary for inspection.
- b) The Committee will meet to at least three times per year following the Academic Board meetings.

- c) Before the end of each academic year the Committee Chair, School Registrar and Company Secretary will meet to agree the cycle of business for the forthcoming academic year to ensure alignment with the Academic Board.
- d) Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time, and date together with an agenda of the matters to be discussed at the meeting will be forwarded to each member and any other person required to attend no later than five working days before the date of the meeting. Any supporting papers will be sent to each member of the Committee and to other attendees (as appropriate) at the same time.
- e) The Committee Chair, or whom they delegate, will attend meetings of the Academic Board in an observer capacity.

7. Attendance

The attendees of the Committee will be: -

- School Director
- School Registrar
- Head of Teaching and Learning
- Company Secretary

And such other members of staff required for the conduct of the Committee's business, as reasonably deemed necessary by the Chair of the Committee.

8. General

- a) The Council will ensure that the Committee: -
 - Has access to sufficient resources to carry out its duties, including access to the Company Secretary and senior staff of the AA, as required;
 - Is provided with appropriate and timely training, both in the form of an induction programme for new members and annual training for Council members. The Committee may request specialist training on new or developing areas of responsibility, via the Company Secretary.
- b) The Committee will ensure that it adheres to the governing documents of the AA including the Articles of Association, By-laws, Standings Orders and AA Code of Behavioural Expectations in undertaking its business.
- c) The Committee will consider the provisions of the UK Corporate Governance Code, the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance and the Charity Governance Code and observe applicable laws and regulations including but not limited to relevant portions of the Charities Act 2011 and Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (as may be amended, from time to time).
- d) The Committee will regularly review its own performance and, at least every two years (ideally at the start of each year), review its terms of reference to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness, and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the Council for approval.
- e) The Committee is authorised by the Council to examine any activity within its terms of reference and to obtain, at AA's expense, professional advice as deemed reasonably necessary by the Committee on any matter within its terms of reference. The Committee is authorised to seek any information it requires in order to discharge its responsibilities, from any employee or the School Director as reasonably deemed necessary by the Committee,

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