



Somerset College

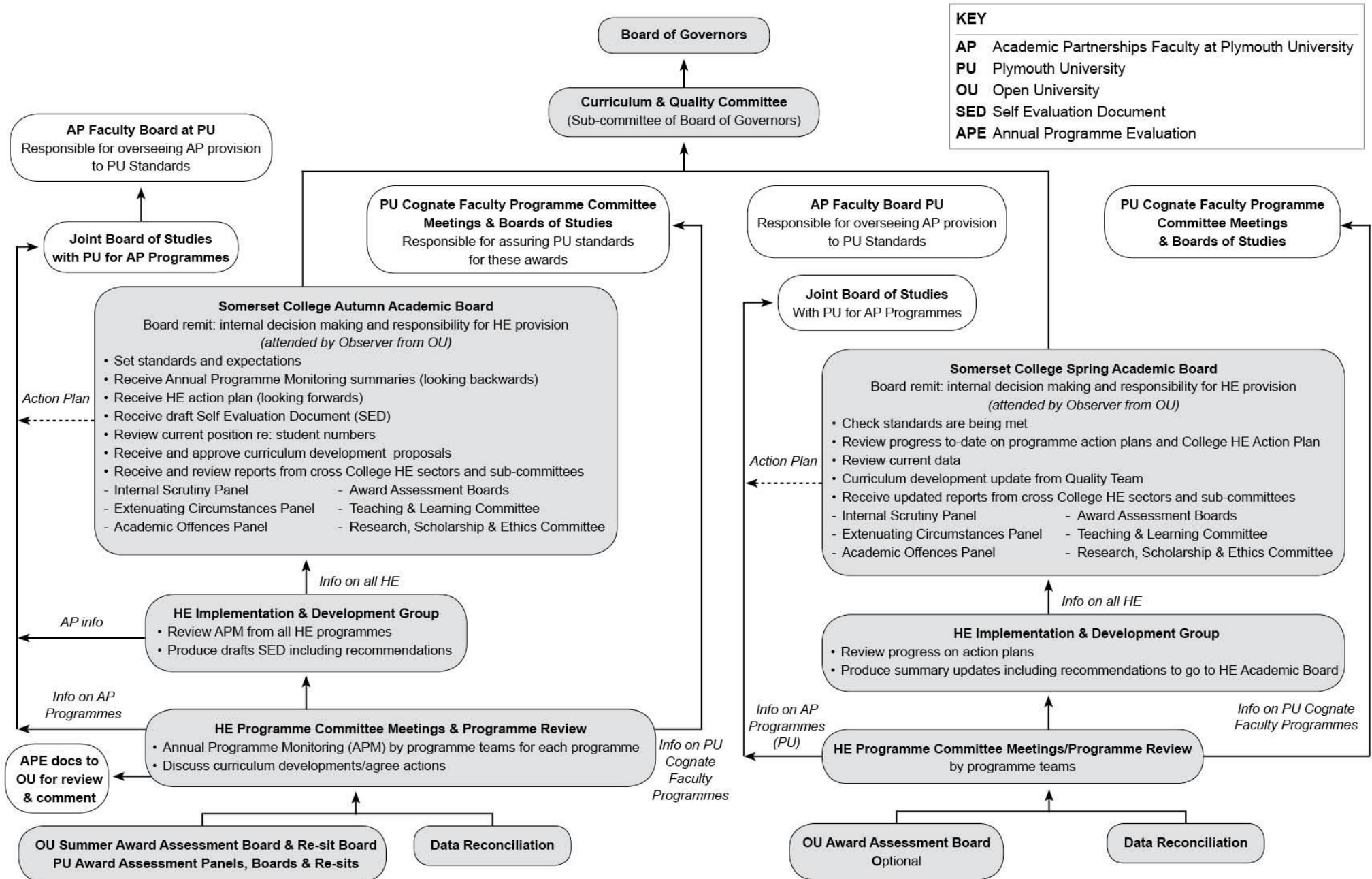
Higher Education Quality Cycle with  
Terms of Reference of the Somerset College  
Academic Board and its sub-committees

Updated following amendments at Academic Board December 2013

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# Somerset College HE Quality Cycle





## Terms of Reference

### ACADEMIC BOARD

(Updated as approved at Autumn Academic Board December 2013)

The Academic Board has responsibility for HE provision at Somerset College. This includes responsibility for internal decision making and for the standards, planning, co-ordination, development and oversight of the HE academic work of the institution; including arrangements for admission, assessment and examination of HE students and the procedures for the expulsion of HE students for academic reasons.

#### Membership

The Constitution of the Academic Board is as follows:

- Chair: Principal /Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality (or a representative from the Senior Leadership Team)
- Director of HE
- Curriculum Directors
- Director of Student Services
- Head of Information and Funding
- HE Quality and Development Manager
- 4 x Academic Staff Representatives (Curriculum Area Managers)

**Minutes:** HE Quality Assurance Administrator

**Frequency:** Each semester, twice a year (additional meetings if required)

**Quoracy:** 40% of the members

#### Powers & Proceedings

The Academic Board may establish such committees as it considers necessary for the purpose of enabling it to carry out its responsibilities. The number of members of any such committee and the terms on which they are to hold and vacate office, shall be determined by the Academic Board and any such committee may include persons who are not members of Academic Board.

Meetings of the Academic Board shall be convened by the Principal/Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality or their representative from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) (or HE Quality and Standards Administrator acting on their behalf).

- The Principal/VP or their representative from the SLT shall be the Chair of the Academic Board.
- The Academic Board may appoint such committees as they think fit, including where appropriate, committees with a membership which includes representatives of the students and may delegate the exercise of some of their functions to a committee.
- The Academic Board may, at any time, disband a committee or revoke the delegation of functions to a committee/working group.

- The Academic Board may make Terms of Reference with respect to the formation, constitution, quorum, frequency and place of meetings of their committees.
- Quorum: Meetings of the Academic Board shall be quorate if 40% or more of the members are present.

If the number of members assembled for a meeting of the Academic Board does not constitute a quorum; the meeting shall not be held. The Chair may call a Special Meeting to be summoned as soon as convenient. Chair's Action is possible in exceptional circumstances and will report to the Board as soon after the event as possible.

- Ordinary meetings of the Board and its Committees shall be held at least once a semester.
- Special meetings for consideration of urgent matters shall be held at the Chair's discretion or following a written request of at least one third of the members.
- The minutes of the Board & Committees shall be sent to the chair for approval and thereafter circulation to members. After ratification at the next Academic Board the minutes will be published on the Portal.

## Functions

Responsibility for:

- Setting and monitoring standards for Higher Education at Somerset College
- the approval and regular review of the effectiveness of all academic procedures including induction, assessment, quality, planning and programme development
- monitoring the quality of HE College provision to include:
  - Performance reports
  - NSS Student Survey
  - Student Perception Questionnaires
  - Complaints/Feedback (formal and informal)
  - Issues raised by the HE student body
- receiving and considering external reports on the College's HE provision from QAA reviewers, Ofsted Inspectors (for teacher training programmes), Awarding Bodies and External Examiners and producing responses to such reports as necessary
- receiving and considering the minutes of, and proposals, recommendations, reports and resolutions from Academic Board sub-committees and Programme Committee Meetings/Curriculum Area Reviews
- approving the College's reviews of the appropriate sections of the UK Quality Code for HE, published by the QAA
- approving all written proposals for new courses and learning programmes prior to development work beginning
- curriculum developments
- advice on and the approval of all significant changes to courses including programme titles, content, delivery, student numbers and method of staffing
- ensuring that External Examiners are replaced (with Awarding Body approval) in accordance with the Academic Regulations and Awarding Body requirements
- receiving, approving and monitoring the HE Quality Improvement Plan
- the approval of procedures for the academic discipline of students
- providing an appeal body for students for academic reasons

## Outcomes

- Approved overall HE Self Evaluation Document for Somerset College annually

**Higher Education Implementation and Development Group**  
**Draft Terms of Reference**  
(to be proposed for approval at Academic Board 2014-15)

**Membership**

Chair: Director of Higher Education  
Higher Education Quality and Development Manager  
Head of Art and Design  
Curriculum Area Manager Social and Professional Studies  
Curriculum Area Manager Computing & Games Technology  
Head of Environmental Technologies  
Curriculum Area Manager Automotive & Engineering  
Curriculum Area Manager Tourism, Hospitality and Business  
Curriculum Area Manager Enterprise & Employer Relations  
Catalyst Project Manager  
HE Advanced Practitioner  
PA to Director of Higher Education – Minutes

Other staff to be invited to attend as required.

**Purpose of the Higher Education Implementation and Development Group**

The Higher Education (HE) Implementation and Development Group is to be an effective sub-group of the Academic Board, focussing on Higher Education provision.

**Key objectives**

1. To implement the HE Strategy
2. To enhance the learning experience for students, ensuring that all HE developments meet student needs
3. Ensure adherence to external and internal HE requirements including taking account of the QAA Quality Code, benchmark statements, awarding body requirements, regulations, policies and procedures

**Functions**

- a) To provide leadership and management for HE
- b) To ensure the implementation of the College's HE Strategy
- c) To plan the curriculum and its development
- d) To ensure the quality of provision to students
- e) To continuously seek to improve student achievement and success
- f) To actively participate in QAA's Higher Education Review process
- g) To ensure the accuracy of all HE public information
- h) To receive and respond to the learner voice, including student surveys (First Impressions, NSS & SPQ)
- i) To monitor progress against the College's Strategies for Access and Student Success (SASS)
- j) To inform the workforce development plan and facilitate relevant staff development for staff teaching and supporting HE provision
- k) To facilitate the sharing of good practice between teams and practitioners
- l) To make recommendations for deliberate strategic enhancement and monitor compliance
- m) To monitor achievement of targets set by Academic Board
- n) To review Annual Programme Monitoring minutes and action plans, Service Area Self Assessment Reports, survey results and data to produce an effective Self Evaluation Document for HE including recommendations to the Academic Board

**Outcomes:**

- Prepare Self Evaluation Document for presentation to Academic Board for its approval

**Programme Committee Meetings/Programme Review  
(including Annual Programme Monitoring/Evaluation)**

- Frequency: Each semester, twice a year (Autumn and Spring)
- Chair: Curriculum Area Manager
- Attendees: Module or unit Tutors, Student Representative(s), Learning Resource Centre representative, Cross College Managers (as required)
- Monitored by: Director of Higher Education
- Coordinated & Minutes by: Curriculum Area Administrator
- Objective: Review of the quality of provision using qualitative/quantitative data, student feedback and External Examiner's feedback.
- Outcomes: Annual Programme Evaluation, annual action plan, review of progress against programme action plan, minutes of meetings
- Follow-up: By Academic Board

### **Award Assessment Board (including Re-sit Boards)**

- Frequency: Twice annually
- Chair: Normally the Director of Higher Education or nominee from the Senior Leadership Team not involved with the assessment of students whose results are being considered
- Attendees: The chair plus Lead Tutors and the Award External Examiner(s)
- Monitored by: Academic Board
- Coordinated & Minutes by: Curriculum Area Administrator
- Objective: Annual confirmation of student results, review of modules and success with report from EE
- Outcomes: Confirmed list of student results signed off as accurate by EE, report by EE, minutes



### **Internal Scrutiny Panel**

- Frequency: As required
- Chair: A College Manager
- Attendees: Pool of panel members to be chosen from attendees of Academic Board, usually to include HE Quality Manager
- Monitored by: Academic Board
- Coordinated by: Quality and Standards Administrator (HE)
- Objective: Ensure quality standards are maintained; Review documentation for any new curriculum developments and report panel's conclusions to the Academic Board to confirm appropriate quality and recommend approval for external dissemination; Carry out reviews as required
- Outcomes: Report on quality of new/amended curriculum documentation with recommendation (red, amber, green); Report on standards of other academic documentation or processes

### **Extenuating Circumstances Panel**

- Frequency: Each semester (more frequently if required)
- Chair: HE Quality Manager or Director of HE
- Attendees: The chair plus two Curriculum Area Managers (or nominees) from any Curriculum Area. Plus, if deemed necessary by the Chair, appropriate academic staff or welfare tutors
- Quoracy: Minimum of 3 people
- Monitored by: Quality and Standards Administrator
- Coordinated & Minutes by: Quality and Standards Administrator
- Objective: Consistency in judgements relating to extenuating circumstances, on-going compilation of “acceptable” and “not acceptable” reasons for extenuating circumstances to help inform future decisions
- Outcomes: Record of decision, addition to list of “acceptable” and “not acceptable” reasons for extenuating circumstances
- Follow-up: By Academic Board

**Panel of Investigation  
(for consideration of alleged Academic Offences)**

- Frequency: As required
- Chair: A member of the Academic Board
- Attendees: The chair plus two members drawn from the Academic Board or curriculum areas who have not taught the student(s) in question
- Monitored by: Academic Board
- Quoracy: 3 panel members in total
- Coordinated & Minutes by: Quality and Standards Administrator (to use 'pool' of possible panel members)
- Paperwork relating to alleged offence to be compiled by: Curriculum Area Administrator & teaching team
- Objective: Consistency and independence in judgements relating to Academic Offences
- Outcomes: Record of decision, addition to central record of such judgements
- Follow-up: Award Assessment Board relevant to the programme and Academic Board

## **Teaching and Learning Committee (FE and HE)**

(Terms of Reference – Amended Revision agreed at Academic Board Dec 2012)

This committee has responsibility for overseeing all matters relating to teaching and learning and its brief is to:-

- Review how the college's teaching and learning strategy is implemented and how good practice is disseminated across the college.
- Develop and coordinate plans for raising the quality of teaching and learning standards across 14-18, Adult and Higher Education.
- Develop links between scholarly activity and the curriculum.
- Review and evaluate the college internal inspection regime and peer referencing activities.
- Review support for staff requiring assistance as the result of unsatisfactory observations and also develop staff to move from 'satisfactory' to 'good', and from 'good' to 'excellent'.
- Support and develop an appropriate academic culture and ethos for Further and Higher Education teaching.
- Measure impact of Teaching and Learning against student attainment / success rates
- Support and review the work of the Advanced Practitioners
- Monitor induction and mentoring activities for those new to their teaching role (ie experienced staff but new to HE delivery)

### **Membership**

Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality - Chair

Core members (for the purposes of quoracy):

HE Quality and Development Manager

FE Quality Manager

Advanced Practitioners

Head of Learning and Technology and Learning Resources

Curriculum Directors

Invitations to also be extended to:

Curriculum Area Managers

**Outcomes:** Report to HE Academic Board in relation to the HE elements and to the Senior Leadership Team in relation to the FE elements of the following:

- Summary of activities undertaken and uptake by staff
- Summary of activities by the Advanced Practitioners and impact on Teaching and Learning
- E-learning and use of VLE
- Progress against Key Performance Indicators in Teaching & Learning Strategy
- Evaluation of activities undertaken
- Plan of activities for the forthcoming year
- Induction plans for new academic and administrative staff
- Summary of outcomes from both FE and HE teaching observations and peer observations

Somerset College is dedicated to furthering knowledge within the institution and within society as a whole. Research and development play a key role in enhancing teaching and learning.

The Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee is responsible for advising the Academic Board on all matters concerning research, scholarship and ethics within the college in relation to HE and to the Senior Leadership Team in relation to FE. This involves developing and maintaining (monitoring) a scholarship ethos across the college, involving support, professional and academic staff.

Activities will include:-

- Encouraging staff to undertake scholarly and research activities which lead to publications, knowledge transfer and the sharing of good practice, e.g. utilising Ernest Boyer's four inter-related aspects of scholarship – discovery, integration, applications and teaching scholarship. Organisation of research events for example conferences for the dissemination of research, and visiting speakers for example from publishing houses or journals
- Setting the criteria for a research proposal and the associated funding
- Establishing, implementing and reviewing ethics procedures and guidelines for research projects involving any participants or human data or material, and to disseminate these as appropriate within the college
- Considering proposals for research activities from staff to ensure they are ethically appropriate
- Monitoring the progress of research to ensure compliance with approved ethics procedures
- Developing and disseminating the research and good research practice
- Supporting participants in carrying out research in the following ways:
  - Making recommendations to support development of research
  - Ensuring that provision of relevant legislation is applied
  - Promoting research integrity and honesty
- Approving funding towards:
  - Doctorate and Masters qualifications prioritised to meet institutional needs within budgetary constraints
  - Action Research based activity related to industry or teaching and learning to enhance knowledge and skills and impact positively on the student experience
  - Research and scholarly activity, that will enable staff to buy themselves out of some of their contracted obligations
- Recommending of a Doctorate/Masters “buddying” scheme.
- Publishing an annual update of scholarship activity across the college.
- Developing, maintaining and retaining an annual college register of research, scholarly activity and publications

**Membership**

Core Members:

Chair:- Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality

Director of HR

HE Quality and Development Manager

FE Quality Assurance Manager

Research and Library Services Manager

Director for Curriculum (HE, International and Adults)

Director for Curriculum (FE and Apprenticeships)

3 Academic Staff Representatives:

- WBL Curriculum Representative
- FE Curriculum Representative
- HE Curriculum Representative

**Outcomes:** – report to Academic Board for HE and Senior Leadership Team for FE to include:

- Record of highest level qualifications held by staff teaching HE programmes and any changes from the previous year
- Record of membership of the Higher Education Academy
- Record of research and scholarly activity undertaken across the College (noting whether linked to FE or HE)
- Publications to which staff have contributed
- Conferences at which staff have actively participated
- Impact of the above on Teaching and Learning
- Record of funding bids submitted and successful bids, awards and income streams achieved