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| **CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2023** |
| **Present (via Zoom):** |  |
| Professor Jeff Bale (Chair)Angela Foulkes (Items 1-9, & 10.1) | Professor Julietta PatnickProfessor Keith Ridgeway (from item 6) |
| **Apologies:** |  |
| Dr Claire Ketnor |
| **In attendance:**Professor Doug Cleaver, Director of the Doctoral School Leopold Green, Head of Academic Quality & Standards Professor Sir Chris Husbands, Vice-Chancellor Dan Lally, Interim Director of Business Engagement, Skills, and Employability Ben Machin, Governance Senior Adviser (Secretary)Ann Norton, Associate Dean (Business and Enterprise) - College of Business, Technology & EngineeringRuth Thei, Head of Governance and Sector RegulationAlison Wells, Director of Academic Services | **Agenda items**Item 6AllAllItem 8AllItem 7AllAllItems 1-7, & 10.1 |
| **Minute Ref** | **Item of Business** |  | **Paper ref** |
| AAC/2023-03-16/1 | **OPENING OF THE MEETING** |  | Verbal |
| 1.1 | In opening the meeting, the Chair:* Noted the apologies received;
* Updated members on Dr Ishan Cader’s resignation and recorded thanks for his contributions to the work of the Committee;
* Congratulated Professor Keith Ridgeway on his appointment to the government’s Council for Science and Technology.
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| AAC/2023-03-16/2 | **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** |  | Verbal |
| 2.1 | The Vice-Chancellor declared an interest in item 8.2 as chair of the Teaching Excellence Framework.  |
| AAC/2023-03-16/3 | **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** |  AAC/2022-11-10/M |
| 3.1 | The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2022 were **approved** as a correct record. |
| AAC/2023-03-16/4 | **MATTERS ARISING / ACTION TRACKER** | Verbal |
| 4.1 | There were no identified matters arising or outstanding actions to report. |
| AAC/2023-03-16/5 | **ACADEMIC STANDING PANEL: ASSESSMENT SCALING AND EXCEPTIONS FOR THE 2021/22 ACADEMIC YEAR** | AAC/2023-03-16/10 |
| 5.1 | In **receiving** the report on cases that had been reviewed by the Academic Standing Panel/University Central Panel in the 2021/22 academic year, the Committee:* received assurances of the low level of scaling activity and mitigating actions to identify and address issues highlighted.
* **noted** the University’s continued commitment to delivering equity across student outcomes.
* **recommended** the University explored the impact of moderation procedures.

**Action: Head of Academic Quality and Standards** |
| AAC/2023-03-16/6 | **INDUSTRIAL ACTION: UPDATE** | Verbal |
| 6.1 | The Committee **received** a verbal update from the Vice-Chancellorin connection with the ongoing national dispute. Members were informed:* The University and College Union (UCU) were undertaking a series of actions related to the ongoing dispute.
* The University’s priority was to continue to minimise the impact of the dispute on students and members received assurance that mechanisms and procedures were in place to identify risks and mitigate disruption for students.
* Future developments would continue to be closely monitored.
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| 6.2 | The Committee thanked the Vice-Chancellor for the update and in discussion, received assurances that Regulation 13 of the [Standards Assessment Regulations](https://students.shu.ac.uk/regulations/assessment_awards/Standard%20Assessment%20Regulations%20202223.pdf), which mitigates disruption to the application of the Assessment Regulations, remains in force. |
| AAC/2023-03-16/7 | **ANNUAL QUALITY REVIEW** | AAC/2023-03-16/6 |
| 7.1 | The Annual Quality Review Report sets out how the University continued to exercise its responsibilities for the regulation, quality assurance, and enhancement of educational provision through its academic governance structure. It details that the University’s quality procedures for taught and research students are operating effectively to maintain standards and to assure and enhance the quality of its provision and meet all required regulatory mandates.In presenting the report, the Head of Academic Quality and Standards outlined modifications to the report following Academic Board’s consideration, in particular the presentation of mitigating actions alongside details of academic challenges facing the institution. Other key points highlighted for the Committee’s attention were as follows:* Areas of external focus for the 2022/23 academic year:
	+ The anticipated forthcoming Ofsted inspection of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) provision.
	+ The monitoring of developments within the international political landscape.
	+ Understanding how the Office for Students will undertake its role as the Designated Quality Body (DQB) and future DQB arrangements.
* The University continued to incorporate a range of new awards into the University’s academic framework, systems, and processes.
* The portfolio redevelopment was expected to have a positive impact on the academic quality and standards of the University’s portfolio through greater curriculum stability.
* An Academic Partnerships Committee had been established to enhance the governance and manage risks relating to the University’s collaborative provision.
* An analysis was provided detailing assurance of continuing compliance with the Office for Students’ B conditions of registration.
* Consideration was given to related metrics and sector benchmarks, noting the University’s good position.
* A mid-year quality review would be developed to report on leading indicators and emerging opportunities and risks.

The Annual Quality Review was supported by technical appendices, including the Annual Review of Research Degrees Activity (annex 1). The Director of the Doctoral School provided members with an overview of the report, in alignment with the presentation given to Academic Board (min ref: AB/2023-02-01/8).  |
| 7.2 | The Committee’s consideration of the Annual Quality Review was informed by the content of the report, details of the scrutiny and challenge that had taken place at the Academic Board, and discussions with senior leaders and managers. In discussion, members:* Thanked all contributors, commenting on a thorough, accessible, and credible report.
* Acknowledged amendments to the report following Academic Board’s scrutiny.
* Received assurances of compliance with the Office for Students’ B Conditions of Registration.
* Considered the key academic challenges and mitigating actions.
* Explored the potential impact of changes to Designated Quality Body arrangements.
* Discussed the University’s ambitions for the development of postgraduate research provision.
* Considered the risks and mitigating actions relating to some areas of partnership provision.
* Supported the inception of a mid-year quality review to provide ongoing assurance of compliance with the conditions of registration.
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| 7.3 | In **approving** the Annual Quality Review, the Committee was assured as to the overall quality of the University's academic provision and that processes were in place to maintain, review and enhance this quality. |
| AAC/2023-03-16/8 | **CURRICULUM STRUCTURES (SCHEME D)** | AAC/2023-03-16/7 |
| 8.1 | The paper presented Academic Board’s scrutiny and approval revisions to the curriculum structures of the University’s taught portfolio in relation to Higher Degree Apprenticeships. The Associate Dean for Business and Enterprise (College of Business, Technology and Engineering), supported by the Head of Academic Quality and Standards, gave the Committee an overview of the consultation process and approach taken to develop the revised structure. Members were informed the changes were important to drive greater consistency and improvements across the provision and in the University’s preparedness for future Ofsted reinspection by enhancing alignment with the education inspection framework.  |
| 8.2 | In **noting** Academic Board’s scrutiny, the Committee supported the approach which utilised key elements of consistency from previously approved schemes (min ref: AB/3/22/8).  |
| AAC/2023-03-16/9 | **APPRENTICESHIPS: SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT** | AAC/2023-03-16/8 |
|  9.1 | The paper presented Academic Board’s scrutiny of the annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR) which reflects on the 2021/22 academic year and set out key areas of Strength and Areas for Improvement (AFI) in relation to the University’s apprenticeship provision. The Director of Business Engagement, Skills and Employability outlined the Self-Assessment Report’s progress through the University’s academic governance framework and informed members: * The strategic direction of the SAR is to drive consistency and embed improvements across the Apprenticeship portfolio.
* The SAR was submitted to Ofsted following approval by Academic Board.
* The Quality Improvement Plan will be presented at the Committee’s next

meeting.* There were plans to explore opportunities in future SAR iterations for achieving outcomes associated with 'outstanding’ ratings within the key judgement categories of the education inspection framework.
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| 9.2 | In **noting** the update, the Committee:* Explored national policy commitments to Higher Degree Apprenticeships, reflecting on the University’s position within the market and potential areas of growth.
* Advised the education inspection framework is closely monitored for any changes.
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| AAC/2023-03-16/10 | **TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK SUBMISSION** | AAC/2023-03-16/8Presentation |
| 10.1 | The Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Success) provided an overview presentation, as received by Academic Board (min ref: AB/2023-02-01/10.2), which reflected on the production, and submission of the institutional response to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) in accordance with published guidance. |
| 10.2 | The Committee thanked all colleagues involved in the submission, **noted** Academic’s scrutiny and in discussion, explored the learning outcomes for the University from this process and next steps. |
| AAC/2023-03-16/11 | **ACADEMIC ASSURANCE COMMITTEE:** **TERMS OF REFERENCE** | AAC/2023-03-16/9 |
| 11.1 | The paper was presented in response to the findings and recommendations from the Academic Governance Review (min ref: AAC/2022-11-10/12) and outlines next steps, including updates to Terms of Reference for the Committee’s consideration. The Head of Governance and Sector Regulation highlighted the following points to members:* Enhancements are proposed to the Committee’s Terms of Reference which incorporate recommendations from the review, consider good governance principles, and align with regulatory requirements.
* There were correlations with changes recommended for approval by Academic Board (paper ref: AAC/2023-03-16/10) which further reflects the relationship between the committees.
* An action plan related to the Academic Governance Review has been developed to support delivery and monitor progress against the agreed recommendations. Progress would be reported as part of the annual committee effectiveness review cycle.
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| 11.2 | In discussion, members: * Thanked outgoing attendees for their contributions, commenting that their input, advice, and wider sector knowledge have been invaluable in the Committee’s development.
* Sought clarity on the mechanisms for delegating meeting attendance.

**Action: Committee Secretary**  |
| 11.3 | The Committee **recommended** the Terms of Reference and membership changes to the Board of Governors for approval. |
| AAC/2023-03-16/12 | **ACADEMIC BOARD: REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES** | AAC/2023-03-16/10 |
| 12.1 | The Committee **noted** the report. |
| AAC/2023-03-16/13 | **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD HELD ON 1 FEBRUARY 2023** | AAC/2023-03-16/10 |
| 13.1 | The Committee **received** and **noted** the unconfirmed minutes. |
| AAC/2023-03-16/14 | **ANNUAL BUSINESS CYCLE** | AAC/2023-03-16/11 |
| 14.1 | The forward schedule of business was **noted.** |
| AAC/2023-03-16/15 | **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS** |  |
| 15.1 |  No urgent business was raised.  |
| AAC/2023-03-16/16 | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** |  |
| 16.1 | Thursday 18 May 2023, 13:00 – 15:00 |