



**Higher Education Services  
Academic Standards and Quality  
Committee Terms of Reference**

**July 2025**

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## Contents

1.0 Responsibilities of the Committee.....	4
2.0 Composition of the Committee.....	4
3.0 Terms of Reference.....	5
4.0 Accountabilities.....	6
5.0 Administration.....	6
6.0 Extraordinary Meetings.....	7

# FutureLearn Academic Standards and Quality Committee Terms of Reference

## 1.0 Responsibilities of the Committee

1.1 The Academic Standards and Quality Committee (“ASQC”) is a committee of the Board of Directors and has delegated responsibility for:

- academic provision,
- quality and standards of awards;
- quality enhancements; and
- academic governance.

1.2 It is also responsible for the above with respect to any academic partnership which FutureLearn may have with third party education providers.

1.3 The ASQC is responsible for supporting the Board of Directors to ensure FutureLearn’s compliance with the Office for Students academic conditions of registration (in particular Condition B).

1.4 ASQC approves academic policies, oversees academic portfolios, curriculum design and review in accordance with regulatory requirements on behalf of the Board of Directors. ASQC evaluates the performance of FutureLearn’s programmes, student recruitment, student performance, teaching quality, research, and staff development. It ensures access to education, academic fairness, and integrity. ASQC oversees strategic planning and resource allocation, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

## 2.0 Composition of the Committee

<b>Chair:</b> Non-Executive Director	Vice President Enterprise Sales
Managing Director (Deputy Chair)	One elected member of technical support
Director of Academic Affairs	One elected member of academic staff
Vice President Higher Education Services	One elected member of student support
Vice President Strategy	
One elected student Representative	<b>Secretary:</b> Academic Registrar

2.1 It is the responsibility of all members of the committee to maintain confidentiality unless information is to be appropriately shared with other members of the represented teams when authorised to do so.

## 3.0 Terms of Reference

3.1 ASQC is responsible for the effective maintenance of FutureLearn's academic quality and standards.

3.2 In maintaining quality standards ASQC's responsibilities include:

- Establishing, maintaining, and providing assurance to the Board of Directors on FutureLearn's academic quality and standards.
- Advising the Executive Chair and Managing Director of FutureLearn, and the Board of Directors on the development of FutureLearn's academic activities.
- Considering and reviewing FutureLearn's academic strategy and recommending this for approval by the Board of Directors, ensuring it is aligned with the organisation's strategic plan, and monitoring progress against academic strategic objectives.
- Developing, approving and keeping under review academic frameworks and regulations relating to courses studied at FutureLearn.
- Ensuring compliance with the requirements of partner validating and awarding bodies.
- Establishing and keeping under review policies and procedures on matters relating to the admission of students, teaching delivery, curriculum content, assessment, examination of the academic performance of students, external examiners, subject to the requirements of partners and that of any external bodies.
- Keeping under review FutureLearn's portfolio of courses and, as appropriate, recommending to the Board of Directors the closure of subject areas.
- Keeping under review the student's complaints procedures, implementation and review through the Student Engagement, Quality and Programme Committee and annual reporting.
- Establishing policies for the management of risk to academic standards and quality, and to receive regular reports on academic standards, quality, and status of risks.
- Having oversight of student satisfaction and outcomes (B3), and to keep under review the comparative satisfaction and outcomes rates for distinct groups.
- Receiving reports as appropriate from executive academic boards and committees.
- Keeping under review Equality, Diversity and Inclusion actions and impacts.

- Establishing regular arrangements for the review of the Board’s terms of reference and composition and effectiveness and making recommendations to the Board of Directors to approve amendments to the same.
- Monitoring FutureLearn’s approach to promoting freedom of speech and academic freedom, and to annually review the policy in relation to these.
- Advising on such other matters as the Board of Directors at FutureLearn may refer to the ASQC and provide regular reports to the Board of Directors on the discharge of its responsibilities.

## 4.0 Accountabilities

4.1 The ASQC is responsible for supporting the Board of Directors in relation to the ongoing compliance by FutureLearn with the Office for Students’ Conditions of Registration, with particular focus on conditions A, B, C and E.

A: Access and participation making education accessible
B: Quality experience, resources, support, standards, and positive outcomes for students.
C: Protecting student’s interests.
E: Effective governance under E7 academic.

## 5.0 Administration

5.1 ASQC will meet four times per year. The quorum for the meetings will be 50% of existing members (rounded up to the nearest whole number) and must include:

- the Chair; and
- Director of Academic Affairs or the Vice President Higher Education Services.

5.2 The ASQC will report into the Board of Directors, providing minutes and a verbal update from the Chair after each meeting and providing an annual written report and such other reports as may be requested by the Board of Directors from time to time.

5.3 Any changes to planned ASQC meetings will be at the request of the Chair and notice given to all members no less than one week before the meeting.

5.4 Where quoracy is not met, formal decisions cannot be taken. Any outstanding business which is non urgent will be moved to the following ASQC.

5.5 Urgent decisions can be made via correspondence and approved through a Chair’s action. All members, apart from the Secretary, will have one vote per item. Where there is an equality of votes, and a majority cannot be reached the Chair will have the casting vote.

**5.6** The term of office for elected members will be three years. All elections will be followed with confirmation of appointment by ASQC and will be reviewed annually to evaluate effectiveness. Additional external members may be appointed by FutureLearn's Board of Directors for such term of office as it shall consider appropriate, up to a period of 3 years, renewable twice.

**5.7** The Secretary of the Board will support the Chair in the efficient conduct of the committee's business. Minutes from the meeting will be prepared and shared amongst members for the next ASQC meeting to approve. All approved and related papers will be retained by the Secretariat for a period of at least six years.

**5.8** The terms of reference for the ASQC will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors, following consultation with the ASQC.

## **6.0 Extraordinary Meetings**

**6.1** The Secretary of the Board at the request of the Chair, or in writing from at least four of the members of the ASQC can summon an extraordinary meeting for ASQC. Notice will be sent to members one week before the meeting with details of the start time, place, and agenda of the meeting.