

## **ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

### **Terms of Reference 2018-19**

Academic Council is a sub-committee of the Court of Governors.

The responsibilities of Academic Council, as set out in the *Articles of Association* and *Instrument and Articles of Government of the University* and approved by the Privy Council in 2017, are as follows:

- (a) general issues relating to the research, scholarship, teaching and courses at the University, including criteria for the admission of students; the appointment and removal of internal and external examiners; policies and procedures for assessment and examination of the academic performance of students; the content of the curriculum; academic standards and the validation and review of courses; the procedures for the award of qualifications and honorary academic titles; and the procedures for the exclusion of students for academic reasons;
- (b) consideration of the development of the academic activities of the University and the resources needed to support them, and the provision of advice thereon to the Vice-Chancellor and President (the 'Vice-Chancellor') and to the Court of Governors;
- (c) provision of advice on such other matters as the Court of Governors or the Vice-Chancellor may refer to Academic Council.

To fulfill these responsibilities, Academic Council has the following terms of reference:

- 1 Subject to the provisions of the Articles of Association, to the overall responsibility of the Court of Governors, and to the responsibilities of the Vice-Chancellor, Academic Council is the University's supreme academic deliberative and decision making body responsible for strategic oversight of all academic provision. As a result, Academic Council gives consideration to a broad range of issues that relate directly to the University's academic direction and focus.
- 2 To assist in meeting its obligations and responsibilities, Academic Council may establish such committees as it considers necessary to enable it to carry out its responsibilities provided that each establishment is first approved by the Vice-Chancellor and Court of Governors. Within this structure, Academic Council is responsible for:
  - i) providing direction and guidance to its sub-committees and to the academic community on matters relating to teaching and learning, scholarship and research;
  - ii) approving University-level strategies and academic policies relating to teaching and learning, quality enhancement, scholarship, research and academic enterprise and ensuring that they are consonant with the University's mission and strategic plan;
  - iii) maintaining and enhancing academic standards, assuring the quality of academic provision and of students' learning opportunities, and ensuring that the curriculum offered through the University's named awards is appropriate, challenging and appropriate to the level of award offered, including through oversight of the annual monitoring process and outcomes, the course approval process, student complaints, and any relevant external measures;
  - iv) advising the Vice-Chancellor and Court of Governors on matters concerning the educational character and mission of the University;
  - v) maintaining oversight of the academic portfolio offered by the University and, within the scope of the educational character and mission of the University as determined by the Court of Governors, determining the content of that portfolio;

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- vi) approving the University's academic and student regulations, ensuring that the regulatory frameworks are appropriate, comprehensive, fair and compliant with external expectations and legal requirements;
- vii) oversight of the University's academic collaborations and partnerships, including the quality and suitability of learning opportunities offered to University of Westminster students by partner organisations;
- viii) approving the University's admissions policy;
- ix) approving the awards which the University may validate and confer;
- x) validating the University's programmes of study;\*
- xi) the awarding to students of academic credit and the conferment upon students of academic awards of the University;\*
- xii) the appointment and removal of External Examiners;\*

\* *these responsibilities may be delegated in full to a sub-committee of Academic Council.*

### Membership

#### *Ex-officio (12)*

Vice-Chancellor (Chair) (1)  
Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Deputy Chairs) (2)  
Pro Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Colleges (3)  
Director, Global Recruitment and Admissions (1)  
Director, Graduate School (1)  
Director, Student and Academic Services (1)  
Head of the Centre for Teaching Innovation (1)  
President of the University Students' Union (1)  
University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (1)

#### *Elected/Nominated (9)*

2 members of academic staff from each College, elected by the academic staff of that College (6)  
1 Head of School, elected by the Heads of School and Assistant Heads of School (1)  
2 currently registered students, nominated by the Students' Union, one of whom, normally, would be a post-graduate (PGT or PGR) (2)

#### *Co-opted*

Academic Registrar (Clerk)  
Deputy Registrar Quality and Standards

#### *Secretariat*

Clerk to the Court of Governors or nominee

A quorum of the Academic Council shall comprise a minimum of 40% of the ex-officio, elected and nominated members, including the Chair or a Deputy Chair.

Elected/nominated members shall serve a term of office not exceeding three years commencing 1 August in the year of appointment. Members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms of office.

### Meetings

Academic Council shall meet at least four times a year. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair as deemed necessary to execute the business of the committee.