

## **Academic Governance Protocol**

Approved by Senate 1 March 2022, and the Board of Governors 22 March 2022

Academic governance is the framework of structures, processes, and functions that collectively provide leadership to and oversight of the University's academic activities at an institutional level. The University's Code of Practice on Academic Governance sets out the detailed academic governance framework.

This protocol is concerned with how the Board receives and tests assurance that academic governance is working effectively.

### **Academic Governance Structures**

The Board of Governors is the University's governing body and carries the ultimate responsibility for the University's overall strategic direction.

The Senate is responsible to the Board for the promotion of research and for monitoring standards in teaching. It acts as the University's principal academic authority. In accordance with the Office for Students regulatory framework and public interest governance principles, the Board of Governors receives assurance from Senate that arrangements for institutional academic governance are effective.

Senate has established Academic Quality and Standards Committees for Teaching, Learning and Students, and Research. These committees are responsible respectively for a) assuring Senate regarding the maintenance of academic quality and standards in teaching and learning, and the enhancement of the student experience, and b) in research.

The Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for expressing opinions and giving assurances to the Board relating to its review of the effectiveness of the University's arrangements for risk management, control, and governance, including academic risk and governance.

### **Academic Governance Processes**

#### **(a) Teaching, Learning, and Students (TL&S)**

The University's Academic Quality Framework sets out the processes by which academic quality and standards with regards to teaching, learning and students are managed and have been developed to ensure compliance with a range of statutory and regulatory requirements.

#### **(b) Research**

The University's Research policies, procedures and guidance sets out the requirements for good practice to achieve and continuously improve research quality and compliance.

## **Receipt by the Board of Academic Governance Assurance**

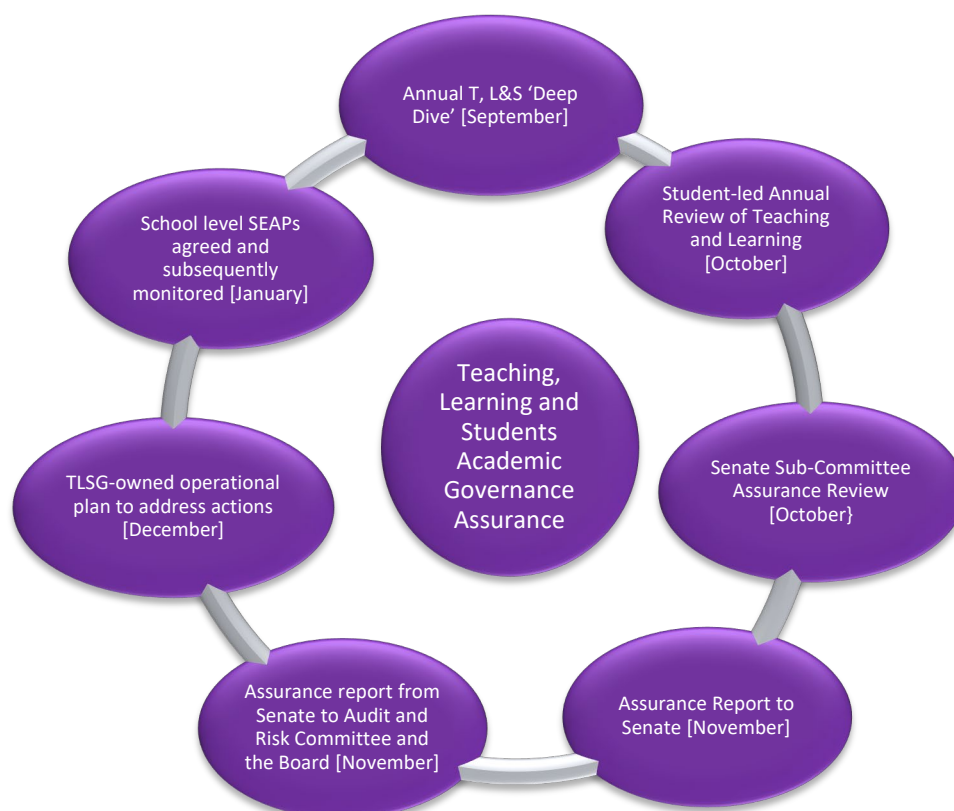
### (a) Teaching, Learning, and Students (TL&S)

The Academic Governance Assurance Framework (Teaching, Learning, and Students) sets out in detail the full range of methods overseen by Senate which ensure continuous academic assurance and enhancement. The Proposed Approach to Annual Teaching, Learning and Students Academic Governance Assurance Review is presented to Senate for approval as agenda item 5.2

Its annual cycle is aligned with the strategic oversight of the Board of Governors, through the following good governance measures:

- Transparency: the use of a single data set of all the TL&S measures that currently form part of the Board of Governors balanced scorecard
- Dedication to the interest of stakeholders: the student voice is central to the annual review of teaching and learning
- Accountability: the framework is characterised by three lines of defence

The Board shall **receive** assurance on academic governance through an Annual Assurance Report from Senate via Audit and Risk Committee.



(b) Research

Senate performs a key role in ensuring the appropriate academic governance of research, including postgraduate research. It is responsible for the scrutiny of policy and supporting information related to research activity at the university in order to enable it to provide assurance to the Board of Governors; including reviewing matters required by statute and regulations related to research.

The University's Research Compliance Committee (RCC) sets standards and ensures that the University meets its obligations to comply with the statutory, regulatory and policy requirements within its scope. It reports to the University's Planning and Resources Committee and is chaired by the Vice President for Social Responsibility who reports directly to the President and Vice-Chancellor and Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer.

The Board shall **receive** assurance on research governance through an Annual Assurance Report from Senate via Audit and Risk Committee.

**Testing by the Board of academic governance assurance:**

The Board shall **test the assurance of academic governance** through the following mechanisms (as noted below, elements of this activity will be carried out via Audit and Risk Committee, whilst the Board retains overall responsibility):

- I. Consideration of an annual review by Senate of its academic business
- II. On a periodic basis in line with guidance from external bodies such as CUC, externally-facilitated reviews of Senate's effectiveness
- III. On behalf of the Board, Audit and Risk Committee shall: use Senate's governance effectiveness review and consider the Annual Assurance Reports in detail to inform:
  - An assessment of the effectiveness of the University's entire risk management (including academic risk), control, and governance arrangements, including academic governance.
  - The identification of potential internal audits for inclusion within the internal audit programme, including on academic governance processes
- IV. In addition, Audit and Risk Committee shall provide assurances related to academic governance through an OfS On-going Registration Conditions assurance map (relevant elements of which will also be subject to consideration by Senate), linked to the institutional risk register and Public Interest Governance Principles
- V. The receipt of regular reports from each meeting of Senate which set out the key issues considered or recommended for approval by the Board.
- VI. Joint meetings of the Board and of Senate focusing on Senate's academic assurance role.
- VII. Academic Strategy and KPIs

The Board's receipt and testing of academic governance shall be reported in the corporate governance statement as part of the institution's Annual Review and Financial Reports.