

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose

A Programme Board is established for every academic programme to monitor and review the provision of the programme, ensuring academic and professional standards are maintained and that learners receive fair and effective opportunities to learn in a stimulating and supportive learning environment.

### 1.2 Status of the Programme Board

Each Programme Board is a subcommittee of the Academic Board.

## 2 Composition and Membership

#### a. *Ex officio members*

- i. Director of Programme.
- ii. All faculty involved in teaching, learning, assessment and research on the programme.
- iii. All adjunct faculty involved in teaching, learning, assessment and research on the programme.

#### b. *Chairperson*

- i. The Director of Programme is the ex officio chairperson.

#### c. *Vice Chairperson*

- i. The Programme Board elects a vice chairperson from amongst its members who shall act as vice chairperson for a two-year period.

#### d. *External members/Appointed members*

- i. There shall be a minimum of one external member, whose term of office shall be two years. They shall be appointed by the Academic Board on nomination of the Director of Programme.

#### e. *Nominated members:*

- i. The Academic Board may nominate a person to the Programme at their discretion.

#### f. *Elected members:*

- i. All student elected representatives.

#### g. *Co-opted members:*

- i. The Chairperson may, with the support of the majority of the members of the Board meeting at an ordinary meeting of the Board, co-opt a member of the College or an

external party to the Board for a period of one year, where such a co-option will assist in the discharge of the responsibilities of the Board.

- ii. Normally, a maximum of two persons may be co-opted to the Board at any one point in time.

*h. In attendance - by invitation*

- i. The Chairperson may invite an external party deemed relevant to the business of a meeting.
- ii. Normally staff in the following roles are invited to the Programme Board:
  - Registrar
  - Quality Assurance Officer
  - Student Support Officer
  - Faculty Manager.

*i. In Attendance – secretarial*

- i. Normally, the Quality Assurance Officer acts as ex officio Secretary to Programme Boards.
- ii. Members of the Programme Administration team may be in attendance to support the Programme Board.

### **3 Terms of Reference**

#### **3.1 Functions and Responsibilities of Programme Boards**

*a. Programme Boards:*

- i. Prepare an annual plan of the work of the Board.
- ii. Monitor the implementation of programmes of study as defined in the Programme document and Approved Programme Schedule.
- iii. Annually review the structure, content, entry requirements, curriculum, and assessment strategies of the programme to ensure:
  - The maintenance of academic and professional standards for the programmes/disciplines concerned, ensuring they conform to benchmarks and sectoral conventions determined by QQI and the criteria contained in the National Framework of Qualifications
  - That all proposed changes to Programmes are submitted to and approved by Academic Board, and thereafter by QQI and any relevant professional body.
- iv. Review the Approved Programme Schedule at the first Programme Board of the year.
- v. Review the effectiveness of the programme in:
  - Fulfilling its aims and objectives
  - Providing a suitable student experience
  - Consider issues affecting the programme and take appropriate actions to resolve, including bringing matters to the attention of any relevant authority.
- vi. Consider/Respond to the recommendations from all external review and monitoring activities relating to the programme and implement where and as appropriate.
- vii. Consider policy, procedure, and regulations specific to the programme and any public-facing information derived from these.
- viii. Consider any issues relating to the student experience and management of the programme and take appropriate action, liaising with the Academic Board and/or College management as appropriate.
- ix. Monitor the impact of teaching, learning, and assessment activities on student engagement and performance.

- x. Collect anonymised information about student performance and engagement, and collect student feedback to support the continuous improvement of the programme.
- xi. Seek feedback from faculty, in particular adjunct faculty, and provide responses to it, including changes to the programme or practices as appropriate.
- xii. Prepare an annual report of the work of the Board and its findings for presentation to the Academic Board for consideration. The report should include quantitative and qualitative data, and provide commentary on:
  - Programme design, content, and organisation for an online/blended learning programme
  - Teaching, learning, and assessment
  - Student progression and achievement
  - Student support and guidance
  - Learning resources
  - Quality management and enhancement
  - Student feedback, faculty feedback, adjunct faculty feedback, staff feedback.

## 3.2 Meetings

### a. *Duties of the Chairperson*

The Chairperson:

- i. Convenes and chairs meetings of the Programme Board.
- ii. Is fully conversant with the remit and Terms of Reference for the Board to ensure that the Board fulfils its remit.
- iii. Ensures that the Board effectively monitors programme implementation and student progress.
- iv. Liaises with the Academic Dean and the Office of the Registrar at appropriate times in terms of provision of documentation referred to in the Terms of Reference for the Board.
- v. Makes such recommendations on the requirements for staffing and other resources to the Executive Management Team (EMT) through the Academic Dean as are required for the proper conduct of the Programme.
- vi. Have prepared in a timely fashion the annual report for presentation to the Academic Board.

### b. *Nature of meetings*

- i. Board meetings may take place face-to-face, by telephone, videoconference, or other electronic means.
- ii. Board members are required to fully prepare for each meeting, read the documentation in advance, and make every reasonable effort to attend each meeting.

### c. *Frequency of Meetings*

- i. Board meetings shall be held at least twice a year.
- ii. The Board shall determine its meeting schedule annually, in advance, and meet as scheduled.

### d. *Quorum*

- i. In the event that a member is absent from a meeting, Programme Boards may conduct business provided that the Director of Programme is satisfied that both the members present and the reports collected are sufficient to conduct business properly.

### e. *Decisions*

- i. Decisions are normally made by consensus. In the absence of consensus, decisions are made by open ballot.
- ii. Where there is a tied vote, the Chairperson has the casting vote.
- iii. Decisions may be made either at a duly called and constituted meeting, or by a resolution in writing to all members which is physically or electronically signed by at least a quorum of members.
- iv. Any matters for decision considered when the meeting is deemed inquorate by the Director of Programme must be subsequently ratified at the next Programme Board meeting before those decisions can be actioned.
- v. All decisions must be formally recorded. In the absence of a formal record, any apparent decision shall be deemed null and void.

### **3.3 Ensuring Effective Practice**

#### *a. Agenda and Minutes*

- i. Agendas and associated documentation are distributed at least five working days before the meeting.
- ii. Members are notified of the location and availability of material.
- iii. Only with the Chairperson's permission may late papers or the tabling of papers be accepted.
- iv. All papers must be submitted to the Secretary by the specified submission deadline.
- v. Board records shall be retained by the Secretary.
- vi. Minutes are to be prepared of each meeting.
- vii. The Chairperson reviews the draft minutes and matters arising, after which the Secretary circulates the documents to all Board members and includes them in the agenda papers for the next meeting.

#### *b. Annual Work Plan*

- i. The annual work plan for the Programme Board is prepared and agreed by the Board in advance.

#### *c. Access to Resources*

- i. All members, both internal and external, are given access to all resources and artefacts needed to fulfil their duties as members.

### **3.4 Evaluation and Review**

#### *a. Review by the Academic Board*

- i. The Programme Board is reviewed by the Academic Board on its performance against these Terms of Reference every three years.

#### *b. Review of the Terms of Reference*

- i. The Chairperson reviews these Terms of Reference every two years, in conjunction with the Academic Board and amends as appropriate.
- ii. Any amendments are subject to ratification by the Academic Board.