



## Student Strategic Advisory Committee (SSAC) Terms of Reference

### Background

QAA is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity in England and Wales, and Scotland. Its Board members are the Charity's Trustees and the Company's Directors.

The Board appoints committees to help it, and QAA, achieve its aims. The Student Strategic Advisory Committee (SSAC) is an advisory committee and, as such, does not have any formal delegated decision-making authority. It plays a key role in advising the Board on the formulation and delivery of the QAA strategy to ensure that it takes into account the views of key stakeholder groups.

### Duties

- 1 The Committee offers objective advice and guidance founded in its members' specific expertise, experience and perspective, as students, student representatives and students' union/student representative body staff members in UK higher education.
- 2 The Committee will inform the Board's strategic planning and decision making by providing the Board with key information and forward-looking intelligence regarding the legislative, regulatory, funding and policy environment likely to affect the experience of students in UK higher education:
  - recommending to the Board strategic responses to developments/changes in the legislative, regulatory, funding and policy environment likely to affect the experience of students in UK higher education, having due regard of QAA's UK-wide remit and operations regarding academic quality and standards
  - advising the Board regarding the continued validity/appropriateness/relevance of QAA's work for students in UK higher education
  - providing independent and objective counsel to, and acting as a sounding board for, the Board with regard to the experience of students in UK higher education and on the engagement of students in UK higher education in regard to the quality of their student experience.
- 3 The Committee will support QAA in the delivery of its charitable objects by:
  - giving strategic direction to QAA's work concerning its engagement with students and their representatives in consultation with the Board
  - advising/recommending to the Board programmes/initiatives of specific relevance to students in UK higher education.
- 4 The Committee agrees by consensus the advice, recommendations and guidance it wishes to offer.

## Membership of the Committee

- 5 The Committee will reflect the diverse student body across UK higher education, and shall comprise a minimum of 13 and a maximum of 15 members, including:
  - the independent QAA Board member (student) and the NUS-nominated QAA Board member
  - one of the student representatives/members from each of the QAA Board committees with student membership
  - five student members which need to include students from across the UK nations
  - two students' union/student representative organisation staff members
  - QAA's lead for student engagement (ex-officio).
- 6 The QAA Board members as per paragraph 5 shall be the joint Chairs of the Committee.
- 7 Appointments to the Committee shall be for a period of one year, extendable by no more than one additional year, as long as members continue to meet the membership criteria. Former SSAC members may be appointed to another QAA committee with student membership - in doing so, they are eligible to rejoin the SSAC as representative for their new committee for the duration of their term on that committee.
- 8 Committee members are expected to attend at least two meetings during their term and to make active contributions to them.

## Reporting

- 9 The joint Chairs of the Committee will bring the Committee's advice and recommendations to the Board as appropriate. A summary of each SSAC meeting is provided at the following Board meeting and the Committee will produce formal reports on any aspects of its business at the Board's request.

## Frequency of meetings

- 10 The Committee shall meet at least three times a year at appropriate intervals in the QAA strategic planning cycle and otherwise as required.

## Quorum

- 11 The minimum numbers of members required to be at a given meeting is six, including at least one of the joint Chairs.

## Secretariat

- 12 The QAA Governance team shall serve as the secretariat for the Committee.
- 13 The appointed QAA lead for the SSAC will collaborate with the Chair or Co-Chairs to develop meeting content and address committee related queries.

## Annex

- 14 All QAA Committee members are expected to familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, the standard provisions applicable to all QAA committees, contained within the document entitled Annex to QAA Committee Terms of Reference.

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