

British Institute of Technology Ltd
Trading As: British Institute of Technology, England (BITE)
Academic Board

Terms of Reference
Reviewed: 11.08.25
Version: 1.4

Introduction

1. Purpose and Authority

The Council has approved and delegated authority to the Academic Board to act as the **principal academic authority** of the Institute. The Academic Board is responsible for ensuring that the Institute meets its obligations under the **OfS regulatory framework**, the **UK Quality Code for Higher Education**, and the requirements of all relevant external regulatory and professional bodies.

The Academic Board has overarching responsibility for **academic standards, academic quality, and the enhancement of the student learning experience**, ensuring these are secured, monitored, and continuously improved within the Institute's governance and management framework.

The Academic Board operates independently in academic matters and provides assurance to the Council that academic governance arrangements are effective, robust, and compliant.

2. Scope of Responsibility

The Academic Board shall exercise strategic oversight and assurance across all academic matters, including but not limited to:

- Academic standards, learning opportunities, and quality enhancement
- Teaching, learning, assessment, and feedback practices
- Programme design, approval, monitoring, modification, suspension, and withdrawal
- Student support, academic resources, and learning infrastructure
- Academic admissions criteria and recognition of prior learning
- Academic regulations, policies, and assessment frameworks
- Research, scholarship, enterprise, and academic integrity
- Staff development related to teaching, assessment, and academic practice
- Academic discipline, fitness to study, appeals, and complaints (academic aspects)
- Collaborative partnerships, subcontractual arrangements, and third-party provision
- External examining and independent academic assurance
- Student engagement as partners in quality assurance and enhancement
- Access, participation, continuation, completion, and progression outcomes

3. Regulatory and Quality Assurance Responsibilities

In fulfilling its role, the Academic Board shall:

- Safeguard the Institute's ongoing compliance with **OfS Conditions of Registration**
- Ensure alignment with the **UK Quality Code**, including core practices and guiding principles
- Oversee institutional self-assessment, quality monitoring, and enhancement planning
- Receive, scrutinise, and act upon external examiner reports and responses

- Receive and review outcomes from external quality assurance and regulatory activity
- Ensure risks to academic quality and standards are identified, mitigated, and escalated appropriately
- Provide formal assurance reports to the Council on academic quality, standards, and student outcomes

4. Strategic Oversight

The Academic Board shall:

- Review and advise on academic aspects of the Institute's Strategic Plan
- Ensure academic priorities support student success, equity, and outcomes
- Monitor student data relating to access, success, continuation, completion, and progression
- Oversee institutional responses to Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) requirements
- Review Access and Participation Plans and associated performance and risk

5. Powers and Functions

The Academic Board has authority to:

- Approve new higher education programmes and academic awards
- Approve research and scholarly activity areas
- Approve and periodically review academic regulations and policies
- Delegate authority to sub-committees with defined terms of reference
- Require reports, data, and assurance from academic units and committees
- Recommend matters requiring regulatory approval to the Council
- Escalate material academic risks directly to the Council

6. Sub-Committees

The Academic Board may establish sub-committees to support its work and delegate defined responsibilities while retaining overall accountability.

Sub-committees shall operate under approved terms of reference and report formally to the Academic Board.

Standing sub-committees include:

- Education Quality and Standards Committee
- Programme Committee
- Programme and Module Approval and Review Panel (PMARP)
- Examination Boards
- Internal Verification Boards

Oversight areas may include:

- Teaching, learning, and assessment
- Programme lifecycle management
- External quality assurance
- Research and enterprise
- TEF and student outcomes
- Access and participation

7. Membership

Membership shall ensure appropriate **academic expertise, independence, and student representation**, and normally include:

- Principal (Chair)
- Independent Council Member

- Academic Registrar
- Head of Quality Assurance
- Elected Academic Staff Representatives
- Programme Leaders
- Internal Verifiers
- External Examiner(s)
- Secretary
- Student Representatives (normally observers unless otherwise agreed)

Membership composition shall be reviewed periodically to ensure effectiveness and regulatory alignment.

8. Student Engagement

The Academic Board shall ensure that students are meaningfully engaged as partners in academic governance by:

- Receiving and considering student feedback and representation
- Reviewing mechanisms for student engagement and partnership
- Monitoring the effectiveness of student representation arrangements

Student representatives shall be elected annually and may serve a maximum of two consecutive years. Failure to attend two consecutive meetings without acceptable cause shall normally constitute resignation.

9. Meetings and Quorum

The Academic Board shall meet a minimum of **four times per academic year**, scheduled in advance within the Academic Calendar.

Meetings shall be quorate when at least **50% of members**, including the Chair (or nominee), are present.

10. Decision-Making and Voting

The Academic Board shall normally seek to reach decisions by consensus. Where a vote is required, each member shall have one vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair shall hold a casting vote.

11. Reporting and Accountability

The Academic Board reports directly to the Council and shall:

- Submit regular assurance reports on academic quality and standards
- Escalate matters of significant academic or regulatory risk
- Provide documentation and advice for external regulatory and quality bodies
- Maintain clear records of decisions and actions

12. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed at least every two years, or sooner in response to changes in regulatory requirements or institutional structure.