UEL QUALITY MANUAL
PART 2
RESPONSIBILITY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

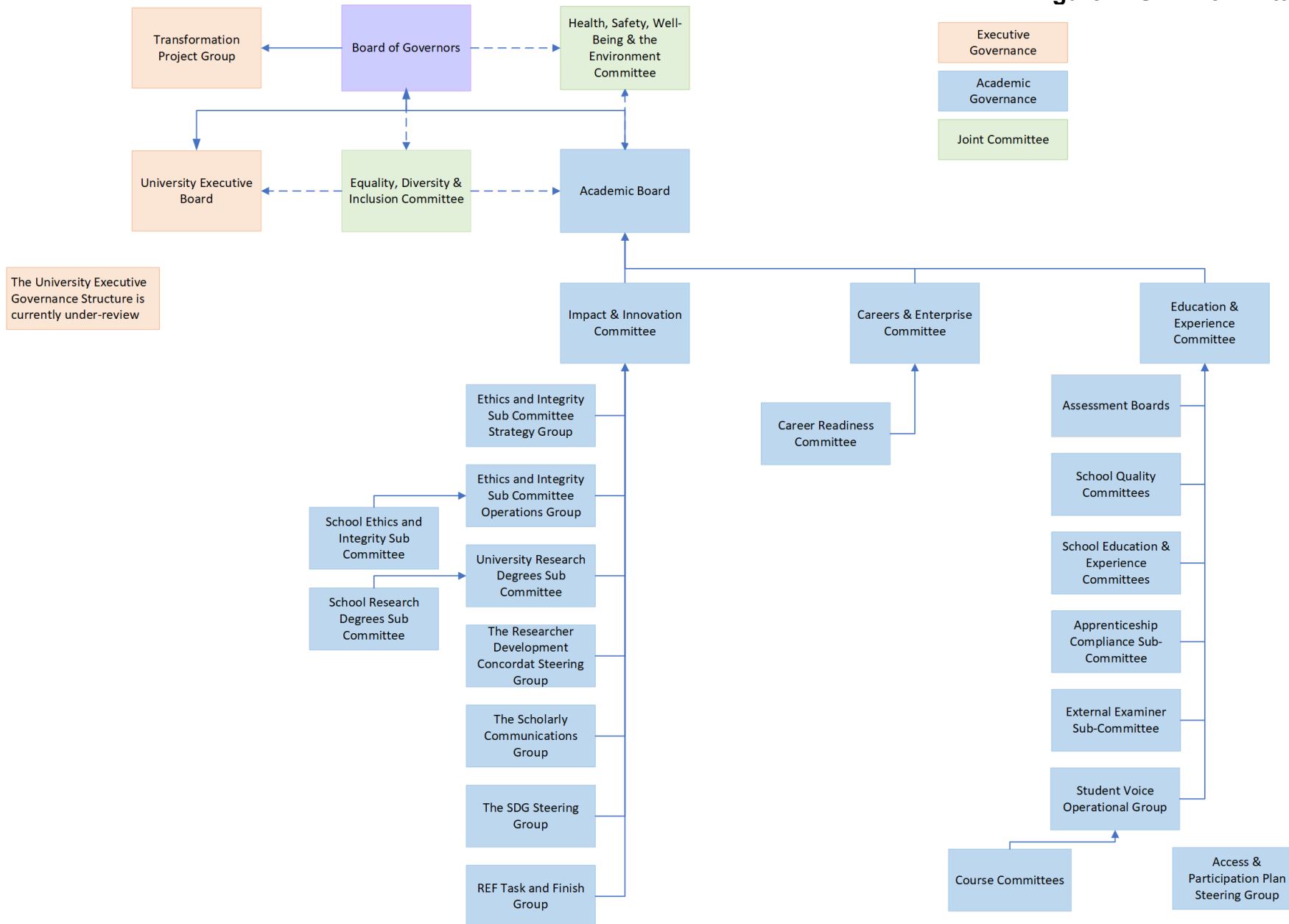## 1.   Introduction

1.1.   UEL's quality assurance and enhancement system incorporates clear lines of responsibility and accountability. This can be seen from two different perspectives: the collective responsibility of staff through the committee structure; and the individual responsibility of all staff in the performance of their duties.

1.2.   This manual details the locus of responsibility for the implementation of our policies and procedures, and for monitoring them. The Education and Experience Committee regularly reviews elements of our procedures as appropriate and receives an annual summary of changes that have been made.

2.   The UEL committee structure

2.1.   The UEL scheme of governance defines governance as having two strands, Executive Governance overseen by the University Executive Board (UEB) and Academic Governance overseen by Academic Board. Both strands feed into the Board of Governors.

2.2.   Quality assurance activity is predominantly located in the Academic Governance strand, though quality assurance processes do often include reference to Executive Governance where strategic decisions are required.

2.3.   The following is a visual interpretation of the committee structure followed by a summary of the roles and responsibilities of the main committees associated with quality assurance. There are full terms of reference for each of the committees listed which are agreed at Academic Board initially. Changes to Terms of Reference are made by a proposal to the parent committee.

2.4.   Summaries outlining the remit of committees, sub-committees and groups with responsibility for academic quality and standards and related activities are detailed throughout this section.

Figure 1: UEL Committee Structure 2023/24

Legend:
- Executive Governance
- Academic Governance
- Joint Committee

Board of Governors
- Transformation Project Group
- Health, Safety, Well-Being & the Environment Committee
- University Executive Board
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee
- Academic Board

The University Executive Governance Structure is currently under-review

Academic Board:
- Impact & Innovation Committee
- Careers & Enterprise Committee
- Education & Experience Committee

Impact & Innovation Committee:
- Ethics and Integrity Sub Committee Strategy Group
- Ethics and Integrity Sub Committee Operations Group
- School Ethics and Integrity Sub Committee
- University Research Degrees Sub Committee
- School Research Degrees Sub Committee
- The Researcher Development Concordat Steering Group
- The Scholarly Communications Group
- The SDG Steering Group
- REF Task and Finish Group

Careers & Enterprise Committee:
- Career Readiness Committee

Education & Experience Committee:
- Assessment Boards
- School Quality Committees
- School Education & Experience Committees
- Apprenticeship Compliance Sub-Committee
- External Examiner Sub-Committee
- Student Voice Operational Group
- Course Committees
- Access & Participation Plan Steering Group

3. The Board of Governors

3.1. The Board of Governors is responsible for the determination of the educational character and mission of the University and for oversight of its activities. Its key responsibilities relating to quality assurance include:
Oversight of the programme of quality-related activities scheduled for the year and discussion of the outcomes of those activities, leading to the submission of any annual accountability returns.

4. Academic Board

4.1. The Academic Board is responsible for academic quality in relation to taught courses and research. Many of the operational aspects are delegated to standing committees of Academic Board. The Board monitors the operation of delegated powers by the receipt of minutes and reports from its committees. Its key responsibilities relating to quality assurance include:

- 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, including the academic regulations;
- 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 including the powers to revoke such awards in accordance with section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992;
- and the procedures for the expulsion of students for academic reasons.

4.2. The Vice-Chancellor and President is the ex-officio Chair of the Academic Board

5. Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee

5.1. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee is responsible to the Academic Board, University Executive Board and the Board of Governors. It exists to promote, steer and progress inclusivity and equity at UEL. The Committee has institutional oversight of delivery against EDI objectives and commitments against agreed performance indicators. The Committee seeks to work with our internal and external communities to ensure that current and future equality legislation is embedded in our policies and practices so that all forms of discriminatory behaviour are eliminated and that equity and inclusion are actively progressed.

5.2. The Vice-Chancellor and President is the ex-officio Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

6. Education and Experience Committee

6.1. The Education and Experience Committee is responsible to the Academic Board for leading UEL's strategic approach to the development, delivery and support of the Future Graduate strategic objectives and related Transformational Projects in support of Vision 2028. In particular, these objectives and projects will focus on student success and student experience. Its themes include oversight, approval and monitoring of recommendations for enhancement of both on-campus and partner provision learning and teaching, quality and standards, and the learner journey.

6.2. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Experience) is the ex-officio Chair of the Education and Experience Committee.

6.2.1. School Quality Committees

School Quality Committees are accountable to Education and Experience Committee. The purpose of the School Quality Committees is to ensure the School's compliance with University quality processes and the Quality Manual and to monitor the School's activity relating to University enhancement processes. The committee is responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring any additional School-level processes and strategies deemed necessary for productive engagement with the University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement activities.

6.2.2. School Education and Experience Committees

School Education and Experience Committees are accountable to Education and Experience Committee. The purpose of the School Education and Experience Committee is to have oversight of School-based activities in relation to the enhancement of academic practices and the student experience. This will include the oversight of outcomes from student feedback mechanisms and any necessary actions in response to this feedback; oversight of School level activities in relation to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF); reviewing School continuing monitoring process (CMP) data on student outcomes and agreeing and monitoring actions; oversight of staff development activities within the School; and working closely with the School Quality Committee to enhance quality assurance practices as they related to academic practice and the student experience.

6.2.3. External Examiner Sub-Committee

The External Examiner Sub-Committee (EESC) is accountable to the Education and Experience Committee (E&EC) for monitoring the external examining system at UEL. It is responsible for appointing and where necessary terminating the appointment of examiners, based on recommendation from the Schools. It monitors the composition and

characteristics of examiners and keeps national developments relating the system under review. The sub-committee monitors issues raised in examiner reports at an institutional overview level. EESC makes recommendations to E&EC for actions to improve the system and standards and monitors their completion. The Quality Manager (Validation & Review) is ex-officio chair of the External Examiners Sub-Committee

6.2.4. Assessment Boards

Assessment Boards are sub-committees of Education and Experience Committee held for each School once per term, that have delegated responsibility for confirming progression and conferring the award of students on behalf of Academic Board. These committees will ensure the accuracy of marks and note decisions on awards and classifications that students have achieved. They will confirm external examiner approval of module standards within a School and they will note decisions on extenuation, misconduct and student withdrawal.

6.2.5. Course Committees

Course Committees are accountable to School Education and Experience Committees. They are responsible for assuring the quality of the student experience at the course level. Course Committees include all staff making a significant teaching contribution, students on the course, and representatives of relevant academic services (i.e. Learning Support Services). Their role is to ensure that the course(s) operates in a manner appropriate to its stated aims and objectives and to a standard commensurate to the award to which it leads. Proposals to change a course for existing students should be discussed at the Course Committee.

6.2.6. Apprenticeship Compliance Sub-Committee

The Apprenticeships Compliance Sub-Committee are accountable to the Education and Experience Committee. The purpose of the sub-committee is to develop and embed institutional compliance with Ofsted and ESFA requirements for all apprenticeships delivered by UEL. This includes the development and monitoring of policy and procedures, the institutional Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), training provision for staff, and logistical arrangements for Ofsted visits and ESFA audits.

6.2.7. Student Voice Operational Group

The Student Voice Operational Group supports the Education and Experience Committee with the gathering and actioning student feedback collected via Quality Assurance and Enhancement

processes. In particular, it supports the promotion of external surveys, Module Evaluation and Course Committees. This group oversees the collection, analysis and dissemination of data and the resultant Actions from these feedback mechanisms.

7. Impact and Innovation Committee

7.1. The Impact and Innovation Committee is responsible to the Academic Board for directing the impact and innovation strategy across the institution. It determines and monitors impact and innovation KPIs, oversees the University's postgraduate research student provision and research student experience and has responsibility for the Framework for Research Quality.

7.2. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Impact and Innovation) is the ex-officio Chair of the Impact and Innovation Committee.

7.2.1. Ethics and Integrity Strategy Group

The Ethics and Integrity Strategy Group maintains institutional compliance with The Concordat to Support Research Integrity, 2019 and associated policies and procedures, through periodical review of the University's strategy relating to ethics and research integrity. It monitors the indicators of the quality of the ethical review and provides guidance on Codes of Practice relating to Research Ethics.

7.2.2. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Impact and Innovation) is the ex-officio Chair of the Ethics and Integrity Strategy Group.

7.2.3. Ethics and Integrity Operations Group

The Ethics and Integrity Operations Group provides oversight of School Ethics Committees including reviewing any concerning ethics applications from Schools. It considers ethical approval of research programmes involving human participants, material, personal data and non-human animals. Applications for ethical approval to research within the University's community are also considered.

7.2.4. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Impact and Innovation) is the ex-officio Chair of the Impact and Innovation Committee.

7.2.5. University Research Degree Sub Committee

The University Research Degree Sub Committee monitors the quality of postgraduate research provision by receiving the unconfirmed minutes of each S-RDSC meeting and considering decisions taken and recommendations made. It receives the university Postgraduate Research Annual Reports and the reports and data from the S-RDSCs,

identifying any matters of concern and communicating as appropriate the required actions.

7.2.6. Researcher Development Concordat Steering Group

The Research Development Concordat Steering Group oversees the institution's commitment to, and enaction of, the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers including an annual progress review and report to Governors. To raise the visibility of the Concordat and maximise the role to Concordat plays in supporting continuous improvement in the activities and approaches to cultivating 'people, culture and environment'.

7.2.7. REF Task and Finish Group

The UEL REF Task and Finish Group acts as an umbrella panel to help steer and shape the University's REF submission. The group advises the PVC Impact and Innovation on any emerging implications of REF proposals, criteria and submission guidelines and ensures that effective and appropriate institutional action is undertaken to support research productivity, grant capture and research student progression in line with REF proposals.

7.2.8. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Impact and Innovation) is the ex-officio Chair of the REF Task and Finish Group.

7.2.9. Sustainable Development Goals Steering Group

The Sustainable Development Goals Steering Group examines the Institution's engagement with Sustainable Development Goals and how to improve visibility of this. The Group provides guidance in the areas of teaching and learning, research, impact and university operation in relation to Sustainable Development Goals and collects the required evidence for external recognition.

7.2.10. The Director of the Office for Postgraduates, Research and Engagement is the ex-officio Chair.

8. Careers and Enterprise Committee

8.1. The Careers and Enterprise Committee is responsible to the Academic Board in relation to the successful achievement of the Future Professional strategic objectives and related Transformational Projects. In particular, these objectives and projects will focus on graduate employment, enterprise, partnerships and portfolio diversification. Its themes include oversight, approval and monitoring of recommendations for enhancement of student employability including the career passport and placement activity, the portfolio of collaborative and apprenticeship provision, graduate outcomes,

access and participation.

8.2. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Careers and Enterprise) is the ex-officio Chair of the Careers and Enterprise Committee.

8.2.1. The Career Readiness Committee

The Career Readiness Committee provides oversight in the impact of measures to develop curricula with a specific focus on improving outcomes for student employability through skills and knowledge, based on sector analysis. It informs decisions about the academic content of UEL's partnership portfolio. It oversees institutional graduate outcomes data and develops and monitors actions to improve this.

8.2.2. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Careers and Enterprise) is the ex-officio Chair of the Careers Readiness Committee.

9. Executive Groups

Executive groups are not part of the formal academic committee structure, but they play an important part in developing and implementing academic and non-academic strategy.

9.1. School Executive Teams

School Executive Teams are responsible to University Executive Board for developing, implementing, and monitoring strategy and process at the School level, in line with institutional strategy, with respect to the academic portfolio; financial performance and risk management; admissions requirements and targets; international recruitment; research; learning, teaching and assessment; curriculum development; Equality and Diversity Strategy; strategy and outcomes in relation to student engagement and student experience; collaborative provision; employability strategy; the Teaching Excellence Framework; peer review; and staff support and development.

9.2. School Executive Teams also have oversight of quality, standards and partnership activity at the School level, including outputs from School-based committees which consider these areas, including:
- collaborative provision for the School;
- course approval, re-approval and modifications;
- external examiner activity;
- annual monitoring processes.

9.3. Department Committees

Department Committees are comprised of all module leaders in the department, and course leaders from courses on which modules are core.

Department Committees are responsible for assuring the quality and standards of the range of modules within the department. They will consider matters relating to the content, assessment and delivery of modules in the department based on feedback from course leaders, course committees, module feedback questionnaires and module leaders. The Department Committee is responsible for approving the Department Continual Monitoring Process report and action plan.

10. Task and Finish Groups

10.1. Task and Finish groups may be established by parent committees on a temporary basis, in order that certain aspects of committee business can be investigated or monitored in more depth. Where this occurs the parent committee will establish the membership, duration and remit of the task and finish group, receive reports or minutes and make decisions based on recommendations for action.

11. Scrutiny Groups

11.1. Scrutiny groups may be established by parent committees on an ongoing basis, in order that certain aspects of committee business can be scrutinised outside of the main assembly and then formally proposed to the committee for approval. Where this occurs the parent committee will establish the membership and remit of the scrutiny group, receive reports or minutes and make decisions based on recommendations for action.

12. Executive responsibilities for quality

12.1. **Vice-Chancellor's Group and University Executive Board**

12.2. The Vice-Chancellor and President is accountable to the Board of Governors. The Vice-Chancellor and President has overall executive responsibility for the management of UEL and is ex officio chair of the Academic Board. The Vice-Chancellor delegates senior staff responsibilities for particular aspects of the institution's management. Each member of staff has responsibility for ensuring quality within their area. The Vice-Chancellor and President chairs the University Executive Board (UEB).

12.3. **School Deans**

12.4. Each School Dean is responsible for executive oversight for the quality of their School's academic provision and for ensuring that quality assurance procedures are complied with inside each School.

12.5. The School Dean is responsible for ensuring the appointment of School Directors to lead the implementation of university strategy at a School level for Education, Careers and Research. This may also include where appropriate the appointment of School Leaders for Learning and

Teaching, Research, and Quality, and Deputy Leaders who may represent the School on committees and chair relevant School meetings.

12.6.   The School Dean is responsible for ensuring that each Course Leader leads completion of a Continual Monitoring Report. The School Dean ensures that a School Continual Monitoring Report, including an action plan, is produced and approved by the School.

12.7.   The School Dean is responsible for the implementation within the School of actions arising from validation, monitoring and review of courses and the ongoing academic quality and standards of courses.

12.8.   **School Directors**

12.9.   Normally, each School has Directors for Education and Experience, Careers and Enterprise, and Innovation and Impact. Directors are accountable to the School Dean and the Pro-Vice Chancellor related to their areas of responsibility, for the effective implementation of relevant procedures at the School level.

12.10. **School Leaders**

12.11. Schools appoint Leaders in critical areas of activity such as Collaborations with Academic Partners, Learning and Teaching, Quality Assurance, and Research. Leaders are accountable to the Deans and/or Directors for the effective implementation of relevant procedures at the School level. The Directors may stand in as a Leader where no Leader is appointed.

12.12. **Course Leaders/Heads of Department**

12.13. Course Leaders and Heads of Department are accountable to the School Dean for the effective management of a department or course and for ensuring that quality assurance procedures at the department or course level, as appropriate, are followed.

12.14. The Head of Department is responsible for leading subject development and ensuring the management of the delivery of modules and their associated assessment in the department. Heads of Department ensure the appointment of appropriate numbers of external examiners.

12.15. The Course Leader completes the Continual Monitoring Report for their courses and ensuring the report is discussed at the Course Committee, and that follow up actions are completed. The Course Leader is also responsible for completing the student handbook and other documentation for quality assurance and enhancement purposes.

12.16. The Course Leader is responsible for ensuring that each member of the course team is aware of their particular responsibilities with regard to the management of a course e.g. Module Leaders, Admissions Tutors, Year Tutors, and Academic Advisors.

12.17. **Directors/Heads of Services**

12.18. Each Director/Head of a Service is accountable to a member of the UEB for the quality of the service which is provided. The Director is responsible for ensuring that quality assurance procedures are followed.

12.19. In particular, the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement is responsible for: the provision of support for the development of policies with regard to quality assurance; the implementation of those quality assurance processes managed by Quality Assurance and Enhancement; and the provision of advice and guidance with regard to implementation at School level.

12.20. The Head of the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching is responsible for overseeing the development of policy and practice in relation to the development of learning and teaching.

12.21. **All staff**

12.22. All staff are accountable to their line manager. All staff have clearly defined job descriptions which state their duties and responsibilities.

12.23. The effective fulfilment of their job description is the responsibility of every member of staff.

12.24. Every member of staff is expected to subscribe to the ethos of quality and contributes to quality assurance and enhancement.