

Academic Quality Assurance

An Introduction to Academic Quality Assurance at Leeds Trinity University

Leeds Trinity University is an independent self-governing higher education institution which has the power to award its own taught awards and therefore the responsibility to assure the standards of those awards and of the educational experience enjoyed by its students.¹ What follows is an introduction to how the University discharges its responsibility.

How do we define standards and quality?

Threshold **academic standards** refers to the minimum level of achievement that a student must reach to succeed on their course and achieve the qualification. A key feature of this is that threshold standards should not vary from one higher education provider to another.

Academic quality in higher education refers to how well providers support students in their learning: through teaching, assessment and feedback, the provision of support, and the availability of resources.

Quality assurance is the process for ensuring that academic standards and the quality of the student experience meet national and institutional expectations for higher education provision. In this context, quality assurance ensures that quality and standards meet minimum baseline requirements.

Quality enhancement is the process through which providers continuously reflect on academic standards and practice with a view to improving the quality of higher education provision and the student experience. In this context, quality enhancement actively seeks to secure quality and standards above minimum baseline requirements.

Leeds Trinity University's Governance Structure

The Academic Board, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, is responsible to the Board of Governors for oversight of the University's academic strategy and the delivery of a quality student experience. This responsibility is discharged largely through a set of deliberative committees, primarily the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee. Faculty Boards and Programme Studies Boards have oversight of quality assurance and quality enhancement at Faculty and School level.

¹ Leeds Trinity University's postgraduate research students are studying for awards of the University of Leeds. In these cases, the University of Leeds is ultimately responsible for standards and quality, but Leeds Trinity University has considerable delegated authority in delivering them at a practical level.

Leeds Trinity University's Academic Quality Framework

The Academic Quality Framework refers to the systems in place to support quality assurance and enhancement across the University. The framework is supported and developed by the Academic Quality Office in partnership with teams from across the University and covers:

- Academic governance arrangements
- Programme approval, review and modification, including academic annual and periodic review
- Collaborative partnership approval, review and modification, including collaborative partnership annual and periodic review
- Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning, including CPD and short courses
- Taught Programme Academic Regulations, which articulate the rules in place to ensure
- Assessment management, including external examining arrangements
- Student casework, including academic misconduct and academic appeals

Processes undertaken in other areas of the University include:

- Student representation, including student representation on the University's Academic Board and committees
- Student surveys, including the National Student Survey (NSS), Student Experience Survey (SES), Module Evaluation Dialogues (MEDs), and Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs)

The External Regulatory Framework

The University is registered with the Office for Students (OfS) who is the independent regulator of higher education in England. As a registered provider, the University is required to comply with conditions of registration, which form a key part of the OfS Regulatory Framework. Therefore, the University's Academic Quality Framework is aligned to the requirements of the OfS Regulatory Framework, particularly the 'B Conditions of Registration for Quality and Standards', to support and evidence the University's compliance with the external regulatory framework.