

# Course Committee Policy

**Introduction:**

This policy outlines the University's expectations for Course Committees on campus and at partners.

**Terms and words we use:**

Words can be confusing. We've explained some **key words** in the popup boxes (see highlighted text in grey).

**What is a Course Committee?**

A Course Committee is a group of staff and student representatives (usually known as **Course Representatives**) who meet to formally manage and review their course, focusing on continuous improvement.

Each course or group of courses has a Course Committee (or equivalent at Partners).

This includes apprenticeship courses who have a separate committee.

Meetings can be in person or organised virtually (such as via Microsoft Teams).

**What do Course Committees aim to achieve?**

Course Committees aim to continually improve the experience of current and future students and apprentices through effective staff-student collaboration. This regular review ensures that high academic standards are maintained and built upon, feeding into our **Continuous Monitoring** process. Course Committees also provide an opportunity for Course Representatives to gain transferable skills which employers hold in high regard.

**What is on the agenda?**

Course Committees follow a University agreed **Terms of Reference** (see Appendix) and [Agenda](#). Committees at partners will cover the same topics and use the same Agenda or a suitable alternative.

The Committee will share good practice and discuss issues raised by students/apprentices and staff concerning the student experience on course. Plans to enhance the student/apprentice experience at course level will be discussed. Actions will be considered to resolve issues in a timely way and revisited to ensure progress has been made.

Topics include:

- Quality of learning, teaching and assessment
- Student experience and wellbeing
- Feedback from students, employers and external examiners (e.g student surveys)
- Course monitoring plans and actions
- Course staffing and structure
- Academic/personal support and guidance
- Equality and diversity
- Resources and facilities
- Work experience and career support
- Celebrating student and staff success

## **What is the membership of the Committee?**

This is flexible but the core membership should be:

- Chair: Head of Department, Course Director, Course Leader or Nominee
- Secretary: Administrator
- Student Representatives: All available elected Course Representatives for each of the courses included. (Ideally at least 1 Course Representative present per course.)
- All relevant Course Leaders and Course Directors
- Technician, Library and Learning Support Services representatives (if appropriate)
- Dean of School or Associate Dean - Students
- Staff with management or leadership oversight of the courses (E.g. work-based education officers and academic practice managers) and staff that make a significant teaching contribution to the courses
- Two Service Users and Carers (for courses where there is a professional requirement)

*Apprenticeships - should employers attend?*

Employers' views are collected and discussed, but they do not usually attend.

*The Course Representative cannot attend – what should happen?*

The student should let the Secretary know in advance and, if possible, provide a nominated replacement. Course administrators and the Student Union work together to ensure courses are well represented.

Members are expected to attend all Committees. 40% of members should be present for the Committee to go ahead.

## **When do Course Committees meet?**

Usually, at least twice a year – once per semester; they are normally organised at the end of November and the end of March, for a maximum 2 hours.

Additional committees can be arranged if appropriate and requested in writing by the Course Representative. For courses that do not fit the standard academic calendar, 2 or more purposeful dates are agreed.

## **How are Course Committees organised?**

The Secretary advises members of provisional dates at the start of the year for each semester (agreed upon by the Course Leader/Student Union and Course Administrator). Dates are then finalised at the beginning of each semester. Members will be updated if the date/s change.

Course Leaders and Course Representatives create opportunities to gather students' views in advance. The Student Union supports Course Representatives in understanding their role, providing training and guidance.

2 weeks prior to the Committee, the Secretary reminds members of the date of the meeting, requests agenda items and gathers relevant documents to share with all Committee members.

### **What documents need to be reviewed?**

The Secretary will send out a link to all relevant documents, normally a week before the Committee. These are usually reports containing current feedback on course experience such as Course Continuous Monitoring Plans, External Examiner Reports and Student Surveys. Occasionally **Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body Reports (PSRB)** will be reviewed.

### **What happens to the points raised in the Course Committee?**

A set of [minutes and actions](#) is produced and sent to the Chair for approval. These are then shared with Committee members. Head of Departments will also receive copies of minutes. Course Leads should upload the minutes to **Blackboard** (or other local virtual platform for partnerships). Minutes and actions from Course Committees are also included in **School Academic Committee (SAC)** papers.

### **Will actions be reviewed?**

Course Committees are responsible for ensuring actions are completed. Any outstanding actions will be reviewed at each meeting. Where actions are completed between Committees, the action 'owner' will inform Committee members of any notable developments.

*What happens if the issues cannot be resolved at Course Committee level?*

If an issue or action cannot be resolved at Course Committee level this should be raised at the School Academic Committee (or partner equivalent) or with relevant person/s via the Chair.

### **What differences are there at Partner institutions?**

Partners should have a meeting using the same staffing, principles, timing and administrative measures. Partners share minutes and action plans from their Committees with their Academic Link Tutor, who will then consider them as part of the Course Monitoring process.

### **What happens for distance learning courses?**

Course Committees can be carried out via Microsoft Teams or other appropriate virtual platform using the same principles as above. Minutes and Actions should still be formally recorded and shared.

**For further training and guidance please see [Student Engagement](#) on the QES webpage**

## **Appendix: Terms of Reference**

Course Committees meet to consider, to review and provide formal feedback on and resolution to:

### **a) Student/Apprentice Experience**

- Matters raised by students/apprentices, tutors and staff
- Matters relating to equality and diversity, and academic/personal support and guidance
- Plans for activities to enhance the student/apprentice experience at course level (including student survey campaigns, welcome week organisation and social belonging and retention events planning)

### **b) Course/Apprenticeship Delivery**

- Matters relating to teaching, assessment, feedback, course structure and workload
- Matters relating to work experience and real-world skills development opportunities (i.e. placements, internships, volunteering etc.) workplace learning and careers support
- The operational running and delivery of the course(s) to ensure that academic standards are maintained and enhanced during the current academic year
- The inclusive nature of course design, delivery and assessment to meet the diverse range of needs of students on the course(s)
- Proposals for course structure modification and new modules

### **c) Resources and Facilities**

- The availability of relevant teaching and learning materials/equipment, buildings, library and IT provision

### **d) Course Quality Management and Enhancement**

- The results from any methods of course feedback from students, including (where appropriate) National Student Survey (NSS), Student Viewfinder Survey (SVS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and to respond as necessary to any issues raised
- External examiner(s) comments
- Course monitoring plans, considering the actions and good practice listed
- Planning for and documentation related to course periodic review, new course approval and relevant other external review processes e.g. accreditation by a professional body, where applicable

### **e) Celebrating Student and Staff Success**

- Aspects of good practice in course delivery and to facilitate sharing that with course teams
- The formal celebration of student and staff success.