



QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK

Casa College

1.0 Introduction to the Internal Quality Assurance & its Handbook

The Quality and Standards Committee is the Committee of the Board of Directors. Its main function relates to monitoring and reviewing, policy development and oversight of the quality assurance framework. The Committee reports directly to the President of the Board, who is also a member of the Committee. The composition of the Committee is detailed below.

The Handbook will be updated as required but particularly where major changes have taken place in the remit or the operation of the Committee. The Handbook aims to provide a comprehensive overview of all aspects of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee and is intended to inform both members and their subordinates in executing their roles in the Committee.

2.0 The Internal Quality Assurance Committee

2.1 Terms of Reference

2.1.1 Constitution & Purpose

The Internal Quality Assurance Committee constitutes one of the Committees of the Board of Directors, and reports directly to it, which is the governing body and executive body responsible for the academic work and standards of the College, both in teaching and in research, and for the regulation and superintendence of the education and discipline of the students of the College.

The purpose of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee is to be responsible, on behalf of the Board of Directors, for all aspects of academic quality assurance: progressing or engaging with institutional policy development; monitoring and reviewing; oversight of the Quality Assurance Framework.

2.1.2 Remit

To advise:

- the College on matters relating to academic quality and standards
- groups or individuals responsible for specific parts of the Quality Assurance

Framework, on the priorities for development, the content and operational processes.

To approve:

where delegated authority of the Board of Directors has been granted, or recommend for approval by the Board of Directors:

- the set of Regulations, Policies and Guidelines and other documents which make up the Quality Assurance Framework of the College, to ensure that they are complete, up to-date and fit for purpose.
- the processes used for the approval, monitoring and evaluation of academic activities, including those related to student learning, to ensure that they are complete, up-to date and fit for purpose.
- academic review activities, including Academic Reviews, Internal Audits and other reviews of academic activities or matters, as may be considered necessary by the Committee.

To monitor:

- the processes that assure the College academic standards for awards are being maintained at a level equivalent to other National and European educational institutions, including those aspects of the Quality Assurance relating to assessment (regulations, policies etc.).

To review:

- reports relating to academic matters of quality or academic standards, arising from internal activities. The review should ensure that all internal processes have been properly carried out and that any necessary action arising from internal activities have been identified and assigned to named individuals.

2.2 Composition & Membership of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee

2.2.1 Composition

The Quality Assurance Committee consists of the:

- President of the Board
- Managing Director
- Academic Director of Studies
- Director of Admissions
- Head Registrar for Student Academics
- Student Affairs Director
- Two Faculty Representatives

- Head of the Program of Study
- Students' representatives

The Committee may invite people to provide specialist input. The Terms of Reference and Membership of the Committee are provided for information at the first meeting of each session and this guide is given to all members for future reference.

2.2.2 Term of Office

Members of the Committee are appointed for one year, from 1st September to 31st July (one academic year). Members are eligible for re-appointment.

2.2.3 Chair

The Chair of the Committee is always appointed by the President of the Board.

2.3 Roles of Members of the Committee

All members of the Committee have a multi-layered representative function. The Directors of Academic Quality represent the views of the College as a whole. The members are responsible for ensuring that the recommendations of the Board of Directors are taken into consideration.

It is agreed that role of the Chair in QAC (responsible for overseeing quality assurance) should operate separately from the role of the Academic Director of Studies (responsible for academic development).

The roles and responsibilities of the Chairman, the Managing Director, the Academic Director of Studies, and other categories of membership are as follows:

2.3.1 Chair

The responsibilities of the Chair with regard to the Committee are:

- to provide leadership to move forward the institutional priorities related to quality and standards and ensure that the Committee achieves its overall objectives;
- to chair meetings and ensuring that meetings run efficiently and effectively;
- to present the Committee's views to other committees as appropriate and to provide feedback from such to the Committee;

- to provide specialist knowledge regarding quality assurance and enhancement;
- to schedule items across meetings so as to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to bring forward items for consideration and that items are not repeatedly dropped from the agenda;
- to be responsible for agreeing the Committee's agenda;
- in conjunction with the Academic Director of Studies being responsible for:
 - briefing new members of the Committee on its remit;
 - ensuring that appropriate papers and information are provided to enable members to make an informed contribution to discussions.

2.3.2 Academic Director of Studies

The responsibilities of the Academic Director of Studies with regard to the Committee are:

- to overview the development of the Quality Assurance Framework to ensure that it remains fit for purpose as the environment and risks change;
- to provide specialist knowledge regarding quality assurance and enhancement;
- to ensure that reports are submitted to the Committee in accordance with an agreed timetable;
- to advise on the committee's agenda;
- in conjunction with the Chair of the Committee, being responsible for:
 - briefing new members of the Committee on its remit;
 - ensuring that appropriate papers and information are provided to enable members to make an informed contribution to discussions.

2.3.3 Other Members – Directors of Departments

The responsibilities of the members - Directors are:

- to represent particular areas of expertise based on the needs for quality improvement of their departments;
- to ensure the consideration of operational and strategic objectives in the context of quality and standards;
- to review quality assurance reports, policies and procedures presented to the Committee for consideration and approval;
- to discuss inter-departmental issues as appropriate and to bring to the Committee the considered views of the Departments;

- to contribute towards discussions that lead to the Committee reaching an informed decision;
- to review and revise departmental policies in light of recommendations from the Committee;
- to bring items to the attention of the Board of Directors;
- to implement agreed policies and procedures;
- to identify policy and procedure items for consideration by the Committee.

2.3.4 Academic Representatives (Faculty)– Head of the Program of Study & Faculty Members

Their responsibilities are:

- to review quality assurance reports, policies and procedures presented to the Committee for consideration and approval;
- to discuss issues with the Academic and Faculty Committee as appropriate and bring to the Committee the considered views of the Council;
- to contribute towards discussions that lead to the Committee reaching an informed decision;
- to bring items to the attention of the Chair of the Academic Council;
- to ensure that the recommendations of the Academic Council are taken into consideration, as appropriate, by the Committee.

2.3.5 Secretary of the Committee

The role of the Secretary is:

- to provide administrative support for the Committee and relevant sub-committees or working groups;
- to prepare draft proposed policies and procedures for consideration;
- to provide specialist input to discussions;
- to advise on the scheduling of agenda items within and across meetings;
- to keep track of and report on progress of actions and matters arising from the Committee meetings.

2.4 Contribution of Members

The success of the Committee in fulfilling its Terms of Reference and its responsibilities to the Board of Directors and the College is dependent on the active engagement of its members both during and outside the meetings.

2.4.1 Preparation for Meetings

For the Committee's meetings to be efficient and effective, members must be well-prepared and informed regarding the issues to be discussed. Such preparation includes reporting on the collective views of colleagues in response to consultations as well as reading the papers circulated in advance of the meeting, and being familiar with the key issues and proposals.

Coversheets for each agenda item will highlight key points for consideration and action required by the Committee, thereby enabling members to focus on their preparation.

The allocation of specific agenda items to individuals or groups requires members to undertake a review of reports, regulations, policies or procedures and present a comprehensive report to the Committee, leading to consequent discussions at the meeting.

2.4.2 At Meetings

Irrespective of their position, the contribution and views of all members are regarded as equally valid. To that end, the Chair will ensure that representatives from the different sections of the College have the opportunity, particularly during meetings, to contribute to issues under consideration. As the situation demands, the Chair will actively invite all members (or particular categories of members) to contribute in order to ensure that the views of each person in attendance are heard during meetings.

2.4.3 Outside the Meetings

In addition to preparation for, and contribution to, meetings of the Committee, members will also be involved in additional Committee-related activities such as briefing or training events (e.g. on the College's annual monitoring and review process).

Other activities outside the meetings involving the Committee members, include reporting to colleagues, disseminating and coordinating responses to consultations, participating in working groups, e.g. working group of developing and implementing ECTS.

2.5 Website of the Quality & Standards Committee

The Committee has a website at: <http://www.casacollege.com/eos/quality-assurance/> which features the remit, composition and membership, dates of meetings, agendas and minutes. The website is updated after each meeting of the Committee.

2.6 Matters delegated by the Internal Quality Assurance Committee

To maximise time available at meetings and allow the consideration of more complex items, routine matters of business have been delegated to the Chair by the Internal Quality Assurance Committee e.g. the approval of membership in various sub-committees, working groups, quality assurance teams etc.

3.0 Operation of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee

3.1 Standing Agenda Items

Agenda items considered by the Committee relate to quality assurance policies, procedures and guidelines. Annual agenda items are detailed in Table 1 below. Departments and other members of the Administration may at times submit non-standing items to the Committee for consideration.

Table 1: Standing Agenda Items

AGENDA ITEMS		Committee date and number/Approval/ Information
TERMS OF REFERENCE		
QSC Terms of Reference	September 2017	30/09/2017 02/2018 EEA Approval
ACADEMIC REVIEW		
Revisions to the Academic Review process and handbook	September 2017	23/09/2017 01/2018EEA Approval
Academic Review Team Reports Departmental Responses/Actions	January 2018	31/01/2018 03/2018EEA Information/ Approval
Academic Review progress reports	30 August 2018	Information/ Approval
Annual Summary of Academic Reviews	30 August 2018	Information
INTERNAL AUDIT		
Revisions to the Internal Audit process and handbook	September 2017	30/09/2017 02/2018 EEA Approval

Internal Audit Reports and Departmental Responses/Actions	January 2018	31/01/2018 03/2018EEA Information/ Approval
Internal Audit progress reports	30 August 2018	Information/ Approval
Annual Summary of Internal Audits	June 2018	30/06/2018 04/2018EEA Information
MONITORING		
Revisions to the Annual Monitoring process and handbook	September 2017	30/09/2017 02/2018 EEA Approval
College Annual Monitoring and Review	30 August 2018	Approval
Academic and Faculty Committee Annual Review Report	At the end of every academic semester (February 2018 & June 2018)	Approval
EXAMINATIONS		
Revisions of Examinations' Processes and Policies	Before the commencement of the new academic year September 2017	23/09/2017 01/2018EEA Approval
Annual Report on Examinations	Feb/June/Sep at end of exams	Approval

3.2 Schedule of Meetings

The Committee usually meets six times per academic year, although additional meetings may be scheduled for more detailed consideration of particular items or for the consideration of items that require immediate consideration.

A schedule of meetings for each academic year is issued prior to the start of each year; each schedule lists the meetings for two academic sessions. Meetings usually take place on Fridays. The start time is typically 15:00 pm, with an expected duration of approximately two hours, which may be extended if more detailed discussion of particular items is required.

Cancellation, rescheduling or inclusion of additional meetings will be notified to members by the Secretary as soon as possible, and within not less than five working days.

3.3 Typical Meeting Structure

The order of business at each of the meetings typically proceeds as follows:

- Welcome and Apologies
- Minutes of Previous Meeting
- Matters Arising
- Chair's Tasks and Responsibilities
- Major discussion items

- Items of Strategy
- Items of Policy
- Formal reports to QAC
- Reports, Working Groups etc.
- Next Meeting: Date and Key Items
- Papers for Information

3.4 Agenda & Papers

Agenda items considered by the Committee are primarily College-specific items but also include items submitted by Departments, the Faculty and the Student Union. In addition, the Committee may generate its own agenda items, identifying areas of policy or procedure related to quality and standards.

3.4.1 Notifying Agenda Items

The agenda is typically set two weeks in advance of each meeting: possible items should be notified to the Secretary of the Committee by no later than 10 days before the meeting. Items notified to the Secretary after this date will be included in the agenda only with the prior agreement of the Chair, otherwise they will be held over until the next meeting.

The Chair and the Secretary will determine whether notified items are matters for this Committee or for another Committee of the College.

Members are requested to identify all matters to the Secretary prior to the meeting, including any urgent or last-minute issues.

3.4.2 Circulation of Agenda & Papers

The agenda and papers are circulated a week in advance of each meeting. These are issued in hard copy and distributed to the Committee members. Notification about the meeting and the distribution of papers will be emailed to members. The date, time and location of the meeting are confirmed in this email and a note included, stating that hard copy papers have been sent.

Minutes of the previous meeting are included in the main circulation; an e-version will have been already issued approximately two weeks after the relevant meeting.

Additional circulations, typically including 'to follow' papers, are kept to a minimum, but on some occasions, are unavoidable (e.g. if papers are being provided by other Committees). Every effort will be made to ensure that all such papers are issued electronically before the meeting, so that members can consider them in advance.

3.5 Decision-Making

The Committee's remit allows it to make decisions on policies, regulations, guidelines and processes that underpin the quality assurance framework, and assure the quality of academic standards and the student learning experience. All decisions are reported to the Board of Directors for information. With regard to policy or procedural matters which require approval from the Board of Directors or input from other Committees, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee will convey its decisions in the form of recommendations.

All full members are entitled to vote, as required, at the meetings of the Committee, although only those who are members of the Board of Directors are eligible to vote on issues involving functions delegated by the Board. Co-opted persons who are not full members and individuals invited to attend meetings are not eligible to vote. The Chair has a deliberative and a casting vote.

3.6 Non-Attendance

To fulfil its responsibilities effectively, the Committee relies on its membership maintaining a high level of attendance at the meetings. If members are absent from three consecutive meetings without a good reason, this may result in the recommendation that the membership is revoked and the President of the Board of Directors appoints a replacement member.

Anyone unable to attend a meeting should notify the Secretary in advance. In the event that a member is unable to attend a meeting, the Chair may approve an alternate.

If a member is unable to attend a meeting where decisions on policy or procedure are expected to be taken, then he or she is invited to submit views (either as an individual or on behalf of the Department, depending on the nature of the consultation) in writing prior to the meeting.

The Committee will maintain a record of attendance for each meeting and will include this in the final report of the session to the Board.

In the absence of the Chair, the Committee can appoint a Deputy Chair from amongst its members. The role of Deputy Chair should normally be undertaken by one of the Directors of the Board. In the absence of the Secretary, the Head Registrar will provide a substitute Secretary.

3.7 Quorum

The quorum necessary to transact business is six full members of the Committee; three members of the Board of Directors and three members of the College staff (administration and faculty staff nominated by the Board of Directors). Substitutes and co-opted members are not included in the quorum.

In the absence of a quorum, no business will be transacted other than the adjournment of the meeting. Notice of the adjourned meeting will be sent to all members of the standing committee at least seven days before the date of the adjourned meeting. At the adjourned meeting, the business for which the original meeting was called may be completed in the absence of a quorum.

3.8 Minutes & Action Points

The Minutes of each meeting are produced by the Secretary and signed off by the Chair. Minutes are circulated electronically to the Committee members usually within two weeks of the meeting. Members are invited to notify any factual errors in the Minutes to the Secretary before the next meeting; these will be announced by the Chair at the next meeting before the Committee accepts the Minutes as an accurate record.

The Secretary is responsible for circulating action points to designated individuals within one week of the meeting so that such individuals have ample time to progress and complete any actions against them. The Secretary will follow up on actions no later than 10 days prior to the next meeting in order to receive a progress report.

3.9 Reporting to Departments and Other Staff Members of the Educational Institution or Partners Involved in the Processes.

As part of its ethos of engagement across the institution, discussions and decisions related to the Committee must be reported to Departments and other staff members of the Educational Institution or partners involved in the processes. Such reporting is the responsibility of the representative on the Committee. All QAC decisions and discussions

should be communicated widely; paperwork and outcomes of debates are very rarely identified as confidential.

In the case of Departments, each Director should ensure that, where appropriate, his or her subordinates, are informed of pertinent issues and decisions. The Directors of Academic Quality should also ensure that staff, and students where appropriate, are properly informed and that individuals who may be directly affected are fully briefed.

3.10 Transacting Committee Business

3.10.1 Reports from Consultations

As the Committee is responsible for institutional matters related to quality and standards, it will frequently require the views of the staff and students across the institution on proposed strategy and policy developments. The Secretary will provide Committee members with discussion papers, questions for consideration and details of format and timescales for responses for all such consultations.

Members are responsible for circulating consultation papers within their Faculties, Administration Departments and the Student Union, as appropriate, and unless an 'official' unit management view is required, for determining the most appropriate means of gaining the collective view of their colleagues. Responses returned to the Secretary must be representative of the shared views of those consulted, not the personal opinion of the individual Committee member. Members should highlight in their responses whether the views expressed are collective or individual.

3.10.2 Papers for the Committee

Members of the Committee or other individuals' out with the Committee, who would like to present a paper to the Committee for consideration, should contact the Secretary in the first instance. The Secretary will liaise with the Chair to determine whether the paper should be forwarded to the Committee for consideration. If the paper is accepted, the Secretary will advise the person related to the paper of details such as the meeting at which the paper will be considered and of the format of the paper.

Non-members are encouraged to communicate with the Committee via the Secretary, rather than emailing the Committee directly. In this way, there is a consistent line of communication and a means of ensuring that only matters of relevance are circulated to the Committee.

3.10.3 Business by Correspondence

At times, it is necessary to complete some of the Committee's business by correspondence, for example if there is urgency to have a certain policy considered and approved within a set time period, it may be necessary for this to take place by correspondence rather than at a scheduled Committee meeting. More permanently, some processes are too time-consuming to be conducted during Committee meetings and therefore take place outside meetings and in line with procedures that have been approved by the Committee; such processes include, for example, the Annual Program Monitoring.

3.11 Devolved Activities and Participating in Working Groups and Projects

At times the Committee may establish working groups to review reports submitted to the Committee or to take forward the development of policies or procedures. All members are expected to participate in such groups to ensure that the work of the group is continually influenced by the objectives of the Committee and to facilitate reporting to and from the Committee. Members are encouraged to invite their colleagues to participate in the various activities of the Committee, thereby providing a wider spectrum of views and experiences.

The Secretary will provide support and guidance to members of a short-term working group, for example, clarification of the group's remit (as endorsed by the Committee), and reporting requirements.

Members may also be allocated specific agenda items for which they will review reports and lead consequent discussions at the Committee meeting.

4.0 Other Committees

The Internal Quality Assurance Committee engages with all other College Committees and primarily the Academic and Faculty Committee, the Administrative and Program Committee and the Student Affairs Committee.

5.0 Useful contacts in the College (for quality assurance matters)

5.1 Quality and Standards Committee

Current Committee membership can be found on the CASA College/Saveriades Educational Organisation website at: www.casacollege.com

It is recommended that all communications with the Committee as a whole should be channelled via the Secretary rather than individual members.

5.1.1 Key Committee Contacts:

Chair

Mr. Yiannis Saveriades, President of the Board,

Tel. 22681882, ext 1+

Email: president@casacollege.com

Secretary

Mrs. Vania Makridou, Registrar

Tel. 22681882, Ext.3

Email: registrar@casacollege.com

5.2 Strategic & Operational Management of Quality Assurance

The strategic and operational aspects of quality assurance are the ultimate responsibility of the President of the Board of Directors and the Academic Director of Studies, being managed primarily by the Head Academic Registrar.

Academic Director of Studies

Mrs. Ellie Petrou

Tel. 22681882, ext.2

Email: academicdirector@casacollege.com

Head Academic Registrar

Mrs. Dorota Jedryka

Tel. 22681882, ext.2

Email: QA@casacollege.com