



CASPIAN
SCHOOL OF ACADEMICS

Procedure 1.9

DELIBERATIVE STRUCTURE AND COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

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Deliberative Structure and Committees – Terms of Reference

Management and Governance

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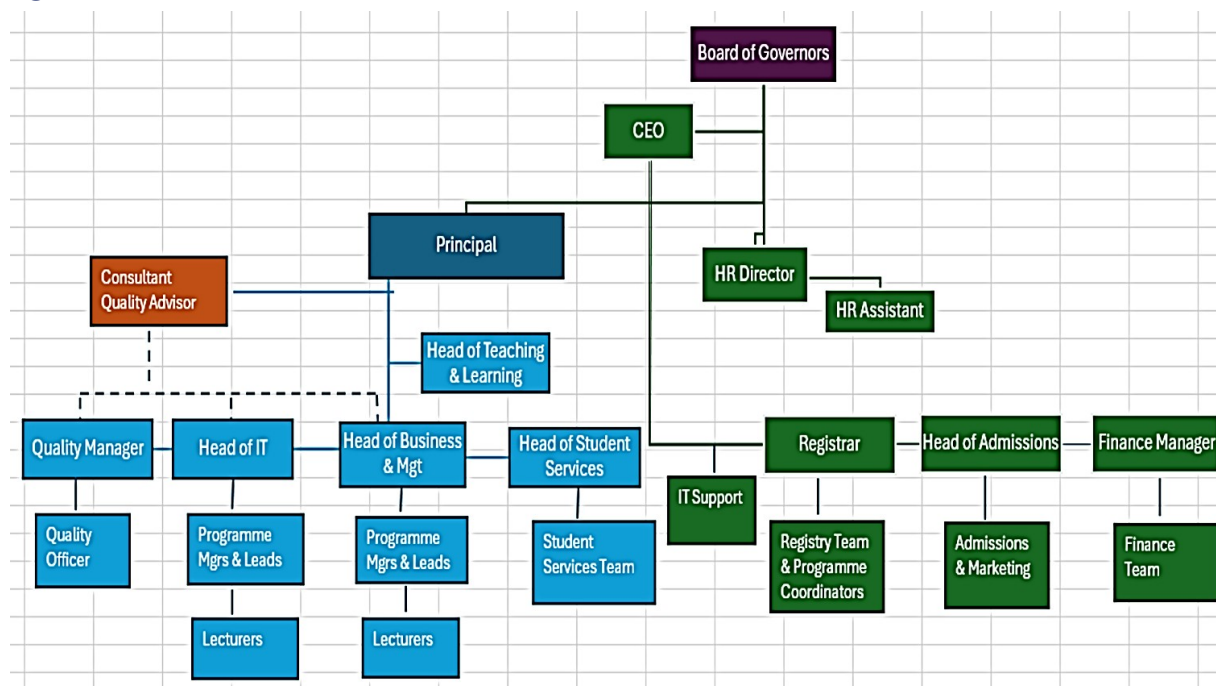
Revision summary (v1.6): Drafting and committee terminology corrected; Version History updated; governance structure reviewed against the published committee chart.

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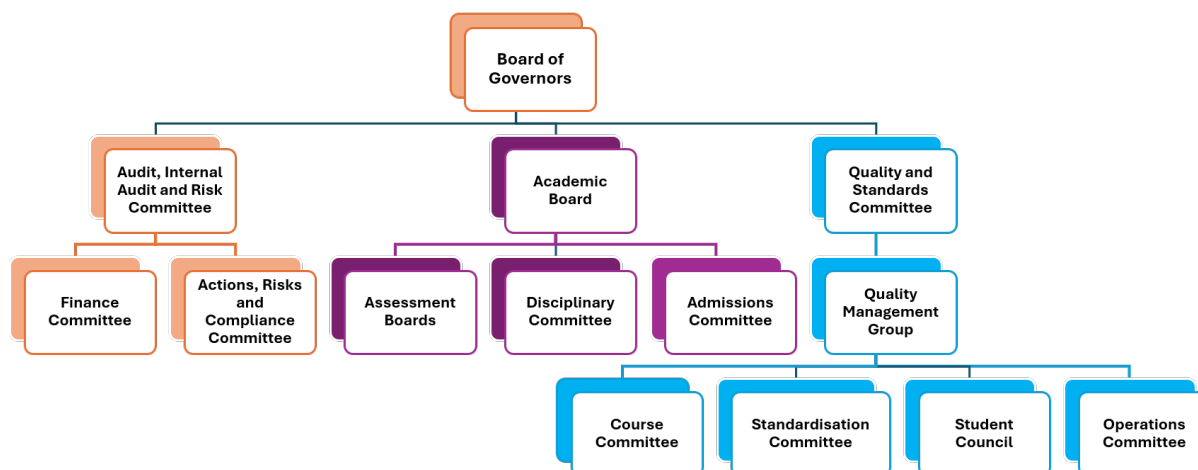
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The School's organisation chart and committee structure has been developed to reflect key responsibilities within a small higher education provider.

Organisation Chart



Committee Structure



Terms of Reference for Board of Governance

Authority

The Governing Body (the Board) has ultimate responsibility for the Caspian School of Academics strategic direction and for the management of education, finances, resources and general affairs of the School.

General Terms

- Oversee local relationships with stakeholders
- Maintain an understanding of effectiveness informed by stakeholder views
- Ensure there is collaboration with employers and others to ensure the range and content of provision is aligned with local, regional and national priorities

- Ensure there is evidence of working with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and other bodies to ensure provision takes account of their priorities
- Ensure the School has a student voice
- Ensure the School has a staff voice
- Comment on School business plans as they are developed
- Oversee Quality of Provision in the School
- Monitor quality performance and provide challenge to local management
- Monitor progress and performance of groups of students so none underachieves
- Secure and sustain improvements in teaching, learning and assessment
- Challenge and support the Senior Management Team to ensure staff improve teaching through incisive performance management
- Monitor progression and destinations
- Challenge and support the Senior Management Team to ensure the provision of accurate, timely and impartial careers guidance
- Ensure the School complies with its policies
- Review and monitor progress in the School and challenge School leadership on:
 - The development of culture in the School in line with its Mission, Values and Behaviours
- Monitor complaints and student feedback

Finance & Resources

- To receive and approve the Financial Plan, budgets and CSA's annual audited accounts.
- To approve variations to the Financial Plan within the limits of delegated authority.
- To recommend financial and procurement regulations proposed by the SMT for approval by the Board.
- The supervision of financial and procurement regulations.
- To approve funding arrangements for major capital projects.
- To approve any long-term loan finance or major financial commitment (if required).
- To agree:
 - Annual estimates of income and expenditure;
 - Staff establishment and salaries;
 - Financial statements;
 - Major variations of expenditure, notable variations from revenue expenditure profiles; and Submission of funding applications to appropriate bodies.
- To approve fees and charges, as appropriate.
- To review arrangements for ensuring the solvency of the CSA and the safeguarding and maintenance of assets.
- To pursue value for money and the efficient and effective use of resources and ensure that financial considerations are considered by CSA staff at all relevant stages in reaching decisions.
- To pursue value for money as it relates to the student experience, aligned to the Value for Money Policy.

Human Resources Matters

- To approve employment-related policies pursuant to the Human Resources Strategy and to approve the framework of pay and conditions of service of employees.
- To approve regulations relating to the conduct of employees and procedures relating to grievances, dismissal on grounds of misconduct, capability, medical incapacity, redundancy and procedures on the appointment, promotion and public interest disclosure.
- To receive or obtain assurance that the framework and procedures for pay and conditions and for grievance and dismissal are appropriate and effective.

General Matters

- To approve CSA's investment policies.
- To keep under review the financial implications of the CSA's Capital Development, Infrastructure and Accommodation Plans, including performance against targets.
- To review annually the provision of pensions and other employee benefits.

Risk External Audit

- To approve the appointment of the external auditors, the audit fee, the provision of any non-audit services by the external auditors and any questions of resignation or dismissal of the external auditors.
- To discuss, if necessary, with the external auditors, before the audit begins, the nature and scope of the audit.
- To discuss with the external auditors problems and reservations arising from the interim and final audits, including a review of the management letter incorporating management responses, and any other matters the external auditors may wish to discuss.

Internal Audit

- To consider the appointment and terms of engagement of the internal audit service, the audit fee, the provision of any non-audit services by the internal auditors and any questions of resignation or dismissal of the internal auditors.
- To review the nature and scope of internal auditors' audit plan; to consider major findings of internal audit investigations and management's response; to monitor the implementation of agreed audit-based recommendations, to promote co-ordination between the internal and external auditors and to discuss with the internal auditors any problems and reservations arising from their audit.

Risk Management, Governance & Control

- To monitor and review the effectiveness of risk management and control of all CSA's activities and those which would apply upon CSA's registration with the OfS and its entry into a validation agreement with a validating body.
- To undertake regular reviews of the effectiveness of academic governance arrangements in previous years.
- To scrutinise the Academic Board and SMT proposed action plans in respect of the outcomes arising from external scrutiny such Quality and Standard Reviews undertaken on behalf of the OfS.
- To review the performance and effectiveness of the external and internal auditors annually, making recommendations to the governing body as to their reappointment.
- To review each quarterly assurance report and the management responses, and the internal auditors' annual report and management responses.
- To ensure that all significant losses have been properly investigated and that the internal and external auditors have been informed.
- To ensure that satisfactory arrangements are in place to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- To keep the quality and accuracy of data submitted on behalf of CSA to external agencies under review.
- To exercise oversight regarding CSA's compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- To oversee CSA's Corruption & Anti-Bribery Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.
- To review regularly CSA's insurance arrangements for assets, people, and business risks.
- In the event of a merger or dissolution of CSA, to ensure that the necessary actions are completed, including arranging for a final set of financial statements to be completed and signed

Membership

The Board shall comprise seven members including:

- Independent Chair and Vice-Chair
- The Chief Executive Officer
- The Principal
- A student member nominated and elected by the students
- A staff member nominated and elected by the staff
- External members

The members of the Board should be made up of individuals with an appropriate mix of skills and experience to allow the Board to discharge its duties effectively. Collectively, members of the Board should have recent, relevant experience in:

- Companies and or local or regional bodies and their needs
- Education and training
- Finance
- Safeguarding
- Equality and Diversity
- The Board will plan for succession to the role of Chair of the Board from current members or an external candidate and will also nominate a Vice-Chair.
- The Board shall nominate individual members to enhance oversight by the Board and ensure the awareness of all members is maintained in the areas of:
 - Safeguarding, including Prevent
 - Equality and Diversity
- If the Chair is absent from a meeting of the Committee, the Vice-Chair shall chair the meeting. In the event that neither the Chair or Vice-Chair is present, the members will select a chairperson from the membership. The staff and student members shall be ineligible to act as Chair, except to chair a meeting in the absence of the appointed Chair.
- The Chair and the School Chief Executive Officer shall nominate suitable members as required. Appointments are subject to approval by the SMT.
- The Principal shall organise the election of staff and student members. Appointments are subject to approval by the SMT.
- Members shall be required to declare their eligibility in a form prescribed by the Principal.
- Every member of the Board shall act in the best interests of CSA and shall not be bound to speak or vote by mandates given by any other body or person. The members of the Board shall be subject to the same requirements to declare

interests as members of the SMT. The Principal shall gather declarations of interests from members.

Terms of Office

- The Chief Executive Officer shall serve as a permanent member of the Board.
- The student member shall serve for one academic year.
- For other members, the initial period of office shall normally be three years. On reappointment, the period of office will be up to three years and set with consideration of the risk that a number of members might leave the Board at the same time. The maximum total term of office shall be nine years.
- A staff member who ceases to be an employee of the School or a student member who ceases to be a student shall immediately cease to be a member of the Board.
- The Board may recommend that the SMT removes from the membership of the Board any member who:
 - has not attended a meeting for a period in excess of six months without the permission of the Board; or
 - is unfit or unable to discharge the functions of a member; or
 - becomes ineligible for membership.
- Any such recommendation should be forwarded to the Principal.
- The SMT reserves the right to appoint or remove Board members.

Meetings

- The Board will normally meet at least 3 times each year, with a Calendar of Reporting approved. Additional meetings may be called as necessary in agreement with the Chair of the Board.
- Meetings shall be quorate if at least 40% of appointed members are present.
- In the event of a vote, a question to be decided at a meeting of the Board shall be decided by a majority of votes cast by the members present. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.
- The Board may invite others to attend its meetings as appropriate. Meetings of the Board will not be open to persons other than the appointed members unless they are invited by special invitation.
- Senior managers at the School should be invited to attend meetings of the Board, particularly where their area of responsibility is under discussion, and shall be entitled to speak at meetings but not to vote.
- Members will be required to keep any matters confidential that are identified as such by the Chief Executive Officer.

Minutes and Papers

- Having regard to the criteria for confidentiality used by the SMT, separate minutes will be prepared for the non-confidential and confidential items.
- At every Board meeting the minutes of the last meeting shall be taken as an agenda item, and, if agreed to be accurate, shall be signed as a true record.
- All minutes will remain confidential until they are reported to the SMT. Any minute which provides personal information about an individual or meets other criteria for confidentiality shall remain confidential.

Terms of Reference for Academic Board

Aim

To consider all matters relating to academic management, teaching, learning and assessment within the School.

Responsibilities

- To consider teaching and learning arrangements for all School programmes
- To receive awarding body reports and consider any necessary actions recommended
- To review the effectiveness of assessment
- To consider the outcomes from teaching observation
- To review student data and consider issues relating to performance and progression
- To prepare for inspections and external reviews
- To manage quality assurance across the School
- To prepare programme and annual monitoring reports
- To manage and monitor the internal verification process
- To consider admissions and enrolment
- To consider academic malpractice and appeals

Membership

The Academic Board will comprise:

- The Principal (Chair)
- The Quality Assurance Manager
- Heads of Department,
- Programme Managers

- Programme Leads
- Student representatives (2)
- Secretary to the Board

In addition, relevant academic and administrative staff may be asked to attend as appropriate.

Meeting frequency and duration

The Academic Board will meet at least once per calendar year and may meet on other occasions as set out in the School academic calendar, as required.

Sub-committees

The Student Committee, Assessment Boards, Admission Subcommittee, Standardisation Committee and the Disciplinary Committee are sub-committees of the Academic Board.

Reports received

The Academic Board receives the minutes of the Student Committee, Assessment Board, Admission Subcommittee, Standardisation Committee and the Disciplinary Committee as and when required.

Terms of Reference for Audit, Internal Control and Risk Management Committee

Introduction

The School is committed to ensuring that it has a strong internal control system that supports risk management, in accordance with regulatory requirements and best practices in risk management.

This Statement explains the School's underlying risk management approach, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Governance, the Principal, and the Senior Leadership Team and other key stakeholders.

The role of the Audit, Internal Audit and Risk Management Committee includes a focus on key aspects of:

- i. the risk management process,
- ii. identifying the primary reporting procedures,
- iii. describing the processes wherein the efficiency of School's internal control procedures will be evaluated by the Board of Governance

Principles of Approach to Risk Management

The School's approach to risk management and internal control is guided by the following core principles:

- Effective risk management contributes to the long-term viability of the School's operations;
- The school's goal is to foster a culture in which risks are identified, acknowledged, and managed by all levels of staff;

Role of the Audit, Internal Control and Risk Management Committee

The Audit, Internal Control, and Risk Management Committee has been assigned responsibility by the Board to monitor and advise on the School's risk management framework.

The Audit, Internal Control, and Risk Management Committee advises the Board of Governance on the efficacy of the School's risk management practises. It submits an annual report to the Board of Governance detailing the Committee's activities. The Committee's formal opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the School's risk management systems is included in this report. This report is considered by the Board as part of its review of the Financial Statements and the data linked to the.

Role of the Principal and Senior Management Team

The Principal is ultimately responsible for the organisation, direction, and management of the School and its staff. The Principal, in the context of risk assessment and audit is responsible for:

- Identifying and evaluating the school's key risks for consideration by the Board of Governance. (Appendix A)
- Advising the Board of Governance on risk management strategy and policy development through the Audit Committee and the effectiveness with which policies and procedures for risk management and internal control are being implemented.
- Providing adequate information on the status of risks and controls at the corporate level to the Board of Governance and its committees in a timely way.
- Notifying the OfS of any significant adverse change, such as a large and imminent threat to the School's financial status, or substantial fraud.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Principal is facilitated by Director Operations who has operational responsibility for the development and application of the Risk Management Policy, as well as making sure that risk management processes are accurately coordinated and consistent throughout, and that employees are adequately inducted and trained.

SMT is responsible for monitoring and updating the School's Risk Register (as needed).

Each Audit Committee meeting begins with a review of the Risk Register.

It is the responsibility of a member of the SMT who a risk owner is, to monitor the risk and ensure that it is monitored and managed effectively, and that progress is reported.

Risk management as part of the system of internal control

The School's internal control system includes risk management and a range of features that allow the School to respond to operational, financial, reputational, and commercial concerns. These are some examples:

- Regulation, policies and procedures

A regulatory and policy framework is used throughout the School and serves as the foundation for the internal control process (this includes, financial regulations, academic regulations, risk registers, counter-fraud and anti-bribery policy, and health and safety policy etc.).

- Regular reporting

The risk management framework and Risk Register is used to review risks on a regular basis by all areas of the School. There are processes in place for reporting and escalating risks when an issue is considered to be high.

The Principal reports to the Board of Governance at each meeting, offering an update on major areas of strategic activity, progress, and development, as well as normal items of business such as student recruitment and financial performance.

The Board periodically considers performance against all key performance indicators (KPIs), including issues relating to the student experience, research and enterprise, and institutional sustainability, and success on all strategic KPIs is explicitly reported on an annual basis.

- Annual planning and budgeting

The annual planning and budgeting processes at the School are used to establish objectives, agree on action plans, and allocate resources. The SMT and members of each academic programme meet at least once a year to discuss risk identification and management. Progress toward meeting annual plan objectives that support the fulfilment of the Strategic Planning Framework is tracked and reported to the Board of Governance on a regular basis.

- Corporate risk management framework

The SMT considers risk management issues on a regular basis, and formal discussion and review of the Risk Register at regular intervals throughout the academic year aids in the identification, assessment, and ongoing monitoring of risks that are important to the institution and its performance.

- Programme risk management framework

Programme managers apply and tailor the risk management framework to each Programme. They are accountable, in collaboration with their Leadership Teams, for identifying, managing, monitoring, and reporting risks and controls via the agreed-upon School processes and make sure that suitable links between operational and corporate level risks are established.

The Principal oversees a routine evaluation of all Programme and Risk Registers to verify compliance with the School's expectations for the consideration, recording, and management of significant risks.

- Audit Committee

The Audit Committee reports on internal control issues to the Board of Governance and to alert the Board to any emergent difficulties. In addition, as part of its evaluation of internal controls, the Committee reviews internal audit, external audit, and management. As a result, the Committee is well-positioned to advise the Board on the effectiveness of the internal control system, including the School's risk management system.

- Internal audit programme

Internal audit is a key component of the internal control process. Aside from its regular work, internal audit oversees an annual review of the efficacy of the institution's risk management system, and it uses a risk-based approach in accordance with instructions from the Office for Students.

- External audit

External audit gives feedback to the Audit Committee on the operation of the internal financial controls examined during the yearly audit.

- Third party reports

External consultants support may be required where seen to be advantageous to the institution, and as appropriate, used on a regular basis. The engagement of specialised third parties for consulting and reporting can improve the internal control system's reliability.

- Internal working groups

Internal cross-institutional working groups serve as an additional mechanism for monitoring and assessing risk on a thematic basis, and can escalate issues to the Risk Register, which senior managers can incorporate into their own.

Annual review of effectiveness

Based on information provided by the Audit Committee, the Board of Governance is responsible for monitoring the

efficacy of the School's internal controls. Its strategy is given below.

- The Audit Committee will review the preceding year and analyse the School's track record on risk management and internal control for the risks on the Risk Register.
- Consider the following year's internal and external risk profile, as well as whether current internal control mechanisms are likely to be successful.
- Ensure that the upcoming year's internal audit programme tackles the significant risks.

The Audit Committee will consider and advise the Board on the following aspects when examining the effectiveness of internal controls:

- Control of environment
- The School's objectives and financial and non-financial goals;
- The institutional culture, approach, and resources for risk management;
- Accurate delegation of authority .
- On-going identification and evaluation of significant risks
- Early identification and assessment of important hazards.
- Risk prioritisation and resource allocation to address high-exposure areas
- Information and communication

The reliability and quality of information on serious hazards;

- The time it takes to identify control breakdowns or new risks.
- Monitoring and corrective action
- The institution's ability to learn from its past experiences and failures;
- The institution's commitment and the speed with which corrective actions are implemented.

Terms of Reference for Quality and Standards Committee

These Terms of Reference must be read in conjunction with the terms of reference of the Caspian School of Academics (CSA) Board of Governance Terms of Reference. The Quality and Standards Committee is a subcommittee of the CSA Board of Governance.

Purpose

In summary, within the context of the Caspian School's mission, vision, aims and strategy, the Committee will:

- Review, monitor and advise the Board on the quality of education (embracing teaching, learning and assessment, and students' achievements) quality review, and standards, including targets, across the School's provision
- Monitor summary reports, underpinning the quality of the provision, in the aspects listed below under Remit of The Committee, but not limited to these
- Review, and advise the Board on arrangements for, self-assessment and quality improvement and recommend to the Board approval of the School's Self-Assessment Report
- Ensure that the School responds effectively to the requirements of the relevant education inspection frameworks and regulatory bodies: including the Office for Students, with explicit emphasis on Leadership & Governance; Inclusion; Safeguarding and Contribution to meeting Skills needs.
- Monitor and advise the Board on the quality of Curriculum, Teaching & Training; Achievement and Participation & Development within the Programmes offered through Awarding Bodies and University Partnerships.

Provision for Learner with High Needs

- Monitor, and advise the Board on, the quality of learning from learner and employer perspectives.
- Monitor safeguarding, Prevent, equality, diversity and inclusion, student wellbeing and personal development, ensuring that the Board receives appropriate assurance.
- Provide assurance to the Board that the School's higher education provision meets the quality and standards requirements of the Office for Students (OfS), including compliance with OfS conditions B1-B6, external examiner reports, student outcomes and student protection obligations.

Membership

1. The Committee shall comprise at least four members, plus any co-opted members. The Committee may invite the Institution's specialist advisers or other third parties to attend meetings of the Committee as appropriate (such persons shall not have a vote but shall be entitled to speak at the meeting). The Quality Manager and a Head of Department will be CSA members. Where possible, a student representative will also be included.
2. The Chief Executive Officer, the Principal and the Head of Teaching and Learning are ex-officio members. Other School staff may attend if requested and required, as appropriate.
3. The Chair of the Committee shall be approved by the Board of Governance and will normally be a Governor.
4. In the absence of the Chair, the members attending the meeting shall select one of their number to 'Chair' that meeting.
5. The quorum for meetings of the committee shall be three members.

6. Any governor not a member of the Committee may attend in a non-voting capacity.
7. The Secretary to the Board of Governance shall act as Secretary to the Committee.
8. The Committee shall meet at least 3 times per year.

Remit Of The Committee

1. To advise the Institution on matters concerning the quality and effectiveness of education programmes for school leavers and adult learners and more broadly the higher education provision and the periodic review of the I provision. Of particular note will be the quality and effectiveness of provision for students with identified learning difficulties and disabilities as part of CSA's widening participation and social inclusion agenda.
2. To advise CSA on matters concerning the quality and effectiveness of provision including as benchmarked against national achievement rates.
3. To review and recommend to the School's Quality Improvement Strategy.
4. To review and recommend to the Corporation, appropriate annual targets for students' recruitment, attendance, punctuality, retention rates, pass rates, achievement rates (formerly success rates), students' progress and progression, embracing all provision.
5. To monitor the relevant KPIs and risks from the School KPIs and Risk Register assigned to the Committee and escalate material risks to the Audit, Internal Control and Risk Committee and the Board.
6. To rigorously monitor the curriculum elements of the Strategic Plan and the progress made in respect of the Quality Improvement Plan, including the extent of achievement against targets and the impact upon students' retention, pass and achievement, their progress and progression/destinations.
7. To note, and to advise the Board of, aspects of curriculum performance which may influence their decisions on the further development of the School's curriculum, including alignment with Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and employer demand.
8. Review the above performance against relevant national and sector performance data and consider the trends in the School's performance year on year.
9. To rigorously monitor the quality and effectiveness of the School's teaching, learning and assessment, including the consideration of lesson observation outcomes and performance management.
10. To consider reports on students' experiences of their teaching, learning and assessment, including the review of students' responses to surveys and questionnaires.
11. To receive, consider and recommend to the Board the Annual Monitoring Report.
12. To ensure that the School undertakes systematic and rigorous self-assessment which is appropriately validated.
13. In partnership with the School's senior managers, systematically and thoroughly consider the School's annual Self-Assessment Report, making subsequent recommendations to the Board.
14. To consider the Quality Improvement Plan of the School's annual Self-Assessment Report and to advise the Board about any significant matters and recommendations arising from their review.
15. To receive termly safeguarding and Prevent reports, together with the Annual Safeguarding Report, and provide assurance to the Board that statutory safeguarding duties are met.

Reporting Procedures

The Secretary to the Committee shall circulate minutes of the meetings of the Committee Members. As advised, the minutes will also be made available to the Board of Governance.

Terms of Reference for Finance Committee

Aim

To monitor accounts, budgets, investment and expenditure and provide financial guidance for the Board of Governance

Responsibilities

- to advise the Board of Governance on matters relating to financial review and management
- to review and monitor School accounts
- to prepare and monitor the School annual budget
- to prepare and monitor departmental budgets
- to assess the need for major investment and capital expenditure
- to liaise appropriately with appointed external auditors
- to monitor all recommendations made by external auditors
- to consider any other matters relating to the finances and financial management of the School

Membership

The Finance Committee will comprise at least one independent external members of the Board, one School Director and the Principal. The Chair will be one of the independent external members. The Board Secretary will provide secretarial support, prepare papers in advance and produce minutes.

Meeting frequency and duration

There will normally be a meeting prior to each Board of Governance meeting (three times per year). The meeting duration will not exceed two hours. The Chair of the Finance Committee will provide a brief oral report on meeting outcomes to the Board of Governance.

Terms of Reference for Actions, Risks and Compliance Meetings

Purpose

The ARC meeting provides a focused forum to review operational risks, emerging issues and compliance matters, and to coordinate actions required to address them. The meeting ensures that issues identified through institutional registers are actively monitored and progressed, with clear ownership and escalation where required.

Scope

The meeting draws primarily on the Quality Intelligence / Emerging Issues Register as the main working document. A small number of priority items are selected for discussion at each meeting where decisions, ownership or escalation are required.

The meeting also reviews the Quality Risk Register to confirm that risks remain accurate, mitigations are progressing and risk ownership is clear. Where appropriate, significant issues may be escalated to the Institutional Risk Register or other governance bodies.

Responsibilities

- Review priority issues affecting academic quality, student experience and institutional operations.
 - Agree practical actions, assign ownership and confirm timelines for delivery.
 - Monitor progress against previously agreed actions.
 - Confirm the status and mitigation of key quality risks.
 - Escalate significant risks or unresolved issues to SMT, Academic Board or other governance groups where appropriate.

Membership

- Quality Lead (Chair)
 - Principal
 - Registry Manager (Kaniz)
 - Student Engagement Lead (Silvia)
 - Head of Student Services (Noman)

Additional colleagues may be invited where relevant.

Meeting frequency

ARC meetings are monthly and will take place typically in the first two weeks of each month. This timing is deliberate to ensure that issues requiring Senior Management Team (SMT) attention are surfaced at ARC meetings.

Approach

Meetings are action-focused and structured around a short list of priority items drawn from the intelligence register. The emphasis is on agreeing practical next steps, confirming ownership and ensuring that issues are progressed or escalated appropriately.

Reporting

Key actions and escalations arising from ARC meetings will be recorded and, where appropriate, reported to SMT and other governance groups.

Terms of Reference for Assessment Board

Aim

To consider all matters relating to the outcomes of provision assessments. Assessment Boards will have a responsibility for considering the performance of students in the subject or set of related units.

Responsibilities

- To confirm grades achieved
- To consider extenuating circumstances
- To review cheating and plagiarism
- To monitor student progression

- Confirmation of awards, referrals, and deferrals

Membership

The Assessment Board will comprise the Principal, and all relevant academic and administrative staff. Meetings will be chaired by the Principal.

Meeting frequency and duration

The Assessment Board will meet at the end of each term. There will be an additional Assessment Board in each academic year. This will usually fall in June/July after the completion of the programme. There may also be a separate board to deal with referrals. Dates will be published in the School academic calendar.

Reports received

The Assessment Board receives the IV reports prepared by the School

Terms of Reference for Disciplinary Committee

Purpose

The Disciplinary Committee is a subcommittee of the Quality & Standards Committee which may be convened by the Head of Student Services or the Registrar on an ad hoc basis to consider issues of alleged or suspected academic impropriety or serious breaches of the Code of Conduct on the part of students. The Student Disciplinary Procedure operates within a wider student conduct framework comprising:

- the Student Charter, which sets out shared values, mutual expectations, and the School–student partnership;
- the Student Code of Conduct, which defines the standards of behaviour expected of all students and identifies behaviours that may constitute misconduct; and
- the Student Disciplinary Procedure, which explains how alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct are investigated and, where necessary sanctioned.

For minor offences or first offences of a less serious nature, the School may rely on informal methods or as set out in the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure, with individual students who have been identified as breaching the Code of Conduct meetings with a Programme Lead or Head of Department.

Formal disciplinary actions will be enacted where serious offences occur or where offences are repeated following informal or less formal interventions. Any student who is the subject of a disciplinary procedure has the right to appeal as per the Appeals Policy.

Where considered necessary, appointments are made by the relevant Head of Department based on the recommendations of the Head of Student Services or the Registrar who then convene the Disciplinary Committee to consider the nature of alleged misconduct or impropriety and make appropriate recommendations. It will normally restrict its deliberations to more serious allegations or suspicions.

Underpinning Principles

This procedure is underpinned by three principles:

Fairness – every student will have the opportunity to understand the case against them, respond fully, and access appropriate support.

Proportionality – disciplinary action will reflect the seriousness of the alleged misconduct, with an emphasis on education and rehabilitation wherever possible.

Transparency – decisions will be clearly reasoned, communicated in writing, and subject to appeal.

Membership

Membership may be drawn from the following;

- Head of Student Services or the Registrar (Chair)
- Quality Assurance Manager
- A lecturer from a programme that the student is not associated with

Other members of School staff or external expertise as may be necessary.

Role And Responsibilities

The Disciplinary Committee is convened by the Head of Student Services or the Registrar (who acts as Chair) as necessary. Membership will be based on nature of alleged disciplinary offence. A minimum of 3 persons will be included who may be drawn from across the School (or occasionally drawing on external expertise) according to, or as relevant to the alleged disciplinary issue under consideration.

Role & Expectations of the Chair

The Chair convenes and manages meetings, provides documentation and reports as necessary to members for the proper functioning of the Committee. The Chair also arranges that the Disciplinary Committee issues a report to the

Quality & Standards Committee and to subjects of alleged or suspected impropriety and/or academic impropriety including such recommendations as the Committee sees fit to make.

Meetings of the Disciplinary Committee

Frequency of Meetings

The committee meets as required.

Quorum: The quorum for a meeting is 3 members. Where a quorum not possible, the meeting will be adjourned until a time determined by the Chairperson.

Appointment to the Disciplinary Committee: Appointments to the Disciplinary committee are made by the relevant Head of Department and are made on an ad hoc basis, based on the nature of the circumstances being considered.

Powers of Decision Making

The Committee is a decision-making body. It investigates circumstances related to allegations of breaches of discipline across a number of policies.

Reporting Relationships

The Disciplinary Committee provides a report based on its investigative function to relevant Programme Boards and, as appropriate to the Academic Board through the Quality & Standards Committee.

Role & Expectations of Members of the Disciplinary Committee

Committee members are expected to be appropriately prepared for meetings, must read relevant reports and documentation in advance.

Terms of Reference for Admission Subcommittee

Purpose

The Caspian School of Academics (CSA) Admission Subcommittee exists to consider applications from specific individuals (examples below), and to make decisions about whether a place can be offered to an individual in line with the CSA Admissions Policy and the CSA Equality Opportunities Policy. The Admission Subcommittee may also be asked to sample applications to ensure that appropriate entry requirements are consistently being applied.

Which applications should be referred to the Admission Subcommittee?

1. New Applicants who have disclosed an unspent criminal conviction
2. Students who have complex ALS (additional Learning support) needs
3. Students who are from EOTAS. (Education other than at School)
4. Students who have previously attended residential and non-residential specialist schools
5. Students who have previously been excluded from CSA
6. Returning students should only be referred to the Admission Subcommittee if one or more of the reasons below apply to them:
 7. The student has disclosed an unspent criminal conviction since enrolment
 8. An appropriate agency (Probation Service or the police) has disclosed to us information about an unspent criminal conviction
 9. Students who have not met the conditions imposed, which have been reviewed by their personal tutor and have subsequently been referred to the Admission Subcommittee.

Who should NOT be referred to the Admission Subcommittee?

- a. A student who has consistently not met any of the CSA standards
- b. These students are put through the college disciplinary process & monitored via their tutor or nominated member of staff.

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee will meet regularly throughout the year and all decisions will be communicated within 10 working days. Committee decisions may typically but not exclusively include:

- An offer being made without conditions
- An offer being made with specific conditions (e.g. offer a place on a particular day or joining a particular group)
- An offer being made with a support package in place
- A place not being offered
- A request for a 'Support and Risk Assessment' to be carried out by an independent specialist to further inform the Committee's decision.

How should referrals be made to the Admission Subcommittee?

All application and interview information should be passed to the designated Admission Subcommittee lead or the Head of Admissions. Please ensure that the reasons for the referral are clearly set out in the paperwork and any supporting information or documents are made available.

NB: In most cases the School interview should take place first and the interviewer should advise the applicant that their application is being referred to the Admission Subcommittee and the reasons for this.

Students that have an unspent criminal conviction

If the student has already disclosed the conviction, they will have been asked to send an email to admissions@caspianschool.ac.uk stating their probation officer's name and their permission for the School to contact them.

If the student discloses the conviction for the first time, in the interview, they should be told that they will be contacted by the designated Admission Subcommittee lead to get the necessary permissions and relevant information from their probation officer.

Once the disclosure is returned to CSA the designated Admission Subcommittee will follow up with the appropriate services, log results and pass back to Admission Subcommittee Chair.

Students with Additional Needs

Young people with complex additional needs will be reviewed by the Head of Student Services and the relevant Head of Department to ensure that their needs can be met. If their needs cannot be met by CSA, the School will try and refer them to another Provider who may be better equipped to meet their needs.

Appeals

The student will be advised if an appeal can be made, and an appeal deadline will be given. This must be made in writing within 10 working days with reasons for the appeal being stated, and any additional new and substantial information to support the reasons for the appeal being supplied.

Appeals will be investigated by a member of the SMT or the Principal but NOT the representative who attended the original Committee meeting.

An appeal will consist of relevant documents being given to the member of staff considering the appeal and a deadline for a decision to be made.

The person considering the appeal will communicate in writing to the applicant with their decision within 10 working days, unless additional reports are required which could delay this response time.

The appeal decision is final and no other appeal can be made for that academic year.

Membership

The CSA Admission Subcommittee will consist of the following staff representatives;

- Head of Department (or appropriate SMT representative/s)
- Admissions Manager (or designated alternative representative)
- Head of Student Services
- A lecturer
- A programme coordinator
- The Note Taker to support with the administrative processes.

The Committee will be considered quorate with 4 members present. (Not including the minute taker).

The CSA Quality Manager will act as a consultant to the Committee when necessary.

Terms of Reference for Quality Management Group

Reports to: Senior Management Team and Academic Board

Meeting frequency: Quarterly (four to five meetings per year)

The Caspian School of Academics (CSA) Quality Management Group (QMG), under the leadership of the Quality Manager and oversight by the Head of Teaching and Learning, is responsible for the School's quality assurance and improvement across the range of provision, and the quality of the student learning experience. In doing so, QMG will act as a planning forum and oversight body for the discussion, promotion and implementation of developments in quality assurance and enhancement whether internally or externally indicated. The function of the group is deliberative as well as operational and includes:

1. Leading Quality Assurance and Improvement across the School including by:
 - a. identifying good quality assurance practices and sharing these across all provision to support enhancements;
 - b. maintaining oversight of the School's response to initiatives and requirements of relevant external bodies, including partners and awarding bodies.

2. Overseeing the School's Quality Assurance including through:
 - a. reviewing and further developing internal documentation for the support and evaluation of courses, programs, services and activities;
 - b. review of termly/annual reports and student feedback including consideration of student data and term-on-term and year-on-year comparisons;
 - c. overseeing and monitoring the effective implementation of internal and external review recommendations,
 - d. ensuring that quality assurance and improvement meets the broader strategic needs of the School and the requirements of external partners and awarding bodies.
3. Oversight and review of the planning, delivery and assessment of teaching and learning through;
 - a. review of assessment strategies, to support broad consistency across subject areas;
 - b. confirmation of compliance with awarding organisation's regulations and requirements and issues impacting on CSA's delivery methods;
 - c. review of student feedback to enhance the student learning experience, including recommendations to SMT and Academic Board;
 - d. sharing of good practices between programme areas as identified by internal and external reviews;
 - e. review of progress against identified themes based on student and external examiner feedback;
 - f. identifying and leading on staff development and training requirements.

Core Membership	Associate Membership
Quality Manager (Chair)	Principal
Head of Teaching and Learning	Chief Executive Officer
Programme Managers	Head of Student Services
Programme Leads	Compliance Manager
Programme Coordinators (as appropriate)	

A quorum of 50 per cent of the membership is required for each meeting and to ratify decisions.

Terms of Reference for Student Council

Aim

To consider all matters concerning student engagement, development and welfare

Responsibilities

- to consider and monitor student engagement across the School
- to review student feedback arrangements
- to consider student welfare and related issues
- to review arrangements for informing students of academic developments
- to involve students in preparation for inspections and external reviews
- to inform students about quality assurance across the School
- to consider student complaints and concerns
- to inform students about academic malpractice and appeals

Membership

The Student Committee will comprise the Student Welfare Officer and all student representatives. Meetings will be chaired by the Student Welfare Officer.

Meeting frequency and duration

The Student Committee will meet once per term and the meeting duration will not exceed two hours.

Reports received

The Student Committee will receive the minutes of the Academic Board and the Board of Governance for information. Minutes of its meetings will be formally received by the Board of Governance (and also the Academic Board for information)

Terms of Reference for Standardisation Meetings

Aim

To consider all matters relating to staff and academic standards affecting teaching and learning of the students at Caspian School of Academics.

Responsibilities

- to discuss all matters that may need standardisation in teaching and learning arrangements for all School programmes
- to consider the awarding body reports and discuss any necessary actions recommended in such reports with a view to have a common practice for such activities.
- to review the effectiveness of assessment
- to discuss the outcomes from peer and teaching observation for existing academic staff
- to review the performance of individual teachers in the classrooms.
- to manage quality assurance across the School
- to discuss and produce programme activities for the term
- to review the internal verification process at the School
- to Consider the enrolment matters such as initial diagnostic tests for prospective students
- to investigate all academic malpractice and appeals that may come to the attention of the School

Membership

The standardisation meetings will comprise all members of staff that have input in the life of a student which typically may be the Principal, PL, Quality Assurance staff and all academic and administrative staff, the student representative is requested to attend whenever necessary. Meetings will be chaired by the Principal.

Meeting frequency and duration

The Standardisation meetings will take place as set on the academic quality calendar, usually at least once per term

Terms of Reference for Course Committee Meetings

Purpose

Course Committee Meetings (CCMs) provide a simple, student–staff forum at course level to discuss the student experience, share feedback, and identify practical improvements.

CCMs are intended to:

- Create open dialogue between students and staff.
- Discuss what is working well and what could be improved.
- Identify actions that improve the student experience.
- Provide a local mechanism for student voice and feedback.
- Feed useful themes into wider quality and enhancement activity.

Scope

CCMs focus on matters affecting the learning experience within a course or programme.

Topics may include:

- Teaching, assessment, and learning resources.
- Communication and academic support.
- Timetabling, facilities, and operational issues.
- Student engagement, belonging, and wellbeing.
- Feedback from surveys or previous actions.

CCMs do not replace formal complaints, appeals, or individual student cases.

Participation

CCMs should remain informal, proportionate, and inclusive.

Participants may include:

- Programme Leader or Course Lead.
- Student Representatives.
- Teaching staff.
- Student support or engagement staff where relevant.

Timing

- CCMs should normally take place once each term, or proportionately to the course structure.

- Meetings are most useful when held mid-term, allowing time for feedback and follow-up.

Outputs

CCMs should result in:

- A short record of agreed actions.
- Clear ownership and timescales where appropriate.
- Updates shared back to students where possible.
- Themes that can inform programme monitoring and enhancement activity.

Principles

CCMs should be:

- Student-centred.
- Collaborative and constructive.
- Practical and solution-focused.
- Proportionate to course size and structure.
- Focused on visible follow-up and “You Said, We Did” activity.

Terms of Reference for Operations Meetings

Purpose

Operations Meetings provide a short, practical forum for staff to coordinate around day-to-day academic operations, student support, and delivery issues.

The meetings are intended to:

- Improve communication between academic and support teams.
- Identify and resolve operational issues quickly.
- Support consistent approaches to attendance, assessment, communication, and student support.
- Share updates that affect course delivery and the student experience.
- Create clear actions and accountability without unnecessary administration.

Scope

Operations Meetings focus on current operational matters that require coordination across teams.

Topics may include:

- Attendance monitoring and follow-up.
- Assessment deadlines, submissions, and progression.
- Student concerns requiring coordinated support.
- Timetabling, rooming, or resource issues.
- Communication processes and escalation points.
- Short-term actions linked to quality, engagement, or compliance.

Operations Meetings are not intended to duplicate SMT, committee governance, or formal quality review meetings.

Participation

Attendance should remain focused and relevant.

Participants may include:

- Heads of Department or Programme Leaders.
- Attendance, assessment, registry, or student support staff.
- Quality staff where appropriate.
- Other staff invited for specific agenda items.

Timing

- Meetings should normally take place monthly or as needed.
- Meetings should remain short and action-focused.
- Typical duration: approximately 30 minutes.

Outputs

Operations Meetings should produce:

- A short list of actions and owners.
- Escalation of issues requiring wider decision-making.
- Improved coordination between teams.

- Practical updates that can feed into local monitoring or wider oversight.

Principles

Operations Meetings should be:

- Practical and delivery-focused.
- Collaborative across teams.
- Light-touch and proportionate.
- Action-oriented rather than discussion-heavy.
- Designed to support timely resolution of issues.

Senior Management Team

Senior Management Team	
Reports to	Board of Governance
Frequency of meeting	Monthly
Membership	Principal (Chair) Programme Leader Director of HR & Operations Quality Assurance staff Associate member – attend as required including Marketing, Admissions and Administration
Remit	Responsible for the strategic development and management of CSA and compliance with external regulations.
Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement, Monitoring and Review Strategy	Receiving summary reports linked to external reviews. Leading on the establishment of partnerships and required evidence of meeting regulatory frameworks.