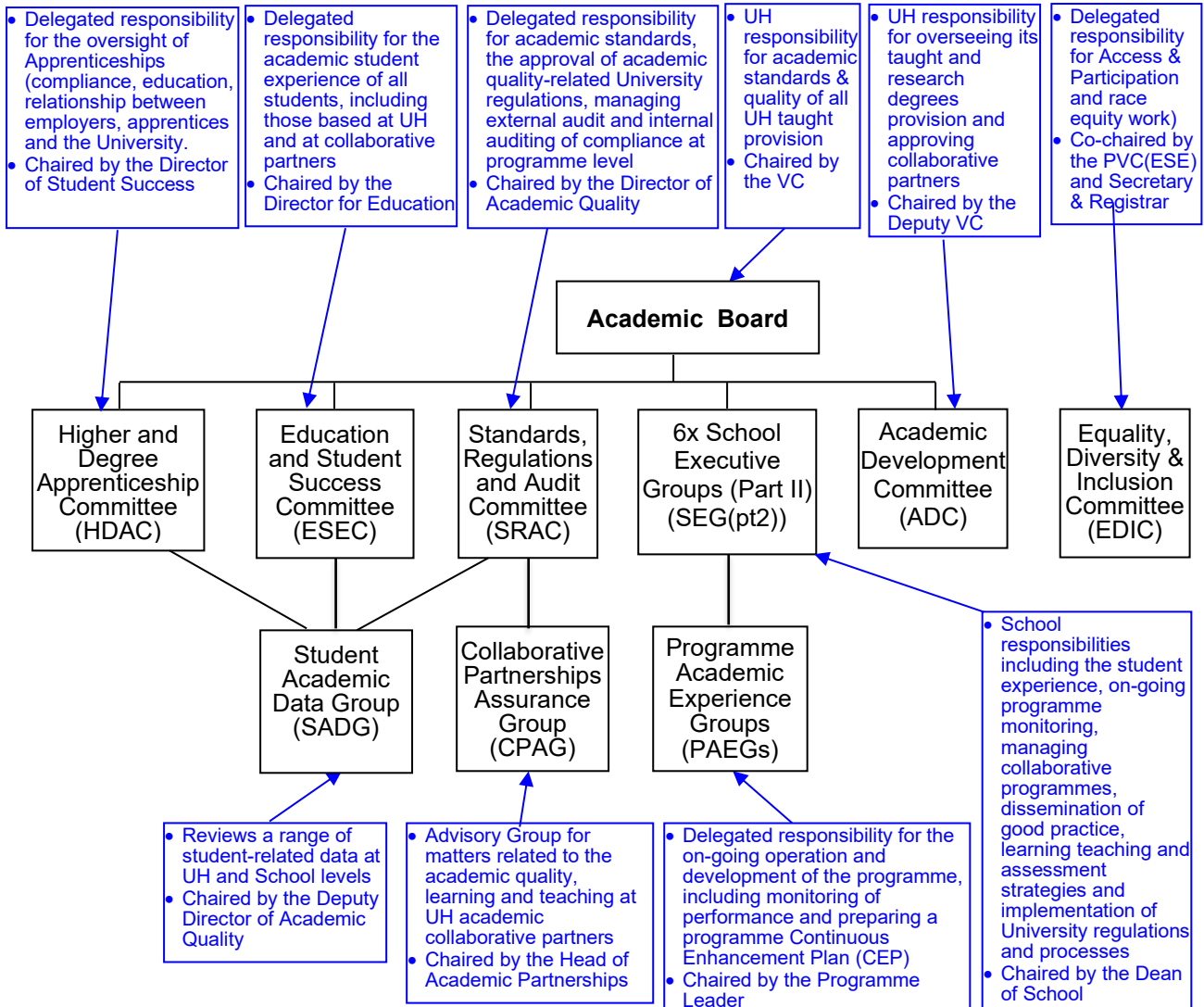


The University of Hertfordshire Quality Assurance System for its taught provision

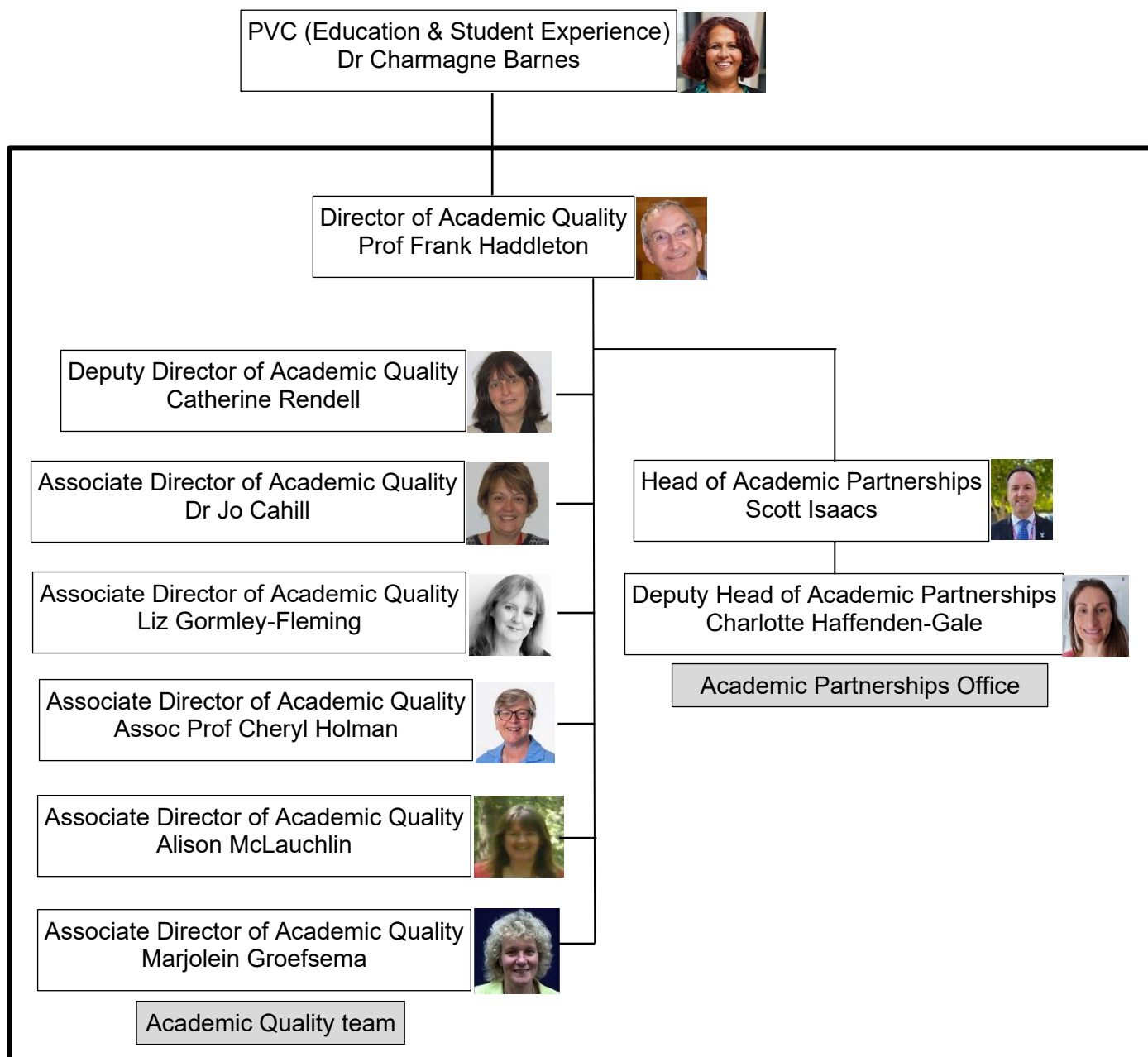
The Key Committees and People



The PVC (Education and Student Experience), Dr Charmagne Barnes, has senior responsibility on behalf of the VC for all matters related to education and the student experience, including academic quality matters. The Director of Academic Quality (DAQ), Prof Frank Haddleton reports to the PVC (Education and Student Experience), along with the Director for Education, Prof Helen Barefoot, and the Director of Student Success, Prof Kate Asante. Collectively their teams form the Centre for Education and Student Success (CEdSS).

The DAQ chairs SRAC, and is also Head of the AQ team within CEdSS, which consists of the DAQ, the Deputy Director (Catherine Rendell) and five Associate Directors of Academic Quality (ADAQs). Each ADAQ takes responsibility for a School, with responsibilities including to:

- advise and support Schools in discharging their responsibilities for the maintenance of academic standards and the assurance & enhancement of the student educational experience;
- promote a culture of enhancement and the dissemination of good practice across Schools;
- support the School in the validation and review of its home & collaborative provision;
- take an active role in the programme Continuous Enhancement Planning (CEP) process;
- support the School in its compliance with UPRs & procedures;
- take an active role in the academic oversight of the University's collaborative provision;
- develop and facilitate QA-related staff development activities.



The Academic Quality team within CEEdSS also encompasses the Academic Partnerships Office (APO), managed by the Head of Academic Partnerships (Scott Isaacs).

The Director for Education heads up the Education team within CEEdSS (formerly within CLASS), which consists of the Deputy Director for Education (Prof Sarah Flynn), several Associate Directors for Learning & Teaching, the Associate Director (Academic Skills) and the Associate Director (Technology Enhanced Learning). The Director for Education also chairs ESEC. The Director of Student Success, Prof Kate Asante, heads up the Student Success team within CEEdSS. This consists of Associate Directors for Career Development, Widening Access & Student Success and Apprenticeships. The Director of Student Success also chairs the Higher and Degree Apprenticeship Committee.

The Director of Academic Services Mrs Lisa Uttley, has responsibility for the Academic Services unit which supports the University on a range of academic quality-related matters (overseeing academic quality systems and procedures, guidance to Schools, administering validation & review events, managing external examiner appointments and reporting, supporting preparation for external audit and administration of the University module feedback process, the National Student Survey and the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey).

Within Schools, Deans are ultimately responsible for quality and standards. They are assisted by Associate Deans of School (Education & Student Success) (AD(ESS)s) who have a range of responsibilities. They work closely with CEdSS staff (and in particular, the Associate Directors for Academic Quality and Learning & Teaching with responsibility for their School) to ensure a shared understanding of quality assurance and enhancement across the University. Programme Leaders are appointed to lead and take ownership of the quality and standards of the learning, teaching and assessment and the overall academic experience of students on a named programme.

Programme Approval, Monitoring, and Review

The University's processes for programme approval, monitoring and review are described in the University Policies and Regulations (UPRs): [UPR AS17 Academic Quality](#).

Approval and Periodic Review of Programmes

The programme development process is initiated with a proposal to the University's Academic Development Committee (ADC), which looks at new proposals in the context of the University's Strategic Plan, the market, resource implications and the impact on other programmes. Following ADC initial approval, a Planning Meeting is convened to agree the development and validation process. A Programme Development Committee is then established.

Validation events are chaired by a senior academic from a School not associated with the programme, and panel membership includes a member of the CEdSS(AQ) team and one or more independent external members with appropriate subject expertise. Both home-based and collaborative provision validation events are administered by the Academic Services unit. The validation panel makes a recommendation to Academic Board concerning programme approval, which is subject to standard requirements and sometimes additional conditions which must be met within a specified timeframe. If conditions are satisfied, recommendations on programme approval are then signed-off by the DAQ (on behalf of the Standards, Regulations and Audit Committee (SRAC)).

Amendments to University-delivered provision are approved through Schools undertaking a minor amendment process or a significant change process. Occasionally, a major review of a programme can be triggered by the University (e.g. Portfolio Review-initiated), by the School (where a fundamental restructuring is proposed) or by a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB).

The University requires that all partner-delivered taught provision is subject to revalidation at least every six years. Revalidation mirrors the validation process. However, the panel is also informed by an initial analysis of the past performance of the programme and a review document that is based on operational experience over the previous six years, and takes account of issues raised in 'Continuous Enhancement Plan (CEP) process (see below).

School and Programme Monitoring

On an ongoing basis the programme committee maintains a 'Continuous Enhancement Plan (CEP) to assure the quality of the University's taught provision and enhance the student learning experience through incremental and focussed improvement at all levels (this replaces the Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report (AMER), which is still used for some partner-delivered programmes). Programme leaders are responsible for maintaining the CEP, with ADoS(ESS)s, Heads of Curriculum and ADAQs overseeing the actions.

Schools are required to submit a continuous action plan along with good practice items for dissemination and University-wide issues for consideration by SRAC and ESSC, summarising matters relating to the academic standards and student experience in the School. After consideration by SRAC and ESSC, a summary of all School reports is prepared highlighting the good practice and University-wide issues brought to the attention of the University.

Assessment and Awards

The University's assessment regulations are described in the University Policies and Regulations (UPRs): [UPR AS14 Structure and Assessment Regulations](#) and [UPR AS12 Assessments, Examinations and Conferments](#) (or [UPR AS13 Assessments, Examinations and Conferments](#) for partner-delivered provision).

Assessment Policies and Regulations

The University uses a numeric (0-100) grading system to report students' performance on modules and to calculate classification of awards. The University Assessment Principles require that (i) all assessments are internally reviewed and also externally reviewed if at academic levels 5, 6 or 7, and (ii) marked student work is internally moderated (on a sampling basis) and also externally moderated (on a sampling basis) if at academic levels 5, 6 or 7.

Boards of Examiners

The University operates a two-tier system of Module Boards and Programme Boards of Examiners. Module Boards are specifically responsible for reporting the awards of grades for candidates, and making decisions about referral/deferral options. They consider formal requests for serious adverse circumstances that may have affected individual performance, and decide on any changes to be made to grades in the light of evidence provided. The Module Board also decides on penalties to be imposed for proven cases of cheating, plagiarism, collusion or other academic misconduct. Module Boards monitor the performance of cohorts of students from different programmes attending a particular module, and report substantial differences in performance to Programme Boards.

Programme Boards of Examiners receive confirmed grades as awarded by Module Boards. They consider the achievement of students completing programmes, recommending the conferment of awards. At earlier stages of a programme they make decisions on the continuation or withdrawal of students on programmes.

External Examiners

The University's processes for external examining are described in the University Policies and Regulations (UPRs): UPR AS17 Academic Quality.

In line with the Boards of Examiners system, the University employs both Module and Programme external examiners to support the maintenance of both quality and standards. External Examiners' annual reports are received by Academic Services, and initially read by one of two people (the Director of Academic Quality or the Deputy Director of Academic Quality, on behalf of the VC) to identify University-wide issues. The reports are then sent to the appropriate School for consideration and response.

University Policies and Regulations (UPRs)

The University policies and regulations (UPRs) are the principle means by which the University publishes its institutional policies, procedures and regulations. The key academic quality-related UPRs (available from [Academic Assessment and Awards | About us | Uni of Herts](#)) are:

- UPR AS11 (Schedule of Awards)
- UPR AS12 (Assessments and Examinations (Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate) and Conferments (University and UK Partner Organisations))
- UPR AS13 (Assessments and Examinations (Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate) and Conferments (Non-UK Partner Organisations))
- UPR AS14 (Structure and Assessment Regulations - Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes)
- UPR AS17 (Academic Quality)
- UPR AS21 (withdrawal of an Award of the University of Hertfordshire)
- UPR TL03 (Learning and Teaching Policy and Graduate Attributes)
- UPR TL05 (Inclusive Assessment Design)

Collaborative Provision

The University's collaborative provision is fairly complex, consisting of over 5500 students on franchised and validated programmes overseas and at UK partners, including employer-based provision. The University's quality management of this collaborative provision is essentially the same as that for University-based provision. However, some additional quality assurance procedures for their approval, support and monitoring have been developed:

- Approval and re-approval of collaborative partners is considered by the Academic Development Committee (ADC), and the partnership is formalised through the signing of a written agreement;
- A collaborative partnership leader (CPL) is appointed for each collaborative programme by the School. They support the partner, monitor the health of the programme and report to the University on any additional support required;

- Quality Liaison Managers, or their equivalent, are appointed for partner organisations with large and cross-disciplinary provision, and support the University and Partner Organisation in ensuring consistency of approach across different programmes delivered;
- The Collaborative Partnership Assurance Group (CPAG) oversees the quality and standards of all partner-delivered provision on behalf of SRAC.

External monitoring and review of the University

External monitoring of the University is undertaken by the Office for Students (OfS), which measures our compliance with the following 'Quality and Standards' conditions of OfS registration:

- B1: Academic Experience:** *The provider must ensure that the students registered on each higher education course receive a high quality academic experience:*
- a. each higher education course is up-to-date;*
 - b. each higher education course provides educational challenge;*
 - c. each higher education course is coherent;*
 - d. each higher education course is effectively delivered; and*
 - e. each higher education course, as appropriate to the subject matter of the course, requires students to develop relevant skills;*
- B2: Resources, support and student engagement:** *The provider must take all reasonable steps to ensure:*
- a. each cohort of students registered on each higher education course receives resources and support which are sufficient for the purpose of ensuring: (i) a high quality academic experience for those students; and (ii) those students succeed in and beyond higher education; and*
 - b. effective engagement with each cohort of students which is sufficient for the purpose of ensuring: (i) a high quality academic experience for those students; and (ii) those students succeed in and beyond higher education;*
- B3: Student Outcomes:** *The provider must deliver positive outcomes for students on its higher education courses. Delivering positive outcomes means that in the OfS's judgement, the outcome data for each of the indicators and split indicators are at or above the relevant numerical thresholds;*
- B4: Assessment and Awards:** *The provider must ensure that:*
- a. students are assessed effectively;*
 - b. each assessment is valid and reliable;*
 - c. academic regulations are designed to ensure that relevant awards are credible;*
 - d. academic regulations are designed to ensure the effective assessment of technical proficiency in the English language in a manner which appropriately reflects the level and content of the applicable higher education course*;* and
 - e. relevant awards granted to students are credible at the point of being granted and when compared to those granted previously.;*
- B5: Sector-recognised standards:** *The provider must ensure that, in respect of any relevant awards granted to students who complete a higher education course provided by, or on behalf of, the provider (whether or not the provider is the awarding body):*
- a. any standards set appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards; and*
 - b. awards are only granted to students whose knowledge and skills appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards;*
- B6: Teaching Excellence Framework:** *The provider must participate in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).*

OfS uses a risk-based approach to ongoing monitoring of these conditions, using (i) 'Reportable events' of potential concern that the University itself reports to OfS, (ii) notifications of potential concerns from third parties (students, staff, etc.), (iii) monitoring of 'indicators' (a range of data including student outcomes (condition B3)), and (iv) targeted 'Quality Assessments' of registered Higher Education Providers to assess compliance with the above Conditions of Registration. If this monitoring raises any concerns with the University's maintenance of academic standards or academic quality, then OfS would undertake an external review of the University (i.e. Enhanced Monitoring).

In addition to OfS regulation:

- The University has accreditation, approval and/or exemption from a range of Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) for a number of courses. A schedule is maintained by ASAC;
- The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) quality assures standards of teaching for the University's Degree Apprenticeships.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The TEF is a national exercise, introduced by the government to assess excellence in teaching at universities and colleges, and how well they ensure excellent outcomes for their students in terms of (i) continuation through their course, (ii) completion of their course, and (iii) progression to graduate-level employment or further study. The University of Hertfordshire was awarded Silver in the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) ranking and has been commended for providing a high level of support and consistently outstanding outcomes for students from all backgrounds. The Panel considered the University submission in relation to the TEF criteria and in making the award the assessment panel recognised:

- Research, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and/or employer engagement
- Staff professional development and academic practice
- Student engagement in improvement
- Intended educational gains
- Approaches to supporting educational gains
- Evaluation and demonstration of educational gains

This award is valid for four years.