

## Terms of Reference

### Qualifications Advisory Group

September 2016

#### Purpose

The Qualifications Advisory Group (QAG) provides strategic and expert advice to UCAS in relation to qualifications, learner progression and the UCAS Tariff.

The Group will provide five key functions:

- Provide a forum for strategic debate about qualification and progression trends to inform UCAS' qualification information services.
- Act as an advisory group in relation to the annual allocation of UCAS Tariff points.
- Act as a forum to discuss and contextualise UK wide feedback received from the HE sector relating to specific qualifications in the UCAS Tariff.
- Provide a high level quality assurance framework in relation to Qualification Information Profiles.
- Represent sector interests and ensure that the impact of proposed changes are anticipated, given due consideration and appropriately communicated to institutions in a timely manner

#### Membership

- The Group is expected to comprise up to 20 members.
- The Groups will be made up of representatives from the higher education (HE), College HE and secondary sectors (including representation from a range of different types of provider, relevant geographical areas and specialisms).
- The UK qualification regulatory bodies: Ofqual; Qualification Wales; SQA and CCEA will have membership of this group.
- Awarding organisation representative bodies (FAB and JCQ) will also have membership of this group, as observers.
- Members should normally be appointed for a maximum term of four years.

- The Group elects its own Chair from among its members that have served a minimum of one year. Members nominated as Chair will normally serve for two years as Chair<sup>1</sup>.
- Members of the Group are expected to actively contribute to the work and attend all meetings. Members who miss two consecutive meetings are at risk of being asked to resign due to non-attendance.
- Opportunities for new members will be made available on the UCAS website and communicated through the appropriate channels.
- Observers may not be involved in confidential items.
- Members of the group may be invited to be part of a sub-group that reviews new or revised Qualification Information Profiles.

## **Responsibilities**

Members of the Group are expected to:

- Actively engage in the enhancement of UCAS' qualification information services.
- Act as advisers on the allocation of Tariff points to qualifications under the standard process.
- Provide quality assurance for new Qualification Information Profiles via the Qualifications Information Sub Group (QIG), which is a sub group of QAG.
- Discuss and contextualise HE sector feedback on qualification, and where appropriate, recommend next steps
- Where appropriate feedback to the sector through their own networks and user groups
- Where relevant the Group will share feedback and actions with the UCAS Undergraduate Advisory Group and Secondary Education Advisory Group.

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<sup>1</sup> The initial Chair of the group will be Annie Doyle (University of Sunderland) to allow for an effective handover between the Tariff Advisory Group and Qualifications Advisory Group.

**Secretariat:**

UCAS will provide the secretariat to support this meeting who shall endeavor to ensure that:

- Minutes are circulated four weeks after each meeting and subsequently published on the UCAS website.
- Agendas and papers are received by all members ten working days prior to meetings.
- Meetings are scheduled six months in advance.
- Members of the group and their Chair are listed on the Groups & Boards sections of the UCAS web pages, along with terms of reference, agendas and meeting minutes.

**Proceedings:**

The Group will normally meet twice a year in October and March at the UCAS offices in Cheltenham.

Meeting agendas will be set and agreed by the Chair.

Minutes will be approved by the Chair and then the Group via email prior to them being posted on the UCAS website.

Confirmed minutes of meetings will be circulated to the Group and published on the Groups and Forums section of the UCA website. Notification of the availability of minutes will be included in the earliest available Correspondents Bulletin.

## **Annex A: Membership**

### **In Attendance**

Higher Education Provider representative (international sector)

Higher Education Provider representative (previous Tariff Advisory Group member)  
x2

Higher Education Provider representative (planning)

Higher Education Provider representative (Russell Group Qualifications Network)

Higher Education Provider representative x2

College Higher Education representative

Secondary Education representative x 2

Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) representative

Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA) representative

Association of Colleges (AoC) representative

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) representative

Ofqual representative

Qualifications Wales representative

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) representative

Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) representative

### **Observers:**

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)

The Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB)