APPENDIX A: GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

1 School Plan [Terms of Reference i)]

Annually, each School shall produce a School plan detailing firm plans for the forthcoming academic year and outline plans for the subsequent two years. The academic part of the plan will inform the University’s planning processes.

2 Research Plan [Terms of Reference iv])

Each School shall establish a Research Committee whose terms of reference will normally include the following:

i) to develop and monitor research and scholarly activity;

ii) to discuss School level issues related to research;

iii) to produce the School’s annual research plan;

iv) to report and submit minutes of its meetings to the School Board;

v) to receive information from the University’s Research Committee;

vi) to ensure that the regulations and guidelines laid down by the University are complied with in the processes of research degrees;

vii) to ensure that all research degree projects are conducted in accordance with established ethical principles;

Annually, each School shall produce a research plan which, following approval by the School Board, shall be forwarded to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) for approval by the University’s Research Committee.

Membership of the School’s Research Committee shall be determined by the School Board and the Committee shall normally be chaired by the School’s Director of Research.

3 Development of Academic Disciplines [Terms of Reference v) b)]

3.1 School Teaching and Learning Committee

Each School shall establish a Teaching and Learning Committee whose terms of reference will normally include the following:

i) to oversee the credit accumulation and transfer systems within the School and to promote and ensure consistency of practice across all courses and modules owned by the schemes;

ii) to promote high quality teaching and to develop innovative methods of teaching and learning and to disseminate them throughout the School;

iii) to incorporate the functions of the School Accreditation and Validation Panel (as identified in paragraph 4 of this appendix) where this panel is not separately constituted;
iv) to report and submit minutes of its meetings to the University's Teaching and Learning Committee through the School Board.

Membership of the School Teaching and Learning Committee will normally include representatives from all academic areas, a cross section of academic staff, representatives of other categories of staff and a Student Union Sabbatical Officer. Representatives of the student body would be entitled to membership but would be excluded from those matters which relate to named students and from the functions of the School Accreditation and Validation Panel. The exact membership and the quorum of the School Teaching and Learning Committee shall be decided by the School Board and notified to the Head of Registry.

3.2 Subject Areas

Each School Board shall establish an appropriate structure – e.g. departments, divisions or course committees - to take responsibility for curriculum development across all undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the School.

3.3 Courses

A Course Committee shall be established for each course or cluster of closely related courses and shall assume collective responsibility for the effective operation, evaluation, and revision of the course(s).

The terms of reference for Course Committees will normally include the following:

i) to determine and develop the modular structure of the course(s);

ii) to ensure that course regulations (including assessment regulations) do not conflict with University regulations;

iii) to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the course(s) and to produce a course annual evaluation report;

iv) to liaise with or seek the advice of external examiners;

v) to liaise with the structure referred to in 3.2 above concerning the requirements of the course(s) with reference to:

   a) the development of the curriculum,
   b) the assessment strategy including the assessment of work-based learning and enterprise skills,
   c) the teaching and learning strategies (including the development of resource-based learning),
   d) the resource requirements of the course,
   e) liaison with the Director of Computing and Library Services in respect of possible new demands for the modules,
   f) the arrangements for student evaluation of modules and to ensure that records of that evaluation are kept;

vi) to establish a Student Panel and to take account of the views of that committee;

vii) to make arrangements for student evaluation of the course(s);

viii) to consider such other matters as the School Board may request;
ix) to report and submit minutes of its meetings to the School Teaching and Learning Committee.

Membership of Course Committees shall be determined by the School Board and must include appropriate student representation. The standard course administration timeline can be found in appendix D of this handbook.

4 Approval of Courses of Study [Terms of Reference v) c)]

4.1 Notification of new courses of study, as identified in the School’s academic plan, must be sent to the Assistant Registrar (or nominee) for determination as to whether they are major developments which will require a University validation event or minor developments which can be validated at School level.

In order to discharge the following terms of reference, each School shall establish an appropriate mechanism for:

i) the validation of incremental changes to existing courses, incremental changes to existing modules, new modules, and new courses which are minor variants of existing courses;

ii) the accreditation of learning or study undertaken either within or outside the University up to the maximum allowed in section D3.4 of the University’s ‘Regulations for Awards’;

iii) the responsibilities which School Boards are given in respect of curriculum or academic matters in relation to the approval of collaborative arrangements;

iv) the maintenance of an overview of the procedures governing the accreditation of prior learning and the validation of individualised courses;

v) the evaluation of recommendations for APLA tariffs;

vi) the responsibilities of auditing the procedures for maintaining equivalence in the award of credit throughout the School;

vii) to report and submit minutes of its meetings to the School Teaching and Learning Committee, when constituted as a separate body.

These functions may be assigned to a separately constituted School Accreditation and Validation Panel or incorporated within the terms of reference of the School Teaching and Learning Committee.

4.2 The School shall inform the Head of Registry of the mechanism (which may or may not be the School Teaching and Learning Committee) by which these duties will be discharged. The Head of Registry (or nominee) shall have the right to attend the committee or panel which is convened by the School to fulfil these functions.

Terms of Reference and Membership of a separately constituted School Accreditation and Validation Panel shall be determined by the School Board.

Recommendations arising from the above are subject to final approval by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee, which is normally exercised by the
Assistant Registrar acting on behalf of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee.

5 Evaluation and Review of Courses of Study [Terms of Reference v) c)]

5.1 Each School Board shall establish an appropriate mechanism to fulfil the following:

i) the review of the operation of all courses;

ii) the consideration of problem areas as identified by external examiners and/or from information provided in evaluation reports. The Dean should ensure that action plans and appropriate mechanisms for ensuring the resolution of issues identified are developed.

5.2 Where a sub-committee is established to carry out these duties, minutes of its meetings must be submitted to the School Board. The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee receives independent reports direct from its representatives nominated to attend the meetings at which annual evaluation reports are considered.

School Boards may refer unresolved problems to the Senate’s committees as appropriate, and, if necessary, to the Senate itself. It is the responsibility of Deans to monitor any requirements identified as necessary during the monitoring process.

6 Overseeing the School’s Work in Contributing to the University’s International Strategy [Terms of Reference v) d)]

6.1 Each School shall establish a School International Committee whose terms of reference will normally include the following:

i) To oversee the School’s work in making a full contribution to the University International Strategy.

ii) To enable the School to communicate international strategy and policy internally.

iii) To support the School in meeting its international KPIs and targets.

iv) To oversee the School’s production of a coherent international plan and accurate international student number forecasts.

v) To advise the School regarding an attractive course portfolio for international students.

vi) To advise the School on providing a first class international student experience.

vii) To identify and exploit strategic international partnership opportunities.

viii) To strategically monitor and develop the School’s international profile.

6.2 Membership of the School International Committee will normally include senior managers, representatives from all academic subject areas, including taught and research provision, as well as staff from marketing and recruitment. Representatives of the student body would also be entitled to membership.

6.3 The exact membership and the quorum of the School International Committee should be decided by the School Board and notified to the Head of Registry.
7 Inter-Disciplinary Courses of Study [Terms of Reference vi)]

7.1 In the case of courses put forward for validation by more than one School, the Deans involved shall decide, in advance of submission, the School in which the course will reside.

The administration of the course will be the responsibility of the School in which the course resides.

The membership of the Course Assessment Board shall reflect the proportional contribution of the Schools involved.

8 External Examiners [Terms of Reference vii) a)]

8.1 External Examiners

The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for the final approval of course external examiners. Applications should be completed in accordance with the criteria for the appointment of external examiners. Following the recommendation of approval of external examiners at the School Board, completed application forms, shall be submitted to the Registry together with a copy of the relevant minute from the meeting of the School Board which considered the application.

External examiners must be involved in the assessment of all modules at I, H and M levels. They are only involved in the assessment of modules at F level in those cases where a course consists solely or largely of modules at those levels.

9 Membership of Assessment Boards [Terms of Reference vii) b)]

9.1 Course Assessment Boards

The membership of each Course Assessment Board shall be determined by the School Board and shall normally comprise the Dean of School or nominee (chair), the External Examiner(s), the course leader(s), module leaders (as necessary), and staff teaching on modules. The minimum quoracy of a Course Assessment Board shall be the chair, the course leader and the external examiner. If the external examiner is not in attendance one module leader is required in addition to the chair and the course leader.

10 Academic Interest [Terms of Reference viii)]

10.1 Each School shall establish appropriate arrangements for the consideration of ethical issues.

11 Staff Development Plan [Terms of Reference ix)]

11.1 Annually, each School shall produce a staff development plan which, following approval by the School Board, shall be forwarded to the University’s Staff Development Co-ordinator. The staff development plan shall be submitted by 31 August.

12 Equal Opportunities Report [Terms of Reference x)]
12.1 Annually, each School shall produce an equal opportunities report which, following approval by the School Board, shall be forwarded to the University’s Equal Opportunities Committee. The equal opportunities plan should be submitted by December of each year.

13 School Committee Structure

13.1 A diagrammatic plan detailing the School's committee structure (including School-specific sub-committees of the School Board) shall be forwarded to the Registry. Subsequent changes to this plan shall be notified to the Head of Registry.