

Quality Assurance Policy

Policy no:	3.11	Version Number	V2.0
Version Date	October 2024	Next Review Date	October 2025
Produced by	Academic Dean	Approved by	Academic and Quality Board
External reference points	<p>Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code 2024 Principle 1 - Taking a strategic approach to managing quality and standards Principle 5 - Monitoring, evaluating and enhancing provision Framework for Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ)</p>		

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1 Background and Scope

This policy outlines the objectives, principles, and regulations that LCK Academy (LCKA) utilises to maintain and enhance the quality of education and related services provided to students. It primarily focuses on internal quality assurance (IQA) while also ensuring compliance with external quality assurance standards established by partner organisations. The policy aims to meet and, whenever possible, exceed the expectations of students, staff, and external bodies. To achieve this, the Academy is committed to continuously assessing, developing, and improving the quality of the student experience through a rigorous process of self-evaluation and enhancement.

2 Aims and objectives

The aim is to ensure that internal quality assurance and enhancement processes are embedded in all of the Academy activities and monitored through the committees that report to the Academic and Quality Board. The committees that report to the Academic and Quality Board include the following:

- Admissions Committee
- Assessment Board
- Programmes Committee
- Learning and Development Working Group
- Student Council

The approach to IQA is based upon self-evaluation of outcomes from reports, feedback, observations and performance data including the experiences of students, teachers, programme leaders and other stakeholders. It includes the following objectives:

- Arrangements for quality assurance are known and fully understood by staff and work effectively to ensure positive outcomes for students.
- An overall approach is adopted by the Academy to provide internal oversight of academic quality, and incorporate quality assurance requirements of external partners or awarding organisations.
- A self-reflective approach is promoted in the Academy to encourage students and staff to make constructive criticism where required without fear of repercussions.
- A bottom-up approach which places students and frontline staff experience and continuous improvement at the forefront of all considerations.
- Action and development planning are conducted on a quarterly basis through the committees that report to the Academic and Quality Board.
- A self-assessment process referred to as the internal annual monitoring review (IAMR) cycle includes the production of an annual Programmes Quality Review that is aligned to the Office for Students condition of registration B1-B5.
- Observations of learning and teaching are conducted by the Academic Dean, Head of Quality and Head of Programme(s) in order to ensure learning and teaching in all sites and for all programmes are aligned with the Academy's Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTA). Peer observations are conducted to ensure that faculty share good practice and continuously improve teaching performance.
- Module/Unit evaluations that take student views on board and inform action plans

are carried out in order to maintain standards and to continuously improve learning and teaching.

- End of year student surveys provide the Academy with the views of students across a wide range of services provided by the Academy.
- A complaints and appeals system are in place to ensure that any concerns or complaints about performance that may impact on student satisfaction are identified early and that an effective plan is in place to improve in areas of concern quickly and efficiently.
- Staff performance development reviews are conducted annually, and continuous professional development (CPD) is provided internally by staff and externally where possible.
- Staff are provided with opportunities to monitor and evaluate quality assurance and provide feedback on its effectiveness through Programmes Committee Meetings, and discussion of the Programmes Quality Review which includes student and staff surveys.

3 Application

This policy aims to inform staff, students, and all other stakeholders about the Academy's approach to Internal Quality Assurance (IQA). It ensures that all aspects of the Academy's provision are continuously monitored, appraised, and enhanced throughout the academic year.

The Academy is committed to quality assurance across all sites (both online and in-person), all courses, and every aspect of Academy life that impacts students. This includes the following areas:

- Student Recruitment
- Admissions & Inductions
- Attendance and Engagement
- Learning and Teaching
- Assessments
- Student Support & Welfare
- Student Engagement
- Operations
- Staff Recruitment
- Physical environment
- Management
- Graduation and Employment

All staff are expected to participate in quality assurance at the Academy through self-reflection, completing surveys, participation in meetings and submitting reports as required. Staff are appraised annually by their line manager. There are lesson observations for all faculty a minimum of twice per annum. Staff should monitor the quality of the work they are responsible for and report on any areas for improvement or enhancement to their line manager.

4 Academic and Quality Board

The Academic and Quality Board has delegated powers from the Board of Governors and meets once every quarter to provide oversight of all higher education at the Academy. It receives reports from five committees that are responsible for delivery of activities along the student journey including Admissions, Assessments, Programmes Committees, the Learning and Development Working Group and the Student Council. It oversees the monitoring and review of quality improvements and enhancements to the student experience. The Academic and Quality Board provides strategic steers for the annual review cycle that culminates with the compilation of the Programmes Quality Review and the Internal Annual Monitoring Review (IAMR).

4.1 Quality

The Academic and Quality Board oversees the monitoring of all internal and external reviews and reports received on all activities at the Academy from student admission tests and academic interviews, faculty interviews and recruitment, observations of learning and teaching, standardisation meetings and training, internal verification/moderation and external examiner/verification reports. The Academic and Quality Board ensures full implementation of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, Lesson Observation Policy, Assessment Policy and the Student Support Policy. The Academic and Quality Board also approves and monitors recommendations by the Learning and Development Working Group (LDWG) for the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of academic and professional service staff.

4.2 Enhancement

The Academic and Quality Board strives to ensure enhancement of provision and services that impact on the student experience throughout the entire student journey and beyond. This includes identifying areas of good practice and disseminating them across all sites and programmes whenever possible. The Academic and Quality Board ensures that Action Plans progress to a complete and successful conclusion and that feedback on action taken is communicated effectively to faculty and students. It also evaluates the impact of enhancements implemented and communicates their successes and lessons learnt to all stakeholders.

5 Committees reporting to the Academic and Quality Board

There are five committees that report to the Academic and Quality Board every quarter (Appendix 1). The reports from these committees form the basis of the Programmes Quality Review, Internal Annual Monitoring Report (IAMR) and Annual Development Plan (ADP) that is compiled and approved by the Academic and Quality Board. Each committee has key objectives as follows:

5.1 Programmes Committee

- Oversees student progress in each course by engaging all stakeholders, including faculty, students, programme leaders, and representatives from partner organisations.
- Monitors both internal and external reports and action plans related to each course, ensuring the implementation of recommended actions.
- Ensures adherence to all operational manuals and regulations of partner organisations.
- Enhancing the overall content and delivery of programmes and curriculum areas.
- Raising the academic standards of learning, teaching, and assessments through quality assurance action plans.
- Implements the Lesson Observation Policy; ensuring all lesson observations, including peer observations, are conducted and result in a report with an action plan for CPD interventions.
- Improves the operational effectiveness of staff recruitment and induction processes.
- Enhances the development of student employability skills and employment opportunities, including training and support for self-employment.
- Improves student satisfaction through the evaluation of feedback and surveys and the implementation of clear action plans.
- Reviews internal and external reports on academic standards and the quality of the student experience, including reports from External Examiners, partner organisations, students, work placements, and the Pearson AMR.
- Implements essential actions and recommendations from internal and external reviews by developing and executing action plans.
- Compiles the Programme(s) Quality Review to be submitted to the Academic and Quality Board.

5.2 Assessment Board

- Ratifies exam/assessment results for all students after internal moderation/internal examination and external examination is completed.
- Agrees upon resits, student continuation and completion.
- Oversees cases of extenuating circumstances academic malpractice and academic appeals.

5.3 Admissions Committee

- Ensures that admissions processes are robust and comply with the LCK Academy Access and Participation Statement.
- Ensures that applicants from diverse backgrounds receive appropriate and timely up to date information about their options.
- Ensures that applicants meet entry criteria for enrolment and are supported throughout the admissions process.
- Improves the methods and operational effectiveness of student recruitment, admissions, entry tests, academic interviews and induction processes.
- Monitors the demographics of applicants for equality and diversity purposes as well as reasonable adjustments for students who disclose a disability or learning difficulty.

5.4 Learning and Development Working Group

- Oversees and make decisions on all learning and development for all academic and professional service staff, including the implementation of a leadership and management development programme for faculty staff to foster growth and succession planning.
- Conducts a skills audit of all staff a minimum of once every year.
- Monitors the learning and development needs of staff based upon the skills audit and outcomes of staff appraisals and lesson observations including peer observations.
- Recommends for approval by the Academic and Quality Board (AQB) and Academic Advancement Committee any LCKA policies relating to staff learning and development.
- Develops an annualised CPD plan for approval by the AQB.
- Ensures the full implementation and monitoring of the annualised CPD plan.
- Develops a budget for staff learning and development for reporting to the Academic and Quality Board and approval by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Reviews and implement recommendations or essential actions from external reports that relate to staff learning and development.
- Promotes equality, equity, inclusion and diversity in all training and development opportunities offered to staff.
- Supports the acquisition of fellowships with Advance HE for all faculty.

5.5 Student Council Committee

- The Student Committee serves as a platform for representing the student voice at the Academy. It also makes recommendations to the Academic and Quality Board regarding improvements to the student experience. The President of the Student Council chairs the Student Committee and is a member of the Academic and Quality Board and the Board of Governors. The Academy support staff may attend the Student Council meetings only if invited by the Student Council.

6 Additional Quality Assurance Functions

The Academic and Quality Board is additionally tasked with supervising the following quality assurance functions:

6.1 Surveys

- To oversee and evaluate the operation of internal and external student surveys across the Academy, and to implement action plans in response to these surveys via quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms. This also includes making additional recommendations for action when necessary.
- To review student feedback and survey results, including the National Student Survey (NSS) and other student experience surveys, and to monitor the implementation of related action plans and recommendations.
- To evaluate module evaluations provided by students and academic staff and to oversee the implementation of action plans based on these evaluations.

6.2 Risk Assessment

- To manage key risks related to the quality and enhancement of academic provision and the student experience at the Academy.

6.3 Resources and Talent Management

- To ensure that staff effectively identify enhancements to the capacity, service level standards and maintenance of learning facilities and resources.
- To monitor and propose enhancements for the recruitment of suitably diverse, qualified, and skilled academic staff.

7 Head of Quality

- Implements the Academy's academic, pastoral and welfare support services, including the Academy's social programme.
- Manages key processes including student complaints, appeals, academic malpractice, misconduct, attendance and engagement, mitigating circumstances, fitness to practise and cases submitted to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.
- Monitors, review and recommend enhancements to personal tutoring services at the Academy and ongoing student professional development planning.
- Monitors, review and recommend enhancements to activities designed to increase employability competencies and opportunities for students at the Academy.
- Increases student engagement at the Academy, including the effectiveness of the Student Council and student representation in Committees and Boards.
- Monitors demographics and achievements of enrolled students for equality and diversity purposes.
- Implements and reviews the Academy's success in maintaining strong and effective links with its Alumni.

8 Internal Annual Monitoring Review (IAMR)

This process involves the compilation of Programmes(s) Quality Review (PQR) data, an examination of broader cross-institutional issues such as student recruitment, retention, continuation, completion, and progression, as well as an analysis of the impacts of external factors. Additionally, it includes a review of strategic opportunities and challenges and an assessment of the implementation of recommendations from external reports. At the end of each calendar year, all PQRs and other reviews inform the IAMR, which concludes with recommendations that form the basis of an Annual Development Plan. This ensures that the IAMR process contributes to meaningful and ongoing improvements in Academy provision and the overall student experience.

The IAMR includes, but is not restricted to, the following content:

- Introduction
- Purpose and Objectives of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)
- Vision & Mission
- Strategic Goals
- Review of Partnerships
- Programmes Quality Review (PQR)
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
- Student Engagement
- Widening Participation – Equality and Diversity
- Student Surveys
- External Reviews
- Resources
- Successes
- Areas for Development and Annual Development Plan (ADP)
- Conclusion

9 Review of Quality Assurance Arrangements

Through the annual review process, the Academic and Quality Board is able to assess the effectiveness of the various processes that contribute to the following quality assurance arrangements:

- Operation of the Academy committees
- Student recruitment and enrolment
- Student induction
- Teaching and learning
- Student retention and progression
- Assessment arrangements
- Internal verification
- External assessment scrutiny and formal recommendations
- Effectiveness and usage of the virtual learning environment
- Learning resources
- Number of complaints and appeals
- Student engagement initiatives

10 External reference points

The Academy considers the following external reference points:

- The requirements and expectations of awarding and validating bodies with regard to the approval, delivery, assessment, and certification of their approved programmes.
- Protocols and expectations relating to all qualifications on the regulated qualifications framework (RQF).
- The expectations for standards and quality as stated in the Office for Students conditions of registration.
- Relevant legal requirements, particularly those concerning health and safety, employment law, and equality and diversity.
- The requirements and expectations of the UK Visa and Immigration agency (UKVI) regarding visa students.
- Specific expectations and guidance outlined in the codes of practice of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and other relevant bodies concerning marketing, advertising, and human resource management.

11 Course Monitoring Procedures

A "programme" refers to a field of study offered by LCK Academy either independently or in collaboration with another organisation. A "course" denotes a specific cohort or academic year of students enrolled in the programme.

For each programme, there will be a Head of Programme Leader, who will report to the LCKA Academic Dean of LCKA and will be fully responsible for the maintenance of standards and quality expectations.

11.1 Admissions & Enrolment

The process starts with the establishment of fair and reliable admissions procedures designed to provide all prospective students with clear, accurate material information and comprehensive support throughout the inquiry and application stages. The Academy ensures that its staff are trained to handle student admissions inquiries and assist applicants with applications for Student Loan Company (SLC) funding, if necessary.

Prior to admission into a programme, a fully qualified and trained faculty member will conduct academic interviews to confirm that each applicant is applying for a suitable course and meets all entry requirements, including a B2 level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Entry requirements for all courses are provided on the LCKA website. The LCKA Registry coordinates directly with staff from partner organisations to facilitate the enrolment of students into their respective programmes.

11.2 Induction

Every student receives a full induction before they begin their programme. During the induction, students receive all the necessary information regarding the Academy, their programme, the awarding body, and the partner organisation. They are introduced to key staff, tour the physical resources, and are introduced to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which enables them to access all learning resources and course information, as well as submit their assignments. To enhance the admissions and induction processes and ensure quality assurance, students are asked to complete a survey following induction.

11.3 Learning and Teaching

Unless otherwise specified by a partner organisation, all instructors will possess a master's degree in a relevant field. They will either possess a teaching qualification or be in the process of obtaining one. All tutors will possess relevant industry experience that is related to the subjects they are teaching. Lesson observations will be conducted by senior academic staff for each tutor at least once during the academic year. During their interview, newly recruited instructors will be required to provide an observed micro lesson and will be interviewed by two senior academics at LCKA. Additionally, tutors will be required to conduct peer observations at least once during each academic year.

The Learning and Development Working Group (LDWG) will review all lesson observation reports and implement recommendations with an annual programme of continuous

professional development (CPD) for all instructors.

11.4 Attendance Submissions and Mitigating Circumstances

Student attendance and the timely submission of assignments by the deadlines are carefully monitored by registry and support staff, who report to the Head of Quality. Registry Assistants contact students regarding their attendance and engagement, including non-submission of assignments. Students receive warnings from the Attendance and Engagement Officers for non-attendance or non-submission. A Student Status Panel convenes to resolve student requests for mitigating circumstances and deliberate on student withdrawals, if necessary.

11.5 Standardisation and Assessments

The Head of Programme will ensure that faculty attend standardisation meetings with Module Leaders prior to all formative and summative feedback and assessments. This will ensure that all grading and feedback provided to students is aligned with threshold standards and is developmental so that it helps students go beyond the threshold standards. This is particularly important for LCKA in order to achieve its target of 85% achievement/continuation rate.

11.6 Additional Student Support

In addition to the guided learning hours (GLH), students have access to additional hours of support every week from LCKA staff. LCKA faculty provides a personal tutoring service to each student. Academic and pastoral support are also provided by trained and qualified support staff, and weekly online workshops are available to students so as to enhance their academic writing and study skills, maths, and IT skills. Additionally, support classes are offered to assist students who may be experiencing difficulty with a specific unit, and talks provided by guest speakers cover a range of different subjects of interest to the student body.

11.7 Surveys

To offer feedback on the learning and teaching experience of the unit, students are asked to complete Module/Unit Evaluations after each semester. Staff and students are also required to complete end-of-year surveys regarding their teaching and learning experiences. The Head of Quality creates a 'You said we did' notice that is displayed in every campus so that students may see how the Academy has responded to their feedback.

11.8 Internal Annual Review Cycle

The Head of Programme produces programme monitoring reports every semester. These are reviewed by the Academic and Quality Board. An annual Programme Quality Review is also compiled by the Head of Programmes taking account of External Examiner Reports and Annual Monitoring Reviews (AMR), as well as other student and staff performance data. The PQR forms the basis of the LCKA Internal Annual Monitoring Review, which includes an Annual Development Plan for the enhancement of

quality. The implementation of this plan is monitored and reviewed by the Academic and Quality Board.

12 Appendix 1: Committee Structure

