

REGULATION 31

DEFINITIONS OF ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STANDARDS

1. Education

The terms below set out City's education definitions related to academic quality and standards. They are derived from relevant national frameworks including the Office for Students (OfS) conditions of registration and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) guidance.

- **Academic quality**
How well students are provided with opportunities and support to achieve their academic award and be well equipped to progress to employment or further study. High-quality provision involves (but is not limited to) delivering learning opportunities that are up-to-date, coherent, provide educational challenge, require students to develop relevant skills, are delivered effectively and by appropriate staff teams, and are assessed appropriately and reliably.
- **Enhancement**
Processes designed to systematically identify and take actions to innovate and improve the quality of provision, enhance students' academic experience and ensure academic standards are not just met but exceeded.
- **Academic standards**
The level of achievement that is required for a student to achieve their academic award, in line with the relevant sector-recognised standards and qualification frameworks. This level should remain consistent over time, so that qualifications retain their value beyond the point of award.
- **Quality assurance**
A framework of regulations, policies and processes designed to ensure that learning opportunities align with sector-recognised quality standards and that students receive a high-quality academic experience. This framework should include mechanisms for engagement with students, professional bodies, employers and alumni where appropriate.

2. Research

The corpus of knowledge defining research is broad and deep. When reporting to HESA or undertaking Research Assessment Exercises for HEFCE, universities in the UK agree to use the definition of research adopted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in their publication entitled the 'Frascati Manual' (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264199040-en> section 2.1 # 63). The summary statement of the fuller definitions contained therein (para 63) is:

'Research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man/woman¹, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.'

- **Academic quality**

¹ The Frascati definition has been updated to include both genders.

How well researchers, post-graduate research students and academic staff are able to produce research that may be recognised as successful by their peers and users in terms of the quality of its outputs and impact.

- **Enhancement**
Taking deliberate action to ensure continual improvement of and support for the research
- **Academic standards**
The level of achievement in research judged in terms of its originality, significance and rigour.
- **Quality assurance**
A range of policies and procedures designed to safeguard academic standards and quality for research.

3. Scholarship

The concept of “scholarship” is fundamental to higher education, and in City, University of London it is seen as being particularly important in underpinning the distinctive nature of being a University for Business, Practice and the Professions. Scholarship underpins our dynamic relationship with practice and the professions, supports our provision of excellent education, and supports other strategic aims, for example in relation to student employability.

Definition

Scholarship activity may take many forms, and we base our approach on the well-respected work of Boyer (1990) who defined scholarship as including: discovery (research), integration, application and teaching, while also reflecting current and forward-looking academic practice. This leads us to the following definition:

“Scholarship and scholarly activity involve the exploration, application and sharing of knowledge and/or practice to transform learning and engagement within discipline(s), together with the public dissemination of this knowledge and/or practice to share, enhance and advance knowledge and /or practice within discipline(s)”.

It also enables us to identify three main areas of scholarship and scholarly activity that are recognised and valued by City, University of London:

Teaching and education

- Scholarship and scholarly activity in relation to teaching involves sharing knowledge gained from discovery, research and practice in order to educate and inspire future generations. It focuses on innovative and effective practice that is student centred. This can be provided through a range of teaching approaches, practice experiences and learning resources.

Application and integration

- Scholarship and scholarly activity in application and integration involve synthesising and connecting the knowledge and practice gained from different areas of study including across disciplines to enhance aspects of the disciplinary activity such as solving practical problems, enhancing and making meaningful contributions to the experiences of those who are served through the discipline. This can involve

developing practice and professional approaches, developing new technologies, or addressing social and environmental issues engaging with the wider community.

New knowledge and practice

- Scholarship and scholarly activity in discovery and research involve the pursuit and creation of new knowledge and related practice, exploring existing theories and ideas, proposing enhancements for them, and developing wholly innovative approaches.

For all three areas the following principles apply:

- Academic quality

How well academic staff are able to produce scholarship that may be recognised as successful by their peers and users in terms of the quality of its outputs and impact.

- Enhancement

Taking deliberate actions to ensure continual improvement of and support for scholarship and scholarly activity, and the use of scholarship to enhance learning and teaching, the content of programmes, and the engagement of City with business, practice and the professions.

- Academic standards

The level of achievement in scholarship is judged in terms of its relevance, significance, and impact.

- Quality assurance

Relevant policies and procedures designed to specifically recognise and effectively support and safeguard academic standards and quality for scholarship and scholarly activities.

Reference

Boyer E L (1990) *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate* San Francisco Jossey-Bass

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