DQB

Designated Quality Body
in England

Assessment for Variation of Degree Awarding Powers

Regent's University London

Review Report

August 2020

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The provider is a self-critical, cohesive academic community with a proven commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective quality systems.	Met

About this report

This is a report of an assessment of Regent's University London conducted by QAA in August 2020 in accordance with the process outlined in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers*, *December 2019*.

Assessment for the variation and revocation of degree awarding powers (DAPs) is the process QAA uses to provide advice to the Office for Students (OfS) about the quality of, and the standards applied to, higher education delivered by a provider in England that has an existing DAPs authorisation and where variation or revocation is to be considered.

While this assessment was conducted in line with the published process, the assessment referral from the OfS required it to be undertaken along an accelerated schedule to ensure that regulatory decisions could be taken in good time. The assessment referral also highlighted that there would be a focus to this assessment and it would be limited to assessing evidence as to how the provider is, and will continue to, meet DAPs criterion A1 (academic governance) and the overarching DAPs criterion (which requires a provider to demonstrate that it is a 'self-critical, cohesive academic community with a proven commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective quality systems'). Given the focus of the assessment, and the schedule along which it was undertaken, it was agreed between OfS and QAA that a desk-based assessment of documentary evidence was required, but that there would be no expectation that a visit would be undertaken as part of this assessment. QAA committed, as part of this agreement, to highlight any issues which may have arisen during this assessment, but which were outside of the scope of the referral.

Provider information

Legal name	Regent's University London
Trading name	Not applicable
UKPRN	10003331
Type of institution	Higher Education Institution (HEI)
Date founded	1984
Date of first HE provision	1993
DAPs assessment method	DAPs Variation
Location(s) of teaching	London

Current powers held	Taught degree awarding powers (time-limited)
Date current powers granted	September 2012
Number of current awards as at (Self-assessment document submitted on 13 August 2020)	32 bachelor's and master's level programmes leading to awards of the University. Three postgraduate research programmes in teach out validated by the University of Wales. A cross-institutional doctoral programme validated by the University of Northampton. A professional doctorate programme validated by the Open University.
Number of students (Student numbers provided on 2 September 2020)	2,421 (2,202 full-time; 219 part-time). This includes 1,700 undergraduate students and 721 postgraduate students)
Number of staff as at August 2020 (Staff numbers provided on 2 September 2020)	682 in total comprising: 386 academic staff (including 135 visiting lecturers and 89 invigilators), 67 senior managers and 229 professional services staff

About Regent's University London

Regent's University London is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee and is a registered charity. Following the grant of taught degree awarding powers in July 2012, when it was known as Regent's College, the use of the university title was approved in June 2013. The University's degree awarding powers were renewed in August 2018 for a six-year term.

In September 2020, ownership of the University is expected to transfer to GGE UK NewCo Limited (NewCo), recently incorporated in England and Wales, with the ultimate controlling interest vested in Galileo Global Education, an international provider of higher education. While NewCo will form part of the wider Galileo Group, the governance and management structure is intended to enable the University to continue to operate as previously, notwithstanding the change of control of the University.

The University's Mission is 'to develop tomorrow's global leaders', reflecting its international ethos. The 2019-2024 Strategic Plan is guided by two key themes, namely simplified processes, practices and structures; and institutional differentiation. The Plan commits the University to achieving objectives which include 'developing successful, effective and engaged global citizens', embedding the Regent's culture, underpinned by the values of collaboration, caring, integrity, excellence and internationalisation; and actively seeking institutional partnerships and alliances aligned with the University's values.

The University offers 14 programmes in Business and Management; five programmes in Fashion and Design; five programmes in Film, Media and Performance; three programmes

in Liberal Arts and Humanities; and five taught programmes in Psychotherapy and Psychology leading to its own degree awards. The University is teaching out three Psychotherapy and Psychology postgraduate research programmes validated by the University of Wales. It also offers doctoral level provision in Psychology, validated by the Open University and a cross-institutional doctoral programme validated by the University of Northampton.

Two faculties - Business and Management and Humanities, and Arts and Social Science - deliver the University's core business, while the Regent's Institute of Languages and Culture, which is independent of the faculties, consolidates the University's language and 'global perspectives' provision.

How the assessment was conducted

The QAA assessment team completed an assessment of the provider according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers, December 2019.*

The team appointed to conduct this this assessment was:

Name: Mary Blauciak
Institution: formerly University of Derby and Manchester College
Role on assessment team: Institutional assessor

Name: Helen Marshall
Institution: University of Salford
Role on assessment team: Institutional assessor

The QAA Officer for the assessment was Irene Ainsworth.

The size and composition of this team is in line with published guidance and as such is comprised of experts with significant experience and expertise across the higher education sector. The team included members with experience of a similar provider to the institution and knowledge of the type of academic awards offered. Collectively the team had experience of the management and delivery of higher education programmes from academic and professional services perspectives and also regulatory and investigative experience. The team included at least one senior academic leader qualified to doctoral level. Details of team members were shared with the provider prior to the assessment to identify and resolve any possible conflicts of interest.

As per the referral from the OfS, the assessment team undertook a desk-based analysis of the University's self-assessment document and an associated set of 108 documents of supporting evidence, submitted on 13 August 2020. Following the team's desk-based assessment of this initial evidence, clarification was sought and further information relating to academic governance and partnership arrangements was requested from the University on 17 August. The University provided an additional set of 39 documents on 18 August. The assessment team reviewed this additional evidence on 19 August and raised a point of clarification with the University on 20 August. One further item of documentary evidence was provided to the team on the same day. The team felt that the documentary evidence provided was sufficient for them to make judgements about the University's ability to meet the DAPs criteria. The assessment team therefore did not feel that a visit to the University would have provided any evidence that would have caused them to change their judgements.

Key themes pursued in the course of the assessment related to the University's academic governance arrangements and its ability to ensure that quality and standards will continue to be maintained by the University's academic community, notwithstanding the planned change of ownership. The team did not undertake any sampling of evidence given the focus of the assessment which spans the whole of the provision as well as the required timescale specified.

Details of the evidence the assessment team considered are provided in the 'Explanation of findings' below.

Explanation of findings

Criterion A: Academic governance

Criterion A1 - Academic governance

1   This criterion states that:

A1.1:   An organisation granted degree awarding powers has effective academic governance, with clear and appropriate lines of accountability for its academic responsibilities.

A1.2:   Academic governance, including all aspects of the control and oversight of its higher education provision is conducted in partnership with its students.

A1.3:   Where an organisation granted degree awarding powers works with other organisations to deliver learning opportunities, it ensures that its governance and management of such opportunities is robust and effective and that decisions to work with other organisations are the result of a strategic approach rather than opportunism.

2   The QAA assessment team conducted an assessment of this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers (December 2019).*

The evidence considered and why the team considered this evidence

3   The QAA assessment team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in the *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA* (October 2019), in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5. The assessment team identified and considered this evidence for the purposes described in Annex 4 and 5 of the Guidance for Providers as follows.

a   To test the effectiveness of the planned new governance arrangements and to establish that there is clarity about the respective roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in overseeing and managing the University's higher education provision, the team considered the revised University's Academic Governance Structure including details of membership and terms of reference, July 2020 [002], a screenshot (taken in August 2020) to highlight clarity and differentiation of function between Senate and the Board of Trustees [002a], a note on GGE UK NewCo Limited (NewCo) and proposed NewCo governance arrangements of the University [002c], the Terms of Reference of the NewCo Committees [091-094] and the NewCo Articles of Association [095].

b   To determine how policies and structures will be operationalised under the new governance arrangements, the team considered the Academic Committee NewCo Membership and Terms of Reference, July 2020 [005], the note on GGE UK NewCo Limited (NewCo) and proposed governance of the University [002c,091-095], the membership of Senate compared to the new Academic Committee [012,013] and the Code of Conduct for Committee Members, August 2017 [010].

c   To test the effectiveness of the academic governance arrangements and management of the University's higher education provision to date, the team considered the Strategic Plan [001], the Vision and Mission Statement [001a], an Academic Assurance Report for the Board of Trustees regarding academic year

2018-19, November 2019 [003], Senate Membership and Terms of Reference, August 2019 [004], Board of Trustees Meeting minutes (17 July 2019) [006], a Leadership Foundation for Higher Education report on governance effectiveness (August 2016) [014], a report presented to Senate on Academic Policies due for review by the end of the 2019-20 academic year (8 July 2020) [017], Academic Policies for Senate Review and Approval (8 July 2020) [017a] and the Senate 3 July 2019 meeting agenda [018]. In addition, the team looked at the University's Academic Regulations and how these are kept under review [023-028], SQAEC attendance [033] and University policies [062 https://www.regents.ac.uk/policies]. It also considered the range of staff expertise and experience demonstrated by staff curricula vitae and job descriptions provided [023-028,067a-k,068,068a-m].

d   To understand how academic governance of the University's higher education provision is conducted in partnership with its students, the team considered the University's Academic Governance Structure [002] and Senate Committees Structure [002b], NewCo governance arrangements [002c], the Membership and Terms of Reference of the Academic Committee NewCo Membership and Terms of Reference, July 2020 [005], Committee attendance records for 2019-20 [029-036] and Senate Minutes, 5 February 2020 [063]. The team also considered the Strategic Plan [001], Student Representation Training [011] and frequently asked questions for representative committee members participating on Senate Student Experience Committee [011a] to identify how the University enables students to engage in academic governance and the management of academic standards and quality at University and course level [001,011a].

e   To establish the University's approach to partnership working, the team considered the Strategic Plan 2019-2024 [001], Academic Regulations [027], Due Diligence Report template, 22 May 2017 [037], Early Scrutiny of Prospective Partners template, 22 May 2017 and example [038, 084], Approving models of partnership and site visit report, 22 May 2017 [039], MoA Regent CalleF, 22 June 2018 [041], Signed Memorandum of Cooperation with the University of Northampton, September 2016 [042], Appointing New University Partners [043], Memorandum of Agreement examples [041, 047, 082], MOU Regent's template 2019 [049], Senate Minutes (5 February 2020) [052], Variation and Approval Agreement RUL OU [054], Variation Agreement RUL UoW [055], Internationalisation Strategy [070], Collaborative Provision Policy [072, www.regents.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/Collaborative%20Provision%20Policy%20-%20July%202020.pdf], Portfolio Reshaping: Future of Senate Portfolio Scrutiny Panel [074], Senate Minutes, 20 November 2019 [075], SPSP Annual Report to Senate 2018-19 [076], SPSP Committee Minutes (17 October 2019) [078], Paper to the SPSP on the Process of Approving Partnerships, October 2019 [079], SPSP rationalisation of partnership agreements, December 2017 [086] and August 2019 [096], Regent's Internationalisation Strategy 2020-24 internal and public versions [097, 097a], International Partnership Strategy 2020-2023 [098], Staff Guide for International Partnerships [101], Evidence of partnership sign-off by the Vice Chancellor [104, 104a, 104b], List of Partnerships - Collaboration Status [105], Example of Partner Visit Report Form, 25 May 2018 [109] and an Updated list of Partnerships [110].

f   To understand how the University ensures that its governance and management of learning opportunities delivered with other organisations are robust and effective, the team examined the Academic Governance Structure [002], Senate Committees [002b], NewCo governance arrangements [002c], Senate Membership and Terms of Reference [004], Report to the Senate Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (October 2019) on a completed mapping exercise undertaken against the revised Quality Code (2018) [040], Collaborative Provision Mapping Template

v3 2017 [045], Collaborative Provision Register [046], Senate minutes, 5 February 2020 [052], Placement feedback reports [056, 057, 058], Portfolio Reshaping: Future of Senate Portfolio Scrutiny Panel (SPSP) paper to Senate, 5 February 2020 [074], Senate Minutes, 20 November 2019 [075], SPSP Annual report to Senate 2018-19 [076], SPSP committee minutes [078], Process for Appointing New Partners, paper to the SPSP on the process of approving partnerships, 4 October 2019 [079], and Rationalisation of Partnerships paper to the Senate Portfolio Scrutiny Panel Committee, 12 August 2019 [096].

How any samples of evidence were constructed

4   No sampling of evidence was conducted due to the scope and the timescale specified for the assessment.

What the evidence shows

5   The assessment team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

6   The Academic Governance Structure for the University (July 2020) [002, 002a], the note on the proposed governance of NewCo and the University [002c], the Terms of Reference of NewCo committees [091-094] and the Articles of Association of NewCo [095] set out the responsibilities of the parties that will be responsible for governance of the University. Under the new arrangements, the NewCo Board of Directors intend to take on the role previously held by the University's Board of Trustees. This means that the NewCo Board of Directors will be responsible for the long-term success of the University and will be responsible for providing constructive challenge to the Directorate of the University [002c]. The proposed NewCo Board of Directors will have six members. There are four proposed subcommittees of the Board which is a reduction from the seven subcommittees that are in place for the Board of Trustees currently. The current Senate is proposed to be re-formed as the Academic Committee, which will become a subcommittee of the Board alongside a Nominations Committee, an Audit and Risk Committee and a Remuneration Committee [002c, 091-094]. The proposed new Board of Directors and its subcommittees have proposed refreshed Terms of Reference. The exception to this is the proposed Academic Committee which will look to retain the same Terms of Reference as Senate currently holds.

7   The Terms of Reference of the Board of Directors are proposed to be the Articles of Association of the limited company NewCo [095]. These set out the responsibilities of the Board of Directors for the management of the business (Article 3.1) and indicate that the Directors may delegate any of the powers which are conferred on them by the Articles to such a person or committee, or on such terms and conditions, as the Board sees fit (Article 5.1 (a) and 5.1 (e)) [002c, 095]. The team were aware that Article 5.3 makes it clear that the Board of Directors are not empowered to overturn decisions made by individuals or subcommittees when appropriately taken under the delegated powers [095]. However, the team also noted that Article 5.3 of NewCo allows the Directors of the company to revoke any power delegated in whole, or in part, or alter any of the proposed subcommittee's terms and conditions. Therefore, while the assessment team can make judgements about the proposed governance arrangements, based on the evidence seen, they are clear that the Board of Directors will be empowered to change these arrangements should they wish.

8   The assessment team noted in the evidence provided that the proposed arrangements for governance show that powers will be delegated to the subcommittees of the Board of Directors [091-094 of NewCo]. A review of the powers that are proposed to be delegated to the subcommittees of the Board of Directors, including those of the Academic Committee, lead the assessment team to feel that the proposals for the delegation of powers are appropriate. As highlighted above, the team understand that the Terms of Reference of

the Academic Committee [092] will mirror those of the current Senate and will be focused on Academic Strategy, Academic Standards and Quality. These terms of reference will also set out a clear cycle of activity to ensure these areas of responsibility are scrutinised by the Academic Committee regularly. The proposed Terms of Reference of the remaining subcommittees cover practice relating to audit of spend and risk, the remuneration of senior staff, and are intended to ensure that the skills and knowledge of the Board members remain appropriate. The assessment team feel, based on the evidence seen, that the Terms of Reference, lines of accountability and responsibility, as articulated, seem appropriate for a Board of Directors and its subcommittees (Nominations Committee [091], Academic Committee [092], Audit and Risk Committee [093] and the Remuneration Committee [094]). As planned, the new arrangements should be capable of providing appropriate University and academic governance.

9   Under the proposed governance arrangements [002c, 091-095], the assessment team were clear that the Academic Committee will be chaired by the University Vice Chancellor [005]. A Non-Executive Director of the NewCo Board will join the Academic Committee. At the time of assessment, a non-Executive member of the Board, who is an academic and a professor, has been nominated to sit on the Committee, while the number of professional services members will be reduced by two. The assessment team were clear that this current nomination and the reduction in size of the Committee have been designed by the provider to increase the academic representation on the Committee [012, 013]. The team noted that the Academic Committee will delegate authority to subcommittees that will mirror exactly those bodies which currently act as subcommittees of the Senate, thereby hoping to ensure a continuity of academic governance within the University. The assessment team understood that this proposed 'continuity change' will be underpinned by the continued use of the University's current Code of Conduct for Committee Members [010], which sets out expectations of committee members.

10   The assessment team concludes that, on the basis of the evidence available to it at the point of assessment, the proposed arrangements, as set out in the Terms of Reference and the lines of reporting and accountability, should enable Criterion A1 to continue to be met. However, as these arrangements are yet to be implemented, there was no evidence relating to their effectiveness at the point the assessment was undertaken. In addition, the team considered that the Board's ability to revoke delegation of powers from any committee or individual at the University, as allowed for by the Articles of Association [095], warranted careful consideration after the planned new governance arrangements have been implemented.

11   As part of their review of the evidence provided, the assessment team were clear that the University's current Strategic Plan 2019-2024 (incorporating a Vision and Mission statement) [001, 001a] was approved by the Board of Trustees in July 2019 [006]. The Plan, Vision and Mission set out the current strategic direction and priorities for the University, as well as its values. The team noted that the Plan commits the University to achieving six strategic objectives. These include the delivery of 'outstanding teaching, learning, scholarship and research while incrementally enhancing quality' and supporting and delivering 'student success, engagement and employability - developing successful, effective and engaged global citizens who achieve their maximum potential'. In reviewing the evidence, the team considered the Strategic Plan, Vision and Mission to be coherent with a clear focus on ensuring the delivery of a quality learning experience and employable graduates in addition to reflecting the University's international ethos [001].

12   As part of this assessment the team reviewed the current arrangement for academic governance to contextualise the implications of the proposed changes that are due to be implemented as a result of the change in ownership of the University. The self-assessment document indicates that the current Board of Trustees consists of 22 members

and has seven sub-committees [002]. The assessment team were clear that, currently, the Senate is the primary academic authority of the University and leads on academic governance. The team were also clear that the Board of Trustees is responsible for setting the strategic agenda for the University and fulfils an audit, monitoring and quality assurance function relating to all the University's work [002a]. Senate has a reporting line into the Board of Trustees but currently sits independently of the Board [002b, 004]. Reports presented to the Board of Trustees, including the Academic Assurance report regarding the 2018-19 academic year [003], Board of Trustees Meeting minutes (17 July 2019) [006], a Leadership Foundation for Higher Education report on governance effectiveness (August 2016) [014], a report presented to Senate on Academic Policies due for review by the end of the 2019-20 academic year (8 July 2020) [017] and the Senate 3 July 2019 meeting agenda, show that the responsibilities of each body are being delivered [017, 018].

13   The job descriptions, provided as part of the documentary submission, outlined to the assessment team the roles of senior staff [068-068m]. The team noted that collectively these define the role of the Senior Team under the leadership of the Vice Chancellor. The curricula vitae of members of the Senior Team [067, 067a-k, 068, 068a-m] included examples of a wide range of relevant expertise and experience, and engagement with the sector through a variety of avenues. For example, staff have worked and held senior positions in other higher education institutions, serve as external examiners, work with the Higher Education Academy, and engage in academic conferences. Staff (academic and professional) are formally included in Senate and Senate Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (SQAEC) membership [004, 033], ensuring their formal inclusion in the development and communication of policies and procedures. The University's regulatory framework, which includes Academic Regulations, Academic Policies student-related strategies and the University Student Handbook, is detailed and has been approved by the Senate. It is freely available on the University's website [062 https://www.regents.ac.uk/policies]. The University reviews its academic policies regularly (tracking revision history) and they are presented to Senate for ratification or review and approval [017,017a].

14   The assessment team noted that the University's academic regulations [023], which include quality assurance and enhancement processes that apply to programme approval, review and modification (leading to awards of the University, externally validated programmes and collaborative provision), are comprehensive and detailed. The team were clear that the regulations are drafted and regularly reviewed by the University [023-028]. The evidence showed that minor and appropriate changes have been made to the regulations following a recent review and these were subject to thorough consideration by a scrutiny panel chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor [023-028].

15   From their review of the evidence provided, it was clear to the assessment team that students are currently engaged in the academic governance of the University primarily through membership of its committees [002,002b]. At least two members of each committee are students. However, the team were also made aware that there will not be student members of the new Board of Directors [002c]. Minutes show that students attend current committees regularly, that they are engaged in academic governance and are involved in discussions about academic developments within the University [029-036, 063]. Additionally, students are elected as student representatives and trained in this role to represent students at programme level, providing course feedback, contributing to learning and teaching developments and participating in programme and University-level decision-making, including the development of the University's Strategic Plan [001, 011, 011a].

16   The current Strategic Plan 2019-2024 [001] commits the University to 'actively seeking institutional partnerships and alliances where this enhances the academic reputation of Regent's, strengthens our finances and aligns with our institutional values'. The University

is committed to internationalisation as reflected in its Internationalisation Strategy 2019-2024 [070, 097, 097a], which supports the University's mission 'to develop tomorrow's global leaders'. The University's academic regulations [027] state clearly the types of academic collaboration the University recognises, as set out in the Collaborative Provision Policy (CPP) version 1.3 [072], and the regulations that apply for all collaborative arrangements. Together, the strategies, policies and academic regulations provided to the assessment team led them to judge that they present a consistent and coherent approach to the development and maintenance of collaborative provision.

17   The CPP [https://www.regents.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/Collaborative%20Provision%20Policy%20-%20July%202020.pdf] outlines the University's current approach to ensuring that all its students have a high-quality student experience and that academic standards are safeguarded irrespective of where students are studying. Three types of collaborative provision are defined: articulation arrangement (students are automatically entitled to be admitted with advanced standing to a subsequent stage of a programme); dual/double or multiple awards (two or more awarding bodies provide a single jointly-delivered programme (or programmes) leading to separate awards; and jointly delivered programme (delivered or provided jointly by two or more organisations). The CPP underpins the strategic development of new partnerships and details the criteria used by the University to determine how any proposed partnership will enhance the University's reputation (or strengthen an existing partnership) [072].

18   The assessment team noted that there is a clear link between the Internationalisation Strategy (May 2014) [070] and the CPP [072] including its associated processes [037, 038, 084, 039, 109]. The team determined that the CPP included clear, coherent definitions of how the success of partnership working will be measured and how it will be monitored and reviewed by the current governance committees of the University. The team were therefore confident that the CPP demonstrates a strategic approach to developing partnerships and is informed by the effective assessment of risk, including the exercise of due diligence [043]. The team noted a report to the Senate Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (October 2019) on a completed mapping exercise undertaken against the revised Quality Code (2018) [040] which included reference to the University's collaborative provision and showed full compliance with the Quality Code.

19   The University's response to a request for clarification from the assessment team indicates that the University has 113 partnerships (including Articulation Agreements, Progression Agreements, ERASMUS, Student Exchange, Staff Exchange, Affiliate, European Mobility Programmes and Inbound Study Abroad) spanning 28 countries [110]. This updated list of partnerships indicated that 23 legally binding Memoranda of Agreement are in place with partner institutions around the world [110]. Memorandum of Agreement documentation [041, 047, 082] seen by the assessment team sets out the separate and joint responsibilities of the University and the partner institutions. The team noted the University's confirmation that all formal, legally binding partnerships are negotiated and agreed by signing a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) [110, Response to request for additional information, 18 August]. However, the team also noted the following statement was included in some of the documentation 'This MOA does not legally or financially bind either of the two universities. Its aim is to promote relations that will mutually benefit each institution, this being the primary aim of university collaboration' [082, 047]. Given the statement included in some of the evidence, the assessment team were not clear as to how the MOAs are used and enforced by the University to maintain academic standards, no matter where their programmes are delivered.

20   The Future Students and Partnership Office (FSPO) oversees study abroad activity, facilitating the recording of appropriate placement learning [056-058] and, for ERASMUS and other study abroad programmes, provides induction to incoming students. The FSPO

also provides academic, linguistic, administrative and pastoral preparation and support to Regent's students prior to them going abroad. The SPSP rationalised the University's partnership arrangements, including exchange agreements, in December 2017 [086] and affiliate and study abroad agreements in August 2019 [096]. The Internationalisation Strategy 2020-2024 [097, 097a] refers to the intention to simplify the approach to student recruitment, focusing on the University's main markets and differentiating the University through the selection of high-quality partnerships. The assessment team found that the evidence of the updated process should provide a comprehensive, appropriately staged approach to approving new partnerships, if implemented as described.

21   Responsibility for oversight of collaborative arrangements and study periods abroad rests ultimately with the Senate [004], which delegates responsibility to the Senate Portfolio Scrutiny Panel (SPSP) [002b]. The assessment team considered that the current committee structure [002] facilitates clear lines of accountability for the oversight of collaborative or partnership provision. The team noted in the evidence provided (SPSP minutes, 17 October 2019) [078, 079]) indications that the University is intending to establish a Collaborative Provision Committee which would meet twice a year in place of the SPSP. The team triangulated this evidence through their scrutiny of discussions at the Senate on Portfolio Reshaping: Future of Senate Portfolio Scrutiny Panel [074] and Senate Minutes (5 February 2020) [052]. The team were therefore clear that the University is to establish the committee and that there is a commitment by the potential new Academic Committee to continue this work. The team noted that in the interim, approval and oversight of collaborative provision would reside with the Directorate while no formal committee was in place to do this work. From the evidence scrutinised the team were made aware that the University does not anticipate that it will be considering new partners in the short-term [request for additional information response, 18 August 2020].

22   On the basis of the evidence available to it at the point of assessment, the assessment team considered that the University has adopted an active approach to assuring effective governance and quality assurance of the learning opportunities it provides in conjunction with its partners. However, the team did note that some of these arrangements are in prospect and as such no evidence as to their efficacy was available. The team also noted that the conflicting evidence in regard to the legal status of agreements with partners may impact on the effectiveness of the governance arrangements.

Conclusions

23   The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in the *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA* (October 2019), in particular Annex 4.

24   On the basis of the evidence available to the team at the time of the assessment, it formed the view that the proposed governance arrangements have been subject to careful consideration to ensure that the University continues to meet its obligations as a degree awarding body. Following the transfer of the University to GGE UK NewCo, the governing body of the University will be the NewCo Board of Directors and will include the Vice Chancellor as a member. The Board will delegate management functions to the Vice Chancellor and the Directorate. Academic Committee (currently the University Senate) will become one of the four committees reporting to the Board. The University's self-assessment document states that the leadership, management, systems and processes will be unchanged.

25   While the new academic governance framework has yet to be fully implemented and tested, on the basis of the evidence available to it at the point of assessment, the team

considered that the planned new governance arrangements demonstrate clear and appropriate lines of accountability for the University's academic responsibilities, although these have yet to be tested in practice. The team noted that the Articles of Association [095] enable the Board of Directors to revoke any delegation of powers from any committee or individual at the University and considered that this should be kept under review to ensure that the governance arrangements continue to enable the University to fulfil its obligations as a UK degree awarding powers body. The team noted that, while the Board of Directors will not include a student as a member, students are actively engaged in the University's academic governance and oversight of higher education provision and are supported in this role by the University.

26   The team found that the University's arrangements with other organisations to deliver learning opportunities are based on a strategic approach, informed by the effective assessment of risk, including the exercise of due diligence. The University has distinguished between different types of collaborative partnerships and clear lines of accountability for the oversight of collaborative provision are evident in current committee structures and proposals for future governance, which are in line with sector practice. However, the University has a new partner approval processes that has yet to be tested.

27   The available evidence leads the team to conclude, therefore, that the criterion is **met**.

Full DAPs overarching criterion

28   The Full DAPs overarching criterion is that:

'the provider is a self-critical, cohesive academic community with a proven commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective quality systems'.

Self-critical, cohesive academic community

29   The University Strategic Plan 2019-2024 [001], Mission and Vision statements [001a] set out the strategic direction and priorities for the University coherently. They are detailed and clearly articulated. The University's academic governance structure, which currently has Senate as the apex body, allows for effective oversight and management of the University's strategic objectives and management of its higher education provision [002, 002b, 004]. Following transfer to NewCo, the Senate will be replaced with the prospective Academic Committee which will be a subcommittee of the NewCo Board [002c]. The plans seen by the assessment team highlight that the Academic Committee will remain the highest academic authority within the University and receive the same reports that are currently submitted to Senate [005]. The Academic Committee's membership will be changed to include a Non-Executive member of the NewCo Board [005]. The current nominated member of the board is an academic and a professor which, with the proposed reduction in the number of professional services members of the committee, is designed to give an increased weighting to academic representation on the Committee during the period of their appointment.

30   The University reviewed and refined its academic regulations in 2016-17 [026] and again in 2019-20 [023] to maintain currency and align with sector practices. The academic regulations, academic policies [062, 062a, 062b], student-related strategies and the University Student Handbook [066] are freely available on the website [https://www.regents.ac.uk/policies], are comprehensive and have been approved by the Senate.

31   Senior staff roles are clearly set out in job descriptions [068, 068a-068m].

Collectively these define the role of the Senior Team under the leadership of the Vice Chancellor. The curricula vitae of post holders demonstrated to the team that there was a balance of expertise and a range of relevant experience [067, 067a-k] within the senior team. Staff (academic and professional) are formally included in the current Senate and Senate Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (SQAEC) membership [004, 033] which has ensured their formal inclusion in the development and communication of policies and procedures.

32   The University effectively engages students in academic governance and oversight of the University's higher education provision. This is primarily through membership of its deliberative committees. At least two members of each committee are students and minutes demonstrate that students engage actively and attend regularly. At programme level students are asked to provide course feedback, feed into learning and teaching developments and participate in University decision making [021, 022, 026, 027]. The University has demonstrated a commitment to stakeholder engagement in its academic governance arrangements and oversight of its higher education.

33   Recognising the need to streamline the process for approving new partnerships, the University has reviewed processes and produced a proposal for future approvals which distinguishes clearly between different types of collaborative partnerships and makes recommendations for improvement [078, 079].

Proven commitment to the assurance of standards

34   The University's current Strategic Plan 2019-2024 [001] is guided by two overarching themes and has six key objectives, each of which has targets and milestones. The objectives include a commitment to deliver outstanding and inspirational teaching, learning, scholarship and research while incrementally enhancing quality, and to support and deliver student success, engagement and employability.

35   The current academic regulations are comprehensive and clear and are communicated to staff and students through staff development, the website and in student handbooks [071, 066]. The regulations are regularly reviewed to ensure currency and that they continue to meet external and internal requirements. Any proposed changes are scrutinised by a panel chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor [027].

36   The current Collaborative Provision Policy [072] and associated documents [045, 039] demonstrate the University's approach to ensuring that all its students have a high-quality student experience and that academic standards are safeguarded, irrespective of where they are studying. It explicitly states adherence to *The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies* as a requirement and provides an effective overarching set of principles to underpin the quality framework for the effective management of collaborative arrangements. The Collaborative Provision Policy and associated processes [072, 045, 039] are thorough, clear, coherent and include definitions of how success will be measured, and how it will be monitored and reviewed. It demonstrates a strategic approach to developing partnerships and commitment to quality assurance.

Effective quality systems

37   The Senate is currently responsible for establishing and overseeing the implementation of approved policies [018, 017, 017a] to ensure the University's higher education mission, aims and objectives are consistently applied. Senate reports and minutes [052, 063] provide evidence of the University's effective scrutiny of performance and student outcomes through its committee structure. The current committee structure facilitates clear lines of accountability for the oversight of the University's provision including collaborative arrangements and the papers and minutes [002, 078, 052, 079] reviewed by the assessment

team indicate that effective quality assurance processes are in place.

38   Coherent quality systems are evident in the current Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy [006b] and academic policies available on the University website [https://www.regents.ac.uk/policies]. Clear criteria underpin the development of new partnerships which demonstrate a strategic approach informed by the effective assessment of risk, including the exercise of detailed due diligence [072, 037, 038].

Conclusions

39   The assessment team considered that there is a self-critical, cohesive academic community at the University. The current academic governance arrangements demonstrate a proven commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective quality systems which are subject to effective oversight and monitoring and review arrangements. The University Strategic Plan 2019-2024, Mission and Vision are detailed, clearly articulated and readily accessible, setting out the strategic direction and priorities for the University coherently. The University's Collaborative Provision Policy and associated processes demonstrate a strategic approach to developing partnerships and its commitment to quality assurance. Clear criteria underpin the strategic development of new partnerships. The current academic governance structure provides a cohesive framework for the delivery of strategic objectives and management of academic quality. The team felt that the evidence provided gave them confidence that there is appropriate depth and strength in academic leadership that informs strategic direction and oversees implementation. The University's current regulatory framework, which includes Academic Regulations, Academic Policies student-related strategies and the University Student Handbook, is freely available on the website [https://www.regents.ac.uk/policies], comprehensive and approved by the Senate, the University's senior academic authority. Senate and associated committee minutes demonstrate that the University scrutinises performance and student outcomes effectively through its committee structure.

40   Staff and students are engaged effectively in academic governance and oversight of the University's higher education provision through membership of programme and University-level deliberative committees, demonstrating the University's commitment to stakeholder engagement in its academic governance arrangements and oversight of its higher education. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the University **meets** the overarching criterion and has a self-critical, cohesive academic community with a proven commitment to the assurance of standards, supported by effective quality systems.

List of evidence

Reference number	Supporting evidence
001	Strategic Plan (A1a)
001a	Mission and Vision statements
002	Committee Structure and ToRs
002a	Clarity and Differentiation of function of BoT and Senate (Section 4 of Academic Governance Structures)
002b	Senate Committees
002c	NewCo Governance Arrangements
003	Academic Assurance Report
004	Senate Membership and ToR
005	Academic Committee Newco Membership and ToR
006	Evidence of approval and communication of strategy
006a	Evidence of communication of strategy
006b	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy
007	Schedule of meetings of Committees
008	Job Descriptions Senate members
009	CVs Senior Academics
010	Code of Conduct for Committee Members
011	Student Representation Training
011a	FAQs for Student Representatives
012	Senate Members
013	Academic Committee Members NewCo
014	Governance Effectiveness Review 2016
014a	Governance Effectiveness Review Proposal 2020
015	Proposal to BoT for transfer to GGE
016	Statement of Responsibilities of BoT
017	11.1 Academic Policies for Senate Ratification

017a	Academic Policies for Senate Review and Approval
018	Senate Agenda 03 07 2019
019	ARSP 11 06 2019 Committee Approved
020	SQAEC ToR Forward Planning
021	Tasklist 50 SPA Import of Grades
022	Draft ARTFG Agenda 08 04 2016
023	Draft Academic Regulations 201920
024	Key Changes to the Academic Regulations 2019-20
025	Change to Condonement Regulations
026	Key Changes to the Academic Regulations 2016-17
027	Academic Regulations with track changes
028	ARSP 05 02 2019 Chair approved
029	Senate Attendance 2019-20
030	SLTC Attendance 2019-20
031	SPSP Attendance 2019-20
032	ASRP Attendance 2019-20
033	SQAEC Attendance 2019-20
034	SPSP Attendance 2019-20
035	SRC Attendance 2019-20
036	SSEC Attendance 2019-20
037	Due Diligence Report
038	Early Scrutiny of Prospective Partners
039	Approving models of partnership and site visit
040	Quality Code Mapping
041	Memorandum of Agreement Regent CalleF Dec2018
042	Signed Memorandum of Cooperation with U of Northampton
043	Appointing new University partners May 2017
044	Approval and Validation Agreement OU RUL March 2015
045	Collaborative Provision Mapping Template
046	Collaborative Provision Register - April 2019
047	MoA RUL Prospective Partner
048	Letter from Vice-Chancellor - 30 01 12 -SPC
049	MOU REGENT'S template 2019
050	PARTNER PREPARATORY AUDIT FORM - Template
051	School of Psychotherapy and Counselling_UoW notification
052	Senate Minutes 050220 Committee approved

053	UW Exit Procedures Pack Final
054	Variation And Approval Agreement RUL OU
055	Variation Agreement RUL UoW
056	Entropia work feedback
057	Company Feedback form Cedefop signed
058	IHG Company Feedback Form
059	Senate Committee Bulletin 29 April 2020
060	screenshot Senate bulletin
061	Senate Committee Bulletin
062	Policies link on website
062a	Admissions Policy
062b	Research Ethics Policy
063	Senate Minutes Feb 2020
064	Leadership and Teams Programme v27 Nov2019
065	STRATEGIC PLANNING 201920-2
066	Final Student Handbook 2019-20 V2
067	CV
067a	CV
067b	CV
067c	CV
067d	CV
067e	CV
067f	CV
067g	CV
067h	CV
067i	CV
067j	CV
067k	CV
068	JD Vice Chancellor
068a	JD Acting Director RILC
068b	JD Chief Information Officer
068c	JD Chief Operating Officer
068d	JD Director of Marketing Recruitment Admissions
068e	JD Finance Director
068f	JD Head of AED
068g	JD Head of Governance
068h	JD Provost DVC

068i	JD PVC and Director of HR
068j	JD PVC Dean BaM
068k	JD Registrar
068l	JD Students' Union President
068m	JD PVC Dean of HASS
069	Learning and Development Committee ToR
070	Internationalisation Strategy
071	Staff training sessions academic regs
072	Collaborative Provision Policy
073	Professional Profile for ....pdf
074	The Future of SPSP.pdf
075	Senate Minutes 201119.pdf
076	SPSP Annual Report to Senate 2018-19.pdf
077	No document
078	SPSP Committee Minutes 17.10.pdf
079	Process for appointing new partners.pdf
080	Approving models of partnership and site visit.pdf
081	MOU REGENTS template 2019.pdf
082	Draft MoA-RUL-BLANK.pdf
083	PARTNER PREPARATORY AUDIT FORM - Template.pdf
084	Early scrutiny of prospective partner - example.pdf
085	Rationalisation of Partnerships.pdf
086	IPO_Rationalisation of Exchange Agreements 16-11-2017.pdf
087	EBS 3 X 10 Work Experience v1.0.pdf
088	Signed Example Risk Assessment USA.pdf
089	Signed Example Risk Assessment EU.pdf
090	Signed Example Placement H and S doc.pdf
091	NewCo - Nominations Committee ToR.pdf
092	NewCo Academic Committee - ToR.pdf
093	NewCo Audit and Risk Committee ToR.pdf
094	NewCo Remuneration Committee - ToR.pdf
095	NewCo Articles of Association.pdf
096	Rationalisation of Partnerships.pdf
097	Regents Internationalisation Strategy 2020-2024 Internal Version.pdf
097a	Regents Internationalisation Strategy 2020-24 Public Version.pdf
098	International Partnership Strategy.pdf
099	Inbound Study Abroad and Exchanges Weekly Monitoring.pdf

100	Outbound Spring 2019 Study Abroad Module Results.pdf
101	Staff Guide for International Partnerships.pdf
102	Establishing Partnerships Guidelines.pdf
103	3a_PPE Programme Development Document.pdf
104	Evidence of Partnership Sign-off from VC.pdf
104a	VC Sign-off for Partnership Approval.pdf
104b	Regents Toyo MoU 2020.pdf
105	List of Partnerships - collaboration status.pdf
106	Recruitment and Partnership Overview.pdf
107	Evidence of Monitoring of Intl Partnerships.pdf
108	Partnership Conference Programme.pdf
109	example of partner visit report.pdf
110	Updated List of Partnerships – collaboration status