

Annex F.1: Committee Oversight Framework

Document	Annex F.1 — Committee Oversight Framework
Part of	NSCD Quality Code
Purpose	Single reference document setting out how NSCD committees operate, are assured, and connect to the wider quality framework
Document owner	Quality Office
Lead contact	Head of Quality & Compliance
Audience	Committee Chairs, Secretaries, members, and the Board of Governors
Approving body	Senate
Implementation	September 2026
Review cycle	2 yearly by the Quality Office

How this document works

This Annex is the framework document for NSCD committees. It is deliberately short. The detailed operational guidance for Secretaries, the role descriptors for members, and the templates referenced here are maintained as separate, linked documents and reviewed on their own cycles. The purpose of this Annex is to give Chairs, Secretaries, members and reviewers a single page of reference for how the committee system fits together.

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1. Purpose

NSCD's committee system supports the School to deliver its strategic, academic and regulatory responsibilities through clear lines of decision-making, scrutiny and assurance. This Annex describes how the system operates and how it is assured.

2. Scope

This Annex applies to all NSCD committees, sub-committees, panels and standing working groups, including those that include members of franchise partner providers.

3. Principles

- **Clarity of purpose:** every committee has a current Terms of Reference setting out its remit, decision rights and reporting line.
- **Proportionality:** committees meet, take papers and produce minutes in proportion to the business they need to consider.
- **Transparency:** agendas, papers and minutes are open by default; reserved items are identified and managed.
- **Accountability:** decisions are owned, actions are tracked, and outcomes are reported up the structure.
- **Continuous improvement:** every committee tracks its own performance through annual and biennial reviews.
- **Good conduct:** all members act in NSCD's interest, declare conflicts of interest, and respect the confidentiality of reserved business.

4. Committee structure

NSCD operates a three-tier committee structure, all reporting to the Board of Governors directly or through the relevant top-level committee. The full visual map is set out in the NSCD Committee Structure chart, which should be read alongside this Annex.

Tier	Role	Examples
Top-level (governing/sign-off)	Strategic oversight, decision and sign-off authority. Reports directly to the Board of Governors.	Board of Governors; Senate; Audit; Finance & Resources; Nominations & Governance; Remuneration; Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Safeguarding & Prevent.
Mid-level (scrutiny/assurance)	Detailed scrutiny, conversation, recommendations and assurance to a top-level committee.	Learning, Teaching & Quality Assurance; Health and Safety & Resources; Validation Panel;

		Board of Examiners; Access & Participation.
Sub-committees and panels (operational)	Specific operational, advisory or decision-making functions feeding into a mid- or top-level committee.	Programme Approval; Academic Regulations; UKVI; Recruitment & Admissions; Mitigation; Appeals; Academic Misconduct; Module Assessment / Progression Board; Ethics; Data Compliance; Diversity Working Group; Joint Faculty Meeting; Student Voice Forum; Student Review Board; Student Union Council.

Each committee's position in the structure, its parent committee and its reporting routes are recorded in its Terms of Reference. Where a committee reports to more than one parent, that is stated explicitly in its Terms of Reference and reflected in the chart.

5. The Committees Calendar

The Quality Office, working with the Clerk to the Governors, proposes the meeting calendar for each academic year, ensuring that the frequency of meetings is as set out in the Terms of Reference for each Committee. The organisation of this calendar ensures that meetings occur in the correct order so as to ensure the integrity of the committee reporting lines. The calendar is agreed by the Chair of the committees and added to the timetabling system and Outlook calendars for the full academic year.

6. The assurance cycle

Each committee operates the same simple assurance cycle. Together these instruments give NSCD a consistent way of evidencing how each committee fulfils its remit.

Instrument	Purpose	Cycle / owner
Terms of Reference	Defines the committee's remit, membership, quorum, decision rights and reporting line.	Reviewed annually by the committee; signed off by its parent committee on a 3 yearly cycle of review. The Quality Office is responsible for making changes to the Terms of Reference for sub-committees, before being signed off by its parent committee.
Order of Business	Sets the standing items the committee will cover across the year.	Reviewed annually by the Chair and Secretary. Signed off by committee.

Agenda, papers and cover sheets	Standard templates ensure each meeting is structured, papers are clearly purposed (Receive / Discuss / Scrutinise / Oversight / Approve), and reserved items are identified.	Each meeting; Secretary, with Chair approval.
Minutes	Permanent record of decisions, reasons and actions, written in the agreed NSCD style.	Each meeting; Secretary, approved by Chair within two weeks.
Consolidated Action Tracker	Single live record of all committee actions across the academic year, owners and deadlines.	Updated continuously; maintained by the Quality Office.
Annual Effectiveness Report	Short report by the Chair and Secretary tracking how the committee has performed against its Terms of Reference and Order of Business across the year.	Annually; submitted to the committee in the first committee of the academic year (reviewing the previous year).
Biennial Effectiveness Review	In-depth review of the committee's effectiveness, membership and contribution to NSCD's quality framework, with recommendations for improvement.	Every two academic years; reported to the committee and parent committee.

At a glance: Terms of Reference (annual) → Order of Business (annual) → Agenda + Papers + Minutes (each meeting) → Consolidated Action Tracker (live) → Annual Effectiveness Report → Biennial Effectiveness Review.

7. Roles in summary

Detailed role descriptors are maintained separately. The summary below is intended for quick reference and to make sure all parties understand how the responsibilities sit alongside one another.

Role	Core responsibility	Detailed reference
Chair	Owns the business of the committee. Ensures it operates within its Terms of Reference, that meetings are orderly and effective, and that decisions are clear, timely and acted upon. Leads the annual Effectiveness Report and biennial Effectiveness Review.	
Secretary	Owns the operational running of the committee. Schedules meetings, drafts agendas, commissions and circulates papers, takes minutes, maintains the	Committees & Boards Secretary Procedures (linked in Section 7).

	Action Tracker entries, and acts as the procedural source of advice for the Chair.	
Members	Read papers in advance, contribute to discussion, take collective responsibility for decisions, declare conflicts of interest, undertake actions in time, and represent the committee's decisions externally.	"My role on an NSCD committee" (linked in Section 7).

8. Standard documents and templates

All committees operate to the same suite of templates, maintained by the Quality Office. New Chairs, Secretaries and members should consult these directly rather than relying on locally adapted versions.

Document	Reference
Committee Structure chart	Visual map of all NSCD committees and reporting lines. Available in Committee Team and on the governance page of the website.
Terms of Reference template	Available in NSCD Committees Team
Order of Business template	Available in NSCD Committees Team
Effectiveness Review template	Available in NSCD Committees Team
Annual Effectiveness Report template	Available in NSCD Committees Team
Agenda template	Available in NSCD Committees Team
Paper cover sheet template	Available in NSCD Committees Team
Minutes & Action Sheet template	Available in NSCD Committees Team
Consolidated Action Tracker	Maintained by the Quality Office in the Committees Team.
Committees & Boards Secretary Procedures	Operational guide for Secretaries (with video walk-throughs).
My Role on an NSCD Committee	One-page guide for committee members.

9. Openness, confidentiality and information governance

Committee documents are open by default. The exceptions are reserved items, which are clearly marked on the agenda, in the minutes and on the cover sheet, and circulated only to those entitled to receive them. All committee records are managed in line with:

- Freedom of Information Act 2000 — most committee papers and minutes are disclosable on request; only specifically exempt content can be withheld.

- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR — papers and minutes avoid unnecessary identification of individuals and are stored securely.
- NSCD Records Retention Schedule — a complete electronic set of agendas, papers and confirmed minutes is held for each committee.

Drafts, working notes and superseded papers should be deleted once the confirmed minutes are available.

10. Chair's action and special meetings

Where business arises between meetings that requires action before the next scheduled meeting, the Chair may either call a special meeting or take Chair's action. Chair's action is taken in writing, channelled through the Secretary, and reported for information to the next scheduled meeting. Detailed guidance on Chair's action is held by the Quality Office and is available on request.

11. Document control

This Annex is owned by the Quality Office and reviewed as part of the wider NSCD Quality Code review.