

**Consortium of Centres of Nursing &  
Midwifery Education (CCNME)  
Academic Council  
Constitution & Standing Orders**

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## 1.0 Introduction

As set out in the Quality & Qualifications of Ireland (QQI) Governance and Management of Quality (2021) and with the approval of the HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director; the Academic Council of the CCNME has the delegated authority for autonomous decision-making concerning all academic matters as they relate to QQI programmes of education, provided by the CCNME.

## 2.0 Constitution

This constitution outlines the set of operating principles that govern the CCNME Academic Council to incorporate its roles and responsibilities and to define its relationship with QQI and the HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director.

### 2.1 Roles & Responsibilities of the Academic Council

The Academic Council is responsible for the planning, co-ordination, development, monitoring and oversight of all academic matters as it relates to the CCNME QQI Levels 5-8 programmes of education.

The CCNME Academic Council reports to the Director of the ONMSD.

It is responsible for:

- Oversight of all academic matters including Learner admission, curriculum, assessment of learner, academic standards and academic quality assurance as it relates to Level 5-Level 8 QQI programmes of education
- Implementation of the written Constitution and Standing Orders as agreed with ONMSD Director;
- Oversight of the development, implementation and review of educational and quality assurance standards and associated policies and procedures ensuring compliance with standards of and guidelines of QQI, legislation, statutory and regulatory external stakeholders requirements;
- Establishment and oversight of the academic governance framework;
- Constitution, reconstitution and discontinuation of committees and sub-committees including Terms of Reference, which it determines is required to fulfil its function;
- Approve, not approve decisions or recommendations of such committee and sub committees;
- Be assured that due diligence has been applied across all committees and sub committees when making decisions or recommendations;
- Retention of responsibility of any delegation of decision making to sub committees;
- Consideration of implications of national strategies on standards and existing curricula;
- Liaise if requested with the Audit and Risk Committee as required on matters relating to audit and academic risk;
- Perform any other functions which may be delegated to it by the Director ONMSD pertaining to CCNME Academic Governance.

The CCNME Academic Council is accountable for:

- Oversight and assurance of the quality and standards of academic matters in the CCNME;

- Development and supervision of the work of the CCNME Academic Council committees;
- Maintaining the integrity of academic standards and awards;
- Establishment of criteria for the selection, admission, retention and exclusion of Learners;
- Delegate authority to relevant committees to ensure learner protection arrangements are in place with respect to enrolled learners on all QQI validated programmes of 3 months duration or longer;
- Approve, not approve or refer for further information new programme documentation consistent with the CCNME mission prior to submission to QQI;
- Oversee the process for the nomination, selection and appointments of External Examiners.
- Delegate authority to the relevant academic committees to nominate, select, and appoint External Examiner for HET validated programmes.
- Formally appoint an External Examiner on behalf of the CCNME.
- Retain a copy of External Examiner Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- Review and make recommendations on the revision of existing programmes;
- Review and make recommendations on programme review reports and programme validation documents as part of the cyclical programmatic review and re-validation process;
- Oversee the development, maintenance and approval of academic-related CCNME Quality Assurance policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines;
- Examining the annual Quality Enhancement Report from the Quality Enhancement Committee and consider implementation of recommendations from each of the sub committees;
- Receive report from Programme Board, on decision from Board of Examiners on Learner final Awards;
- Provision of oversight of the assessment of learners and approve decisions relating to progression and recommendations for award as determined by the Boards of Examiners;
- Selection of External Examiners/Authenticators from an established panel;
- Identify and select National or International Subject Matter Experts for External Programme Review;
- Promotion, recognition and dissemination of good practice in teaching to all sub-committees and the CCNME Management Team.;
- Consultation with QQI on proposed programme changes to validated programmes received from Programme Board;
- Receipt, review and respond to reports, including an end of year report from all subcommittees;
- Being a point of contact with QQI with regard to QA agreement and programme validation/revalidation;
- Communication of decisions on academic matters to all sub-committees and the CCNME Management Team;
- Review and sign off the Programme Monitoring Review and Evaluation Report and make recommendations in regard to the continuation or discontinuation of programmes;

- Provision of a QQI Annual Quality Report and Cyclical review;
- Provision of an annual report to the ONMSD Director;
- Establish and maintain effective communication structures and collaborative working with the CCNME Management Team to achieve effective Governance, whilst respecting the individual roles, responsibilities and authority of each function.

## 2.2 **Role of the Academic Council Chairperson**

The Chairperson must be an external appointment to the CCNME.

The role of the Chairperson is to:

- Ensure all CCNME Academic Council activities are in line with the Constitutional Standing Orders.
- Lead the group including presiding over CCNME Academic Council Meetings and directing Council discussions to ensure the time is used effectively.
- Ensure minutes accurately reflect CCNME Academic Council discussions.
- Provide reports of CCNME Academic Council activities to the HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director.
- Review the CCNME Academic Council Constitutional Standing Orders annually with CCNME Academic Council members and amend as required.
- Inform the HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director of any conflict of interest that may impact on their function.

## 2.3 **Role of the Vice Chairperson**

The Vice Chairperson must be an external appointment to the CCNME and will be nominated by the Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson is accountable to the Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson is accountable to the HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director.

The role of the Vice Chairperson is to:

- Deputise in the absence of the Chairperson
- Contribute to CCNME Academic Council activities.
- Inform the Chairperson of any conflict of interest that may impact on their function.

## 2.4 **Role of the CCNME Academic Council Secretary**

The role of the CCNME Academic Council Secretary is to:

- Co-ordinate the development of the administrative function to support the CCNME Academic Council.
- Ensure that reports for the HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director are developed in a timely and effective manner.
- Schedule CCNME Academic Council meetings and distribute relevant documents 14 days in advance.
- Attend and record minutes of the CCNME Academic Council meetings.

## 3.0 **Standing Orders**

The following standing orders sets out the rules by which the proceedings of the Academic Council and its committees/sub-committees (where relevant) are operated.

### 3.1 **Membership of the Academic Council**

#### 3.1.1 **Composition**

Composition of the Academic Council and its committees will be detailed in each individual committee Terms of Reference and will aim to comply with the QQI & HSE policies that relate to equality, diversity and inclusion. Membership is subject to review and approval of the HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director. Any additional committee/sub-committees established are subject to the review and approval of the Academic Council.

#### 3.1.2 **Term of Office**

The Term of Office of nominated or elected members of the Academic Council is three years. Members may not serve more than two executive terms. Ex-officio membership recognises those members whose role in the Academic Council is by virtue of holding another office. Ex-officio membership will continue for the period of the ex-officio role held by the individual.

#### 3.1.3 **Members**

Nominated or elected members and ex-officio members of the Academic Council and its committees will be appointed in accordance with their Terms of Reference and approved by the HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director. The Academic Council or its Committees may decide to co-opt a member of the CCNME educational/tutorial/technical/ administrative staff with the approval of the Chairperson and consensus of the relevant Committee. Co-opted members will be able to attend as necessary. Co-opted members will not have voting rights.

### **Membership of the Academic Council**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Voting Rights</b>
Chairperson (External Academic)	External	Yes
Vice Chairperson (External Academic)	External	Yes
Secretary	Ex-officio	No
ONMSD Education Lead	Ex-officio	Yes
Chairperson of General Programme Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Intellectual Disability Programme Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Midwifery Programme Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Psychiatric Programme Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Children's Programme Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Further Education & Training Programme Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes

Chairperson of Programme Development Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Programme Board	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Teaching Learning & Assessment Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Blended Learning Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Board of Examiners	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Quality Enhancement Committee	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Chairperson of Appeals, Complaints and Academic Integrity Committees	Elected/ Nominated	Yes
Learner Representative(s) from Higher Education Programmes	Elected	Yes
Learner Representative(s) from Further Education & Training Programmes	Elected	Yes
Lead Programme Co-ordinator	Co-opted	No
Tutorial Representative	Co-opted	No
Librarian	Elected/ Nominated	Yes

### Chairperson

The Chairperson of the Academic Council will be nominated by the HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director. The nominee will have knowledge and experience of Academic Governance in Higher Education.

Chairpersons of established committees/sub committees will be appointed by the Academic Council. In so far as possible committees/sub committees should appoint a Vice Chairperson. Chairpersons hold a key leadership and governance role to ensure the conduct of its business.

### Secretary

The HSE Office of Nursing & Midwifery Services Director will nominate a Secretary to the Academic Council.

## **3.2 Conduct of Business – Meetings**

### **3.2.1 Notice of meetings**

The Chairperson shall ensure that the CCNME Academic Council members will have 14 days' notice of the date, time and place of scheduled meetings. Agenda items and/or documents for circulation to the members must be submitted to the Secretary of the Academic Council. Agenda and supporting documentation will be forwarded to each member 5 days prior to the scheduled meeting. The Chairperson of the Academic Council may in an emergency situation at his/her discretion call a Special Meeting without 14 days prior notice.

### **3.2.2 Frequency of meetings**

Ordinary meetings of the CCNME Academic Council shall be held at least quarterly. Dates, times and venues will be agreed in advance. Virtual meeting facilities such as Cisco WebEx or Microsoft Teams will also be available.

### **3.2.3 Quorum**

A quorum for meetings of the Academic Council will consist of 50% of the membership + 1, and must include the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson. If a quorum is not reached the Chairperson will close the meeting and not allow any business to be discussed and will reconvene a meeting at the earliest opportunity.

### **3.2.4 Attendance at meetings**

An Academic Council member who is absent for 3 or more consecutive meetings (unless absence was due to illness or previously approved by the Chairperson), may be replaced for the remainder of that person's term of office.

### **3.2.5 Resignation**

Resignation from the Academic Council can take place at any time. Resignation must be effected in writing to the Chairperson and shall be deemed to take effect from the date of receipt of the letter of resignation.

### **3.2.6 Procedures – Mode of Address**

Members may speak to any motion when granted the right to speak by the Chairperson.

### **3.2.7 Procedures – Motions**

A motion is a proposal moved by a Member and if resolved it becomes a resolution. In speaking to any motion or amendment, members are to confine their remarks strictly to the motion or amendment, and shall not introduce irrelevant matters or engage in needless repetition. The Chairperson's ruling is final.

In matters of confidentiality or conflict of interest, relevant members must make alert the Academic Council and will be excluded in regard to these matters.

In matters of unresolved dispute within the Academic Council, the Chairperson's ruling is final.



### 3.2.8 Voting

Voting shall be conducted by a show of hands by those entitled to vote who are either physically present or in attendance virtually. Only elected or nominated members and ex-officio members of the Academic Council will have voting rights. Co-opted members or those in attendance to observe (with the approval of the Chairperson) will not have voting rights.

The Secretary shall count and record the votes for and against a motion or to an amendment to a motion, and will also count the number of abstentions. When voting results in a tie, the Chairperson will have the deciding vote. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

### 3.2.9 Minutes

The minutes of meetings of the CCNME Academic Council will be circulated to the membership 14 days prior to the scheduled date of the next meeting. The minutes shall document:

- Date, time and venue of meetings
- Attendance, apologies and decisions made by the Academic Council
- Abstentions from or disagreements within the Academic Council, when this is specifically requested by member(s)
- The name of the members, who formally proposed, seconded and approved the minutes. Once minutes are adopted they will be signed and dated by the Chairperson.

### 3.2.10 Subcommittees of the Academic Council

1. Programme Development Committee
2. Programme Board
3. Teaching Learning & Assessment Committee
4. Blended Learning Committee
5. Quality Enhancement Committee
6. Academic Integrity Committee
7. Appeals Committee
8. Complaints Committee
9. Disciplinary Committee

#### Sub committees of Programme Board

1. Board of Examiners
2. Programme Committees –
  - Higher Education (HET)
    - Children's
    - General
    - Intellectual Disability
    - Mental Health
    - Midwifery
  - Further Education and Training (FET)
3. CCNME Programme Teams