

Educational Excellence Strategic Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Strategic Advisory Groups (SAGs) are a central part of Advance HE's commitment to ensuring the organisation meets the needs of members across all areas of work. SAGs are involved in:
 - a) Reviewing and shaping Advance HE's priorities and strategic development;
 - b) Identifying current and emerging strategic issues, challenges and opportunities across a range of global contexts to inform the future work of Advance HE;
 - c) Considering the implications of global insight and good practice and shaping how Advance HE's portfolio could respond to work for each relevant area;
 - d) Representing Advance HE and contributing to thought leadership to enable mutual learning across the Advance HE global membership community.
- 1.2 The Educational Excellence and Student Success Strategic Advisory Group (EESAG) supports Advance HE in shaping its strategic direction, priorities, and portfolio on educational excellence and student success across global higher education.
- 1.3 The Group provides insight, challenge, and advice on how Advance HE can best support its members in designing, delivering, assuring, and continuously enhancing high-quality education and positive student outcomes. This includes consideration of academic practice, professional services, organisational systems, culture, leadership, policy, regulation, and the student experience.
- 1.4 The EESAG recognises that educational excellence and student success are collective endeavours, dependent on effective collaboration between academic staff, professional services, students, and institutional leadership.

2. Duties

- 2.1 The ESSAG will :
 - a) Help shape Advance HE's strategic approach to educational excellence and student success, ensuring relevance and impact for members across global contexts;
 - b) Identify current and emerging challenges, opportunities, and risks relating to teaching, learning, assessment, curriculum design, student experience, retention, progression, and outcomes;
 - c) Provide insight on the implications of policy, regulation, funding, technology (including digital and AI developments), inclusion, and changing student expectations;

- d) Provide constructive scrutiny and challenge to Advance HE's priorities and plans, ensuring alignment with contemporary member needs and sector developments;
- e) Act as a sounding board for the review, refresh, and development of Advance HE's education- and student-focused programmes, frameworks, services, and products;
- f) Contribute to and promote Advance HE's thought leadership through publications, events, and external engagement;
- g) Advise on the intersections between educational excellence, student success, leadership, governance, quality assurance, equality, diversity and inclusion, and organisational development;
- h) Consider any other matters relating to educational excellence and student success as may be referred by Advance HE's Board of Directors or Executive.

3. Membership

- 3.1 The maximum number of members will be 18 members drawn from Advance HE member institutions, stakeholders and partners. Other members may be appointed for their specific skills and experience.
- 3.2 Membership will be designed to reflect a balanced mix of academic and professional services experience, recognising that educational excellence and student success are shaped by both educational practice and the institutional systems that support it.
- 3.3 Membership will also explicitly reflect Advance HE's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). The Group will bring together individuals with experience and expertise in advancing EDI in education and student outcomes, and will model inclusive practice in its composition, behaviours, and advice to the organisation.
- 3.4 Members will typically be appointed for a two year term of office. All members will be reviewed at the end of each term to ensure fresh and diverse perspectives. Members will ordinarily serve a maximum of two terms. The Chair of the group will be appointed on a three year term to ensure there is greater continuity.
- 3.5 The ESSAG will require specific skills and expertise as outlined in the person specification (annexe A).

4. Meetings

- 4.1 The ESSAG shall meet (at least) two times each academic year.
- 4.2 Secretariat support will be provided by Advance HE.

Next review date for ToR: January 2028

Annex A

Education Excellence Strategic Advisory Group Person Specification

Experience and Expertise

Members will collectively demonstrate:

- Experience of leading, shaping, or enabling educational excellence and/or student success at the institutional, national, or system level;
- Experience spanning academic practice and/or professional services, or demonstrable ability to work effectively across both domains;
- Understanding of how organisational systems, policy, regulation, funding, and culture influence educational quality and student outcomes;
- Experience of evidence-informed enhancement, quality assurance, or educational transformation;
- High-level understanding of higher education in more than one national or global context;
- Experience of Board, committee, or advisory group work;
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, sound judgement, and the ability to engage constructively with complex strategic issues;
- Commitment to the values and principles of Advance HE.

Diversity of Perspective

In selecting members, Advance HE will seek diversity of perspective, including:

- Representation from different types of higher education providers (for example, research-intensive, teaching-focused, specialist, and regional institutions);
- Representation from across the UK nations and countries within Advance HE's global membership;
- A balance of academic practice, professional services, quality and standards, student support, digital education, and institutional strategy expertise;
- Diversity of protected characteristics, equity-seeking groups, career stage, and background;
- Experience of leadership and educational development beyond the higher education sector, where relevant.