Head of Academic Quality
Job Description

The Role

Job title:	Head of Academic Quality
Department:	Academic Services
Responsible to:	Director of Academic Services
Responsible for:	Academic Quality Team
Location:	Cirencester
Salary:	Grade 9: £42,977 to £54,395 per annum
Term:	Full-time, permanent
Relationships with:	Academic Services teams, Academic staff, students, Senior Academic Leadership, External Examiners, Partner Institutions, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies including the Office for Students, Quality Assurance Agency and Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

Purpose

To provide strategic leadership across the RAU and its collaborative partners regarding all aspects of academic quality and standards. This will include overseeing the operational management of the Academic Quality team and its activity, and guiding all staff in exceeding regulatory expectations, providing assurance on the quality of our academic portfolio across the world.

The post holder will report to the Director of Academic Services and act as both advisor and guardian on matters related to academic quality and standards, including the definitive interpretation and application of academic regulations.

In leading the Academic Quality team, the post holder will have overall responsibility for academic governance, the maintenance and review of academic regulations and the academic policy framework, the annual lifecycle for academic quality assurance, the management of curriculum information, programme validation processes, the management of partner relationships and the management of student casework.

Key Responsibilities

1. Providing strategic leadership to RAU regarding:
   - the setting and maintenance of academic standards
   - the quality assurance of all aspects of programme delivery, assessment and student support

2. Assuring institutional compliance with professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements including:
   - Office for Students' Conditions of Registration covering academic governance (A, B, C & F)
   - Requirements of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education
   - Sector Recognised Standards
   - The UK Quality Code, as published by the Quality Assurance Agency
   - Consumer protection law, as per guidance by the Competition and Markets Authority

3. Programme specific accreditation requirements including the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and the Chartered Management Institute (CMI).

4. Providing leadership and management to the Academic Quality team; designing, planning and implementing operational plans that support institutional strategic goals.

5. Managing the activity of the team, including:
   - Academic governance, reporting to Academic Board
   - The maintenance and review of academic regulations and the academic policy framework
   - The lifecycle for academic quality assurance
   - The management of partner relationships
   - The management of student casework

6. Overseeing and managing the operational lifecycle for academic quality at the university, co-ordinating the workload of the team to ensure it is deliverable and delivered to the highest standard. Management of both the processes and the people within Academic Quality, whether direct or devolved line management.

7. Co-ordinating the University's academic governance; managing the annual schedule of business for committees and ensuring an efficient secretariat service is provided by the team. Acting as Secretary to the University's Academic Board.

8. Overseeing the maintenance of the University's curriculum information, ensuring processes to amend and enhance the curriculum are robust and follow the University's policies and deadlines. Ensuring accurate and up-to-date information is provided to Registry for publication to staff and students.

9. Co-ordinating the lifecycle of programmes (including validation, revalidation, replacement and cessation) in accordance with university policy and strategy. Ensuring the team fulfil their duties as validating officers, and that timely support and feedback is provided to programme teams.

10. Overseeing the delivery of effective academic governance in accordance with good governance principles and in alignment with the wider institutional and operational governance of the University.

11. Acting as co-owner of the Academic Regulations and wider academic policy framework, under the authority of the Director of Academic Services, and providing definitive advice and guidance to all stakeholders on their interpretation.

12. Managing the ongoing maintenance and review of the Academic Regulations and wider academic policy framework; ensuring their continued enhancement in line with sector best practice and professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements.

13. Overseeing the effective and efficient management of the annual cycle for academic quality assurance including:
   - Maintenance of curriculum information
   - Validation of new provision
   - Annual monitoring of provision and reporting to Academic Board
   - Periodic revalidation of provision
   - Arrangements for External Examiners
   - Systems for student feedback

14. Leading the day-to-day management of effective relationships with new and existing collaborative partners on academic governance; working with colleagues across the institution to provide assurance that our collaborative partnerships continue to support institutional strategic goals.

15. Managing the delivery of quality assurance processes related to collaborative provision, including the approval and review of partners and the validation and revalidation of provision with those partners.

16. Co-ordinating with other departments on corporate governance and other non-academic governance areas, including Governing Council, Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group, Finance, Innovation and Learning Directorate and Estates and IT Directorate. Ensuring collaborative partners receive a seamless, unified relationship with RAU, mindful of the intersectionality of their needs and obligations across different teams.

17. Managing the delivery of student casework activities including:
   - Academic appeals
   - Student complaints
   - Academic misconduct
   - Breaches of the student terms and conditions (disciplinary procedures)
   - Support to study

18. Overseeing the nominations, vetting, appointment, due diligence and training of External Examiners, to ensure they competently and comprehensively fulfil their vital quality checking roles. Collate and analyse External Examiner annual reports, to drive improvements in the

delivery of RAU programmes.

19. Monitoring the budget for academic quality activities; including approving the payment of External Examiners.

20. Making a significant contribution to the work of the University through supporting the strategic goals of the University and assisting other areas as and when required, recognising the effective delivery of all our services is the best assurance of quality.

General responsibilities:

- The University is committed to equality of opportunity. All staff are required to comply with current legislation, University policies and good practice guidance.

- All staff are required to act in a way that always safeguards the health and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. The post holder must be familiar with and adhere to appropriate safeguarding policies and guidance and participate in related mandatory/statutory training. Managers have a responsibility to ensure their team members understand their individual responsibilities regarding safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

- All staff are required to participate in the University appraisal process and should ensure they are familiar with the process and plan time to prepare for their appraisal. Following the appraisal, staff are expected to undertake in any necessary learning and development and work towards the objectives that have been set.

- The University expects staff to attend any training designated as mandatory and to undertake learning and development activities to support their role. Managers must facilitate learning and development within their teams.

- It is a condition of employment that staff will not disclose any information obtained in the course of their duties other than to those entitled to receive it. The post holder must ensure that the confidentiality of personal data remains secure and that restricted information or highly restricted information to which they have access remains confidential during and after their employment at Royal Agricultural University. All staff must undergo appropriate data protection training as required.

- All absence from work must be reported in accordance with the University's absence procedures and recorded on iTrent

- The University acknowledges its responsibility to provide a safe, smoke free environment, to its employees, service users and visitors. It is the policy of the University not to allow smoking on university premises other than in specifically designated areas.

Person Specification

Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured By A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
Qualifications:		
Educated to degree level, or equivalent professional practice	Essential	A
Considerable experience in Higher Education administration, demonstration of continuous professional development and keeping abreast of sector practices	Essential	A
A professional qualification in Higher Education administration	Desirable	A
Knowledge, Experience and Skills:		
Extensive knowledge of quality assurance practice in a UK higher education context	Essential	A, B, C
Detailed knowledge of Higher Education regulatory requirements including the OfS Conditions of Registration	Essential	A, B, C
Stakeholder management skills: proven ability to elicit support and co-operation from a diverse range of stakeholders	Essential	A, B
Decision-making, negotiating and influencing skills: an ability to exercise balanced judgement in complex and/or sensitive situations and elicit others to support successful outcomes	Essential	A, B
Communication skills: an ability to adjust communication style and approach in response to the format and audience	Essential	A, B, C
Experience of line management: supporting the professional development of a team to perform with complex and competing priorities	Essential	A, B
Experience of working with collaborative partners in a higher education context, including UK and transnational education.	Desirable	A, B
Evidence of understanding, engaging, delivering and balancing students' needs within a quality assurance / standards setting	Desirable	A, B

Application Procedure

If you are interested in applying for this role, please send:

- University Application Form together with the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form available on the University website www.rau.ac.uk) – you may attach your up to date CV if you wish to add

Reviewed March 2025

additional information.

- Details of two referees who must be people who can comment authoritatively on you as a person and as an employee in relation to the level of the post, and must include your current or most recent employer or their representative.
- Please forward to the HR Team, Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6JS or via email to jobs@rau.ac.uk stating where you saw the advert for the role
- Informal enquiries can be made to Dan Shaffer, Director of Academic Services Dan.Shaffer@rau.ac.uk
- **Closing date**: xxxx with **Interviews during:** week commencing
- Should you be selected for interview please be aware that we are unable to reimburse interview expenses.

The RAU is an equal opportunities employer and we particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates as they are underrepresented within the RAU at this level.