

## REGULATION 31 DEFINITIONS OF ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STANDARDS

### Freedom of Speech

City St George's, University of London, regards freedom of speech and academic freedom to be fundamental to delivering its mission as the University of business, practice and the professions. Its values in this respect are set out in a code of practice on freedom of speech and academic freedom, which explains how the University will uphold, secure, and promote freedom of speech within the law. See: <https://www.citystgeorges.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/code-of-practice-on-freedom-of-speech>

Nothing in this regulation should be interpreted in any way that would be inconsistent with the code of practice and – in the event of any inconsistency – the provisions of the code will prevail.

### 1. Education

The terms below set out City St George's education definitions related to academic quality and standards. They are derived from relevant national frameworks including the Office for Students (OfS) conditions of registration and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) guidance.

- Academic quality  
How well students are provided with opportunities and support to achieve their academic award and be well equipped to progress to employment or further study. High-quality provision involves (but is not limited to) delivering learning opportunities that are up-to-date, coherent, provide educational challenge, require students to develop relevant skills, are delivered effectively and by appropriate staff teams, and are assessed appropriately and reliably.
- Enhancement  
Processes designed to systematically identify and take actions to innovate and improve the quality of provision, enhance students' academic experience and ensure academic standards are not just met but exceeded.
- Academic standards  
The level of achievement that is required for a student to achieve their academic award, in line with the relevant sector-recognised standards and qualification frameworks. This level should remain consistent over time, so that qualifications retain their value beyond the point of award.
- Quality assurance  
A framework of regulations, policies and processes designed to ensure that learning opportunities align with sector-recognised quality standards and that students receive a high-quality academic experience. This framework should include mechanisms for engagement with students, professional bodies, employers and alumni where appropriate.

### 2. Research

The corpus of knowledge defining research is broad and deep. When reporting to HESA, universities in the UK agree to use the definition of research adopted by the Organisation for

Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in their publication entitled the 'Frascati Manual' ([# 63](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264199040-en_section_2.1)). The summary statement of the fuller definitions contained therein (para 63) is:

***'Research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man/woman<sup>1</sup>, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.'***

- Academic quality  
How well researchers, post-graduate research students and academic staff are able to produce research that may be recognised as successful by their peers and users in terms of the quality of its outputs and impact.
- Enhancement  
Taking deliberate action to ensure continual improvement of and support for the research
- Academic standards  
The level of achievement in research judged in terms of its originality, significance and rigour.
- Quality assurance  
A range of policies and procedures designed to safeguard academic standards and quality for research.

### **3. Scholarship**

The concept of "scholarship" is fundamental to higher education, and in City St George's, University of London it is seen as being particularly important in underpinning the distinctive nature of being a University for Business, Practice and the Professions. Scholarship underpins our dynamic relationship with practice and the professions, supports our provision of excellent education, and supports other strategic aims, for example in relation to student employability.

#### **Definition**

Scholarship activity may take many forms, and we base our approach on the well-respected work of Boyer (1990) who defined scholarship as including: discovery (research), integration, application and teaching, while also reflecting current and forward-looking academic practice. This leads us to the following definition:

"Scholarship and scholarly activity involve the exploration, application and sharing of knowledge and/or practice to transform learning and engagement within discipline(s), together with the public dissemination of this knowledge and/or practice to share, enhance and advance knowledge and /or practice within discipline(s)".

It also enables us to identify three main areas of scholarship and scholarly activity that are recognised and valued by City St George's, University of London:

#### Teaching and education

- Scholarship and scholarly activity in relation to teaching involves sharing knowledge gained from discovery, research and practice in order to educate and inspire future

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<sup>1</sup> The Frascati definition has been updated to include both genders.

generations. It focuses on innovative and effective practice that is student centred. This can be provided through a range of teaching approaches, practice experiences and learning resources.

#### Application and integration

- Scholarship and scholarly activity in application and integration involve synthesising and connecting the knowledge and practice gained from different areas of study including across disciplines to enhance aspects of the disciplinary activity such as solving practical problems, enhancing and making meaningful contributions to the experiences of those who are served through the discipline. This can involve developing practice and professional approaches, developing new technologies, or addressing social and environmental issues engaging with the wider community.

#### New knowledge and practice

- Scholarship and scholarly activity in discovery and research involve the pursuit and creation of new knowledge and related practice, exploring existing theories and ideas, proposing enhancements for them, and developing wholly innovative approaches.

For all three areas the following principles apply:

#### Academic quality

How well academic staff are able to produce scholarship that may be recognised as successful by their peers and users in terms of the quality of its outputs and impact.

#### Enhancement

Taking deliberate actions to ensure continual improvement of and support for scholarship and scholarly activity, and the use of scholarship to enhance learning and teaching, the content of programmes, and the engagement of the University with business, practice and the professions.

#### Academic standards

The level of achievement in scholarship is judged in terms of its relevance, significance, and impact. These judgments are made on academic grounds such as originality, methodological rigor, and contribution to knowledge, and are not contingent on agreement with prevailing views or institutional positions. Lawful research and expression that may be unorthodox, controversial, or unpopular will not be disadvantaged on that basis. Evaluation of impact may include scholarly, professional, or societal influence over different timescales and does not equate to popularity or the avoidance of criticism.

#### Quality assurance

Relevant policies and procedures are designed to specifically recognise and effectively support and safeguard academic standards and quality for scholarship and scholarly activities. In doing so, they will be applied consistently with academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law, evaluated on scholarly merit rather than viewpoint, and will not disadvantage any person for the lawful expression of academic views or participation in lawful scholarly debate.

#### *Reference*

*Boyer E L (1990) Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate San Francisco Jossey-Bass*

Approved by Senate 04.03.15 and revised 08.07.15, 24.08.16, 12.07.23  
Merged Regulation - approved by Senate 09.07.25  
Freedom of Speech additions - approved by Senate: 10.12.25