



Handover Guide

Education

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New Zealand Union of Students' Associations

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Introduction

This handover guide is intended for student representatives who are involved in the academic decision-making structures of their respective universities. More specifically, it is intended for those representatives who sit on their university's Academic Board or Senate, and other related university/department-wide committees. The aim of this guide is to demystify these structures and provide advice on how to be an effective student voice. After attending the Student Voice Summit this document can help to guide you during your year(s) of representation and can also be used to train others.



Part One | Our Vision for Tertiary Education in New Zealand



NZUSA believes that every New Zealander should have access to high quality, publicly-funded and publicly-owned tertiary education. We believe that tertiary education is a public good which means that the system belongs to all of us, and that we all benefit from it. Our role in fighting for this is embedded within our Constitutional objects, which are to:

- Ensure tertiary students are well represented and supported across the tertiary sector by NZUSA and local students' organisations, who are influential, visible, principled, well-resourced and informed
- Encourage world-class learning and teaching practices
- Promote outstanding student experiences and learning environments
- Develop adequate levels of student support
- Ensure there are no unfair barriers to education
- Promote equitable access and support for achievement
- Ensure students are valued members of an academic community that contributes to the creation and dissemination of knowledge

We believe that the issues of student welfare and quality education at universities are inextricably linked. Limited financial support and poor mental health are barriers to education success. Students' associations have done a great job at campaigning on the welfare issues, related to transport, housing, and health, that students face. In the current climate, it is really important that academic issues that students face are also remain integral parts of the work that NZUSA and individual students' associations engage in. This can range from student fees to class sizes, how the university performs its 'critic and conscience' role and quality assurance.

Student Voice in Universities

Students are the primary stakeholders of the university and its decisions, so it only makes sense that we play our part in those decisions. This can be seen in a number of ways, including:

- Student representation on University Councils
- Student representation on Academic Boards / Senate
- Class-level student representation
- University's Investment Plans requiring them to demonstrate how they are supporting student voice
- Academic quality audits requiring that the university demonstrates that it support student engagement in planning, policy development and the monitoring of key academic activities

The role of student voice is also evidenced in research in New Zealand and around the world on student partnerships in tertiary education settings. For example, in 2012 NZUSA and Ako Aotearoa (the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence) worked in partnership on a project called the "Student Voice in Tertiary Education Settings: Quality Systems in Practice".

One of the aims of the research was to identify pre-conditions for the effective operation of systems that allow/ facilitate a representative student voice to have an impact in quality enhancement. Those pre-conditions have now been summarised into a table of five practice features and indicators of good practice in action.

In addition the Student Voice research report has produced six sets of reflective questions (29 in total) that align to six major themes of the research:

1. Establishing the partnership in which the student voice is to be heard
2. Legitimising the student voice
3. Establishing clear roles for those delivering the student voice
4. Providing training for those delivering the student voice
5. Providing adequate resources for supporting the student voice
6. Hearing and heeding the student voice

Part Two | Your Role as a Student Representative

You're the Expert - *what outgoing administrations wished they knew this time last year*

How to be an effective member of Academic Committees

Part Three | Understanding the Jargon

Key Terms, Acronyms and Abbreviations

AB	Academic Board
AQA	Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities, Te Pokapū Kōunga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa
AUSSE	Australasian Universities Survey of Student Engagement
AVC	Assistant Vice-Chancellor
BoGS	Board of Graduate Studies (AU, OU)
BUGS	Board of Undergraduate Studies (OU)
CAD	Centre for Academic Development
CALT	Committee on/for Learning and Teaching
CARs	Commendations, affirmations and recommendations
CE	Continuing Education
CEQ	Course experience questionnaire
CRM	Customer Relationship Management (system)
CUAP	Committee on University Academic Programmes (UNZ sub-committee).
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
EFTS	Equivalent Full-Time Students
ELT	Executive Leadership Team
EPI	Educational Performance Indicator
ETSG	Enhancement Theme Steering Group
FTE	Full-time equivalent (staff)
GES	Guaranteed Education Score
GDS	Graduate destinations survey
GRS	Graduate Research School
GS	Guideline statement(s)
GYR	Graduating year review (part of CUAP processes)

ITS	Information Technology Services
KPI	Key performance indicator
LMS	Learning or Library Management System
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority (non-universities)
NZQF	New Zealand Qualifications Framework
NZVCC	New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (statutory body responsible for QA in universities, operates as UNZ)
Panel	Panels engaged by AQA to conduct academic audits of universities
PVC	Pro Vice-Chancellor
QA	Quality Assurance
QE	Quality Enhancement
SAC	Student Achievement Component (funding)
SLC	Student Learning Centre
SLG/T	Senior Leadership Group/Team
SMS	Student Management System
SP	Strategic Plan
SSP	Statement of Service Performance (requirement for annual reports)
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission (funding)
TKA	Te Kāhui Amokura (UNZ Māori Committee)
UNZ	Universities New Zealand (operating name for NZVCC)
VCAG	Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group (OU)

Academic Board/Senate

The Academic Board (also known as Senate at some institutions) is a committee of the University Council's at each university. Among its functions is to "advise the Council on matters relating to courses of study, awards, and other academic matters". It approves new courses, significant changes to qualifications, discontinuation of courses and programmes and is the highest University body to approve new subjects or qualifications, which are then forwarded to CUAP for consultation with the other universities.

The structure of the Academic Boards at each university are different, but their function is essentially the same. The structure below the Academic Boards (i.e. the committees and sub-committees of Academic Board/Senate). Learning these structures, at your own and other institutions is highly recommended.

Reflections from a former-Academic Vice President, Isabella Lenihan-Ikin

Academic Board can entertain very high level discussion and appear to be a 'rubber-stamp' committee. However, it's important to realise that Academic Board has a more strategic focus than the other sub-committees, that are more 'nitty-gritty'. By the time an item has gone to Academic Board, it has usually already been discussed extensively at Faculty/School level or at Academic Committee. It's therefore important to be strategic in the way that you speak at this level. In saying this, it is still really important to reiterate points or raise contentious issues, even if they have been raised many times before. This is the opportunity to say it in front of the Vice Chancellor and senior members of staff, and it is really important that the student perspective is heard.



Before each Academic Board meeting, we had a pre-meet with all of the student members of Academic Board. This meant that we were all on board with the issues and knew who was going to speak to each issue. It made us seem very organised and united. It is important to have read all the board papers before the pre-meet as the purpose of this meeting is to (i) raise any concerns with any agenda items and; (ii) determine the position that you all as student representatives will take (i.e. deciding to vote against a proposal).

In addition to having pre-meets with the other student members, we would often have pre-meets with the Academic Officers. In addition to getting information about particular issues, this helped in building relationships with staff in the Academic Office.

Academic Quality Agency (AQA)

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA), previously known as the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit, was established in 1993 by the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee to carry out audits of the processes in universities which underpin academic quality. These audits take place every 7-8 years.

After working together for several years, in 2017 NZUSA and AQA signed a memorandum of understanding. This formalised their partnership to enhance student voice and the engagement of students in the academic audit process. The partnership objectives are set out in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between AQA and NZUSA.

AQA and NZUSA share an objective of having an authentic, enduring, diverse and effective student voice that contributes to academic quality and quality assurance in New Zealand universities. The MoU also supports a specific objective to include students, or recent graduates, as auditors in the sixth cycle of academic audit for New Zealand Universities.

Cycle 6 Academic Audit Enhancement Theme

'Access, outcomes and opportunities for Māori students and for Pasifika students: an enhancement theme approach.'



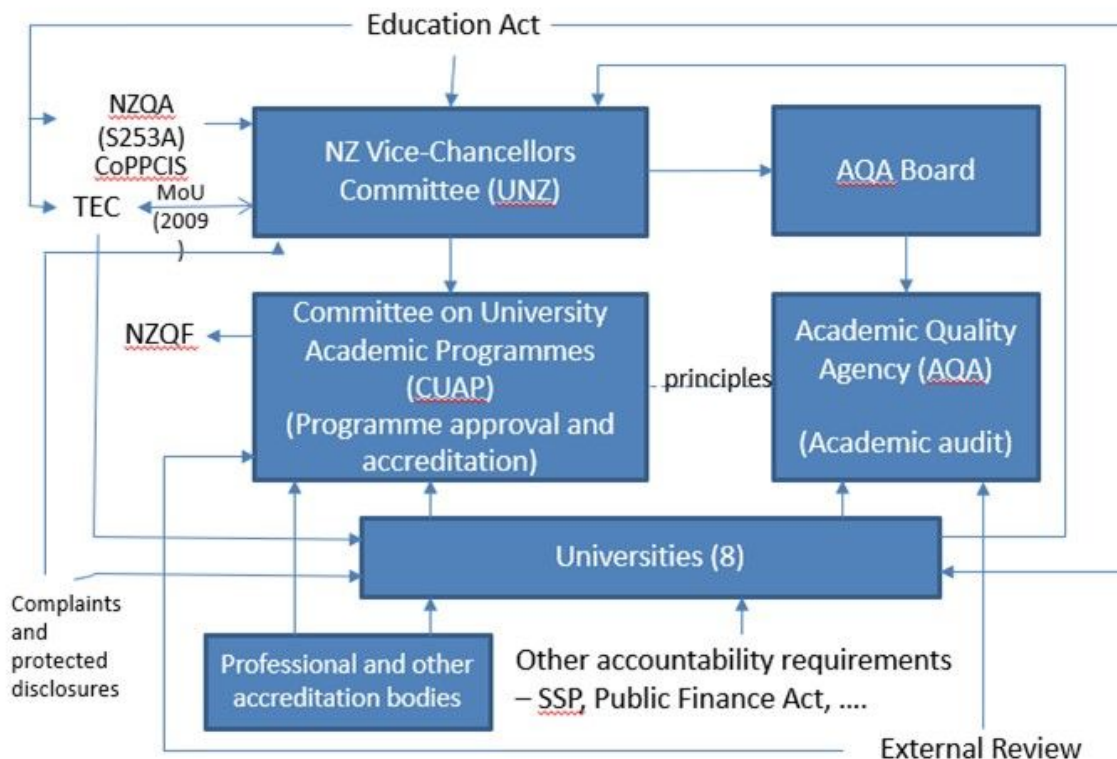
Members of the Enhancement Theme Steering Group at the STARS conference in July. Left to right: Professor Robyn Longhurst, Professor Giselle Byrnes, Dr Darryn Russell, Dr Tasileta Teevale, Ali Leota, Parekura Pewhairangi.

Enhancement-led quality assurance is part of the external academic quality framework for the New Zealand universities. The universities have drawn on the Scottish experience and introduced an enhancement theme into the Cycle 6 Academic Audit in which universities collectively address an issue which is a topic that is strategically important for each university and of national significance.

The enhancement theme is 'access, outcomes and opportunity: for Māori, recognising Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the bicultural foundation of Aotearoa; and for Pasifika, recognising the place of Aotearoa in the Pacific.'

The enhancement theme is overseen by an Enhancement Theme Steer Group (ETSG) which has membership from all eight New Zealand universities, Te Kāhui Amokura, Komiti Pasifika, New Zealand Union of Students' Associations' and Te Mana Ākonga.

Quality Assurance in New Zealand Universities



Ako Aotearoa

Ako Aotearoa is New Zealand's National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence. Established in 2007, Ako Aotearoa is a government-funded organisation committed to supporting New Zealand's tertiary sector teachers, trainer and educators be the best they can be.

Ako Aotearoa works alongside all parts of the tertiary sector with an emphasis on building education capability. The majority of its work is geared towards better understanding high quality teaching and using that information to improve tertiary teaching practice across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Fundamental to Ako Aotearoa is to support collaborative work that encourages learners to have their say about their tertiary education experience. Ako Aotearoa works closely with its advisory groups, that features a strong presence of student voice, to help identify issues relating to tertiary teaching and learning, set priorities and to contribute to building education capability.

New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF)

Level	Certificate	Diploma	Degree
10			PhD
9			Master's Degree
8	Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Diploma	Honours Degree
7	Graduate Certificate	Graduate Diploma/ Diploma	Bachelor's Degree
6	Certificate	Diploma	
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			

For more information on the NZQF, see:

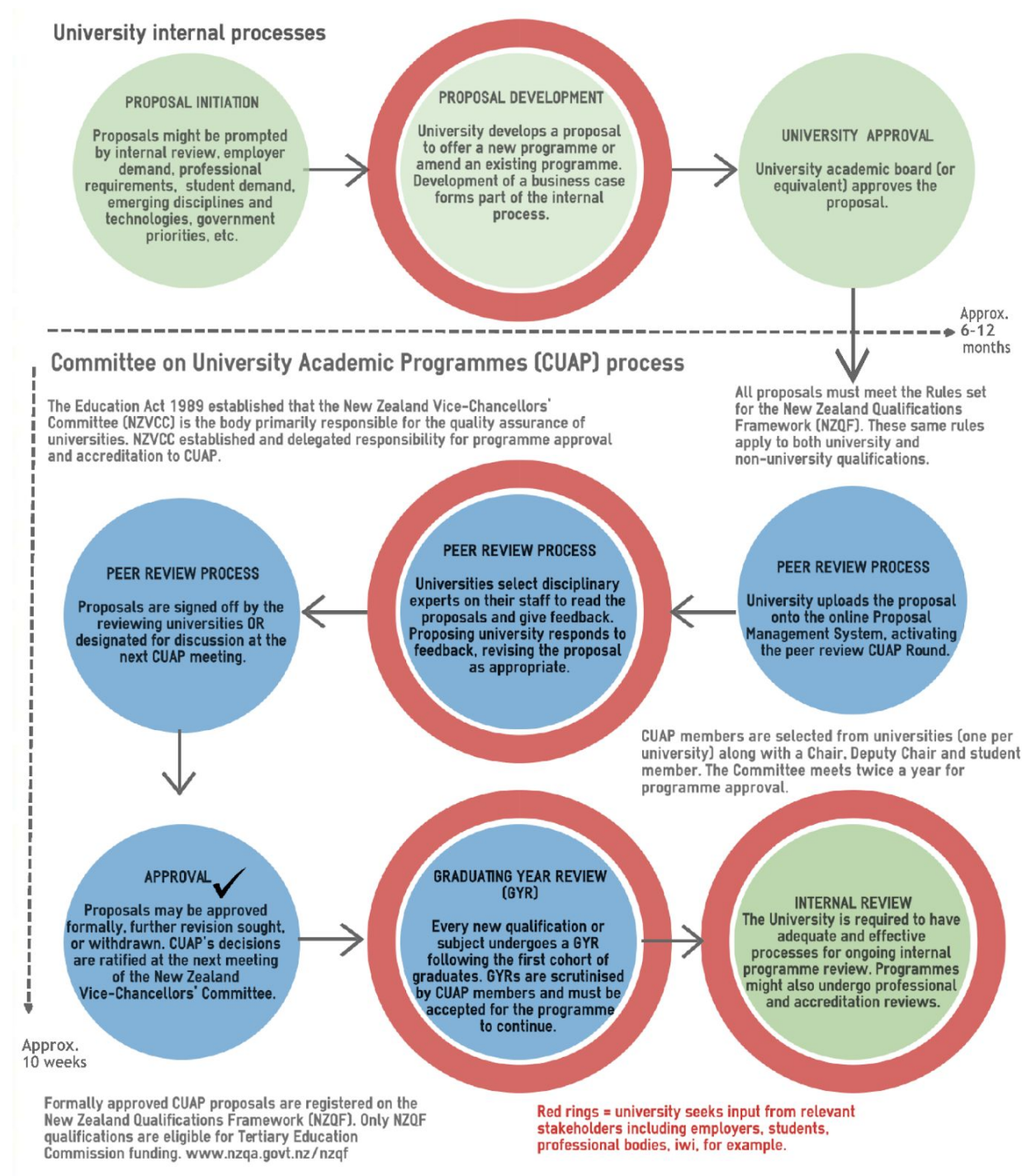
<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/studying-in-new-zealand/understand-nz-quals/>

Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP)

New Zealand's eight universities collaborate to ensure the quality of the country's university academic programmes. Instead of self-reviewing proposals and courses, university peer-review them. CUAP is the body that reviews the more significant types of academic proposals, including new or significantly amended qualifications, subjects, majors and specialisations. CUAP coordinates an inter-university review process that culminates in a set of recommendations made to Universities New Zealand, which are almost always accepted. When the proposals are for new qualifications, Universities New Zealand approves them on behalf of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and notifies the Tertiary Education Commission so that funding may be enabled. There are two CUAP rounds per year, in May and in September. At Academic Boards or Committees 'CUAP', a lot of focus will be on ensuring that programmes are submitted to CUAP in time for either round 1 or 2 for approval. Courses will only be sent to CUAP once they have moved through the quality assurance structure at each university. CUAP is comprised of one representative from each university and a NZUSA representative. Normally the representative from the university will be the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) or

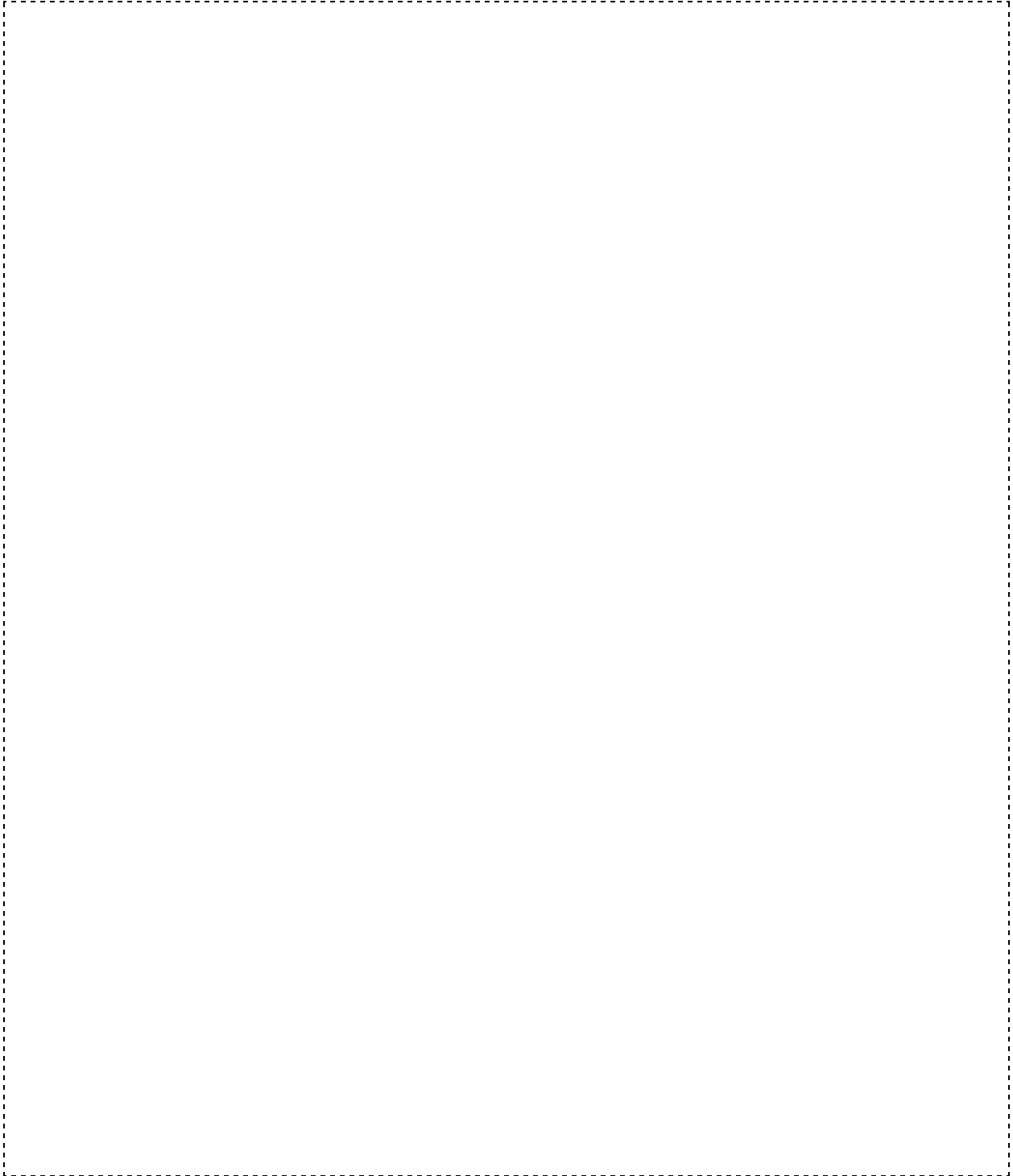
equivalent. The 'rules' of CUAP are contained within the CUAP handbook found here: https://www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/sites/default/files/uni-nz/CUAP_Handbook_2018_Web.pdf

Structure of CUAP



Academic Governance Structure

Draw in the structure of academic governance at your institution. Note the names and positions of those that will be useful to your role next year.

A large, empty rectangular box with a dashed border, intended for the respondent to draw the academic governance structure of their institution. The box is centered on the page and occupies most of the lower half of the document.

Useful links and further notes

Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland (sparqs)

<https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/index.php>

Memorandum of Understanding - AQA and NZUSA

<http://www.aqa.ac.nz/memorandum>