



Higher Education Design Quality Forum

Dr. Ghazwa Alwani-Starr  
HEDQF Chair

*REGISTERED OFFICE*  
Crews Hill Golf Club  
Cattlegate Road  
Enfield  
EN2 8AZ

To all HEDQF members

[admin@hedqf.org](mailto:admin@hedqf.org)  
[www.hedqf.org](http://www.hedqf.org)

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Dear members of HEDQF

I am writing to you in my capacity as the new Chair of HEDQF. I am delighted to have been elected into this role and very much hope that I am able to follow in the footsteps of Julian Robinson, Director of Estates at the LSE. I am sure you would join me in thanking Julian for his excellent chairmanship of HEDQF over the last 3 years.

During his time the forum has grown into a recognised thought leader for championing good design of university buildings, providing advice, sharing knowledge and undertaking research in key areas.

HEDQF is now well established organisationally. It enjoys the commitment of strong Trustees who work hard on its development and I very much look forward to continuing to work with them as we take HEDQF on its next phase of development.

Under Julian's leadership, HEDQF put in place a 5-year strategic plan 2018/19 to 2022/23 which aims to:

- Develop HEDQF organisationally by strengthening the membership base, developing members' benefits, building our website and social media presence, putting in place policies and procedures in line with the Charity Commission requirements and ensuring that it stands on sound financial footings.
- Strengthen HEDQF's impact by establishing a strong research base on important themes in relation to design of HE buildings.
- Build on the research by publishing material of interest to members and others and facilitating highly attended series of events, home and international visits and a successful annual conference
- Develop our external links and partnerships.

We have taken excellent strides in all of these areas and in taking on the role of Chair, my objectives will be to continue in the delivery of this strategic plan with support from our Trustees, members and the wider university and design communities but to also focus on:

- supporting Universities in planning for post-COVID learning, research and work environments,

- building on HEDQF's International reach and partnerships, and
- building further HEDQF's academic rigour through further research and publications.

Understanding the impact that buildings have on their users has been a passion of mine since my PhD days back in the 1980s. It is an honour to now be Chairing the HEDQF and working with colleagues to widen and deepen knowledge of the value of good design of HE buildings.

Higher Education is a life changing experience in so many ways. The design of our buildings and campuses has an enormous impact on the students' and staff experience while at University. During my time as Chair, I would also like to build our understanding of how the design of campuses and buildings can encourage students and staff from all walks to life and all backgrounds to feel able to access HE and be enabled to succeed in their studies and their work.

I very much hope to meet as many of the members virtually or face to face in the near future. Your feedback on the activities of HEDQF and your involvement in its development are vital, and I would very much welcome any suggestions or comments from members directly to me.

Wishing you all a very good summer.

Ghaz

**Dr Ghazwa Alwani-Starr**

Chair of HEDQF

PVC Strategy Planning and Partnerships and Director of Property

University of London