

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR ANNUAL PROGRAMME REVIEW AND PERIODIC REVIEW

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0	Quality Office	July 2018	Quality assurance document and version controls added.
1	Quality Office	August 2018	References revised to reflect new academic governance structure
2	Education Services	August 2021	Updated to reflect revised Annual Programme Review process, previously approved by Education Committee

Purpose

- This Code of Practice sets out the University's requirements for annual programme review and periodic review. Its purpose is to ensure that :
 - the University has in place annual and periodic processes to monitor the quality and standards of the programmes and awards it offers, ensuring their continued currency and the relevance of learning opportunities, and to identify areas for development and the dissemination of good practice;
 - The University meets the ongoing conditions of registration with the Office for Students, particularly conditions B1 to B5.
 - the annual programme review process provides an opportunity for a regular review of the on-going learning and teaching provision at school level;
 - the periodic review process provides an opportunity for a more detailed review of one or more aspects of the education management and standards of academic provision across a school and identification of areas for development and examples of good practice;

Code of Practice for Annual and Periodic Review

- the University meets the requirements of the QAA Quality Code of HE, specifically the section on Monitoring and Evaluation which requires that monitoring and evaluation processes:
 - *Ensure that providers academic provision enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes of their course.*
 - *Evaluate student attainment of academic standards and allow providers to confirm that their portfolio aligns with their mission and strategic priorities;*
 - *Covers all provision that leads to awards*
 - *Allows providers to consider objectively whether their courses are well designed and high-quality*
 - *Look at all stages of the student experience and consider the support provided to students*

Responsibilities

2. Senate, as the University's academic authority, has overriding responsibility for ensuring and enhancing academic standards and learning opportunities through the operation of annual and periodic review processes. Some aspects of this responsibility are delegated as follows:
 - The Education Committee has delegated power to approve significant amendments to this Code of Practice, and receives an annual report on the operation of the process from the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee;
 - the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee has delegated power to oversee the development and implementation of this Code of Practice and, in particular to convene Periodic Review Panels;
 - College Education Committees have delegated powers to implement the requirements of this Code with respect to Annual Programme Review.
3. Senate maintains oversight of these activities through reports from the Education Committee, an annual report on the operation of the Code of Practice and the Annual Academic Assurance report which is considered by Senate and recommended to Council.

Section A

Annual Programme Review

Introduction

1. Annual Programme Review (APR) is a reflective and evaluative quality assurance and quality enhancement process, supplying the opportunity to improve the quality of student learning opportunities and the learning and teaching experience as a whole. It also supplies an opportunity to show student successes and disseminate good practice.
2. The process of APR:
 - a) provides an opportunity for reviewing and improving the quality of the student learning and teaching experience and assuring academic standards and quality;
 - b) strengthens school processes of annual review and monitoring;
 - c) includes a specific focus on enhancement;
 - d) plays a central role in informing the additional review process;
 - e) reports PSRB monitoring and accreditation activities that occur alongside APR
 - f) clarifies the role played by the College Education Committees in assuring standards and the quality of learning opportunities of programmes offered by schools within the College;
 - g) incorporates National Student Survey (NSS) Action Planning.
3. The output of APR should be school level reflection on the operation and student experience across programmes from the last academic year, identification of areas of good practice and of concern, and the development of an action plan to address the latter.
4. Annual Programme Review builds upon processes that take place at School level for the monitoring and evaluation of programmes and student outcomes. These include the operation of the module review process, the consideration of student feedback via LUMES, engagement with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and consideration of external feedback mechanisms such as the National Student Survey.
5. Annual Programme Review informs the Periodic Review process.
6. College Education Committees play a key role in the management of APR allowing them to assure standards and the quality of learning opportunities of programmes offered by departments within the College, as well as facilitating the dissemination of good practice.

Annual Programme Review Principles

Responsibilities

7. Heads of School are responsible for ensuring that Annual Programme Review is completed for all taught, award bearing programmes within their school and submitted for consideration within the timelines that shall be set out each year. This responsibility may be delegated to the Director of Learning and Teaching for the School.
8. Education Services are responsible for ensuring that the template and guidance are provided to schools and updated each year. The Service will also be responsible for monitoring

completion rates of APR and following up with schools to provide support where required. Education Services are also responsible for ensuring that the outcomes of APR are reported through the relevant governance structures.

9. The College Education Committee is responsible for considering APR returns from each school and reporting on outcomes to the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee. CECs are also responsible for monitoring actions arising from APR where these are identified.
10. Quality and Standards Sub-Committee is responsible for University level consideration of APR outcomes, for reporting to the Education Committee and Senate, and for recommending any actions required at University level to those bodies.

Operating Principles

11. Annual Programme Review is a reflective process. It is undertaken following the completion of the academic year, and reviews the delivery of programmes and the student experience in the year that has just finished. For undergraduate programmes the review for the previous year should be completed and submitted in the Autumn term of the subsequent academic year. For taught postgraduate programmes submission takes place in the Spring term of the following academic year.
12. Annual Programme Review utilises a standard template that is provided by Education Services in the Division of Student and Academic Services. The template will, where possible, be pre-populated with relevant data relating to the academic year under review. Where data is not pre-populated, schools will be provided with a range of data sources to consider in order to complete the APR process.
13. The APR forms are designed to encourage reflection on specific issues and the production of a clear action plan. Schools are not required to produce an extensive narrative

Identification of APRs for completion

14. Schools are responsible for identifying the number of APRs to be completed to ensure appropriate monitoring of the range of programmes across its provision, subject to the overall requirement that every award bearing taught programme must be identified and considered within an APR every year. Schools should identify clusters of programmes for which separate ADR reports will be submitted to College Education Committees for approval in each academic year.
15. Undergraduate and PGT APRs should be completed separately, even if there is some overlap in teaching. This is due to the different characteristics of the student population and the data available.
16. As part of the process for identifying clusters for the APR process departments are required to identify APRs for joint provision. Where there is sufficient overlap a single APR may be produced if there are joint programmes in cognate disciplines. Where joint programmes span two departments, both must contribute to the production of the APR report.
17. Where departments offer higher education provision with other partners a separate APR report should be produced for arrangements which involve module delivery, validation, dual or joint awards. For definitions of these forms of collaboration please see the Code of Practice on Managing Higher Education Provision with Others.
18. For other types of collaborative provision, such as progression or articulation agreements, Educational Delivery Partners for distance learning programmes, placement or student

exchange partners a commentary can be provided in the relevant section of the appropriate School's APR.

Provision of data for the APR

19. The APR template requires schools to reflect and comment upon a range of data sources relating to student experience and outcomes. Most sources are drawn from central records but in some instances schools may need to use local data such as the outputs of module review processes.
20. The various data sources that schools will need to use are set out in the APR template (Appendix 1) and a list data sources (Appendix 2). In summary these are:
 - NSS outcomes
 - Recruitment data
 - External Examiners' reports
 - LUMES
 - Progression, continuation and degree classifications
 - Engagement Data
 - Graduate Outcomes
 - PSRB and other accreditation data

Completion of the APR report

21. The APR template requires schools to reflect on the following broad areas, seeking to identify areas of good practice and concern, and produce an action plan to address the issues identified. The APR requires schools to focus on the following areas:

Overall Programme Summary Review

Schools should produce a concise commentary concentrating on any trends requiring changes/proposals at a programme level arising from module reviews. This section should also comment on the actions from the previous APR.

Teaching and Learning

Schools should consider teaching and learning development, engagement in peer enhancement, alignment of teaching and assessment to programme ILOs and relevant benchmarks.

Assessment and Feedback

Schools should consider how the performance of students in assessments has met the learning outcomes of the programme(s), how marking criteria are used in the programmes, processes to ensure consistency in the application of marking, and procedures for the timely provision of feedback to students and support for students to act on feedback received.

Support, Community, Voice and Student Feedback

Schools should consider feedback arising from Student-Staff Consultation Committees, Internal Questionnaires, Module Reviews, NSS, PTES and any other formal or informal mechanisms used. Consider how student feedback has been acted upon.

Progression and Awarding

School should consider student progression and degree classification in comparison with previous years.

Skills and Employability

Schools should consider employability data and engagement with the Career Development Service (including Employability Partnership Agreements, the Leicester Award and embedding significant experience into a module)

Organisation and Learning Resources

Schools should consider use of the digital learning environment and associated issues relating to their design and contribution to the overall student learning experience.

External Evaluations and PSRBs

Schools should identify key points arising from the reports from external examiner reports and PSRB accreditation and annual monitoring activities, including action points and areas of good practice. Please note all accreditations, removal of accreditations (intentional or otherwise) and re-accreditation.

22. Schools are required to comment specifically upon any differentials in outcomes, experience or other measures that exist between different demographic groups including gender, ethnicity, disclosed disability and mature students.
23. Schools should ensure that a full range of staff have the opportunity to contribute to the drafting of the APR.
24. The APR document focusses reflection and clear actions in response to issues identified. Reports should be concise and focussed on specific areas of good practice or concern. These should be articulated in the action plan along with those responsible for undertaking the action and the timescale for the action. The report should highlight where support from across other areas of the College or University are required to address issues identified.

Process for Approving Annual Programme Review Reports

25. Each APR report should be considered at school level by School Education Committee or equivalent. At this point the final version should be approved by the Head of School and Director of Learning and Teaching and submitted to the College Education Committee.
26. The APR for undergraduate programmes will be considered by the College Education Committee in the Autumn Term of each academic year. The APR for taught postgraduate programmes will be considered in the Spring Term.
27. Following the consideration and approval of reports a summary report will be produced for each College which will inform an annual report to the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee

and from there a single summary will be submitted to the Education Committee and reported to Senate.

Monitoring and further actions

28. College Education Committees will identify any issues raised through APR which require monitoring at College level and will receive updates on the progress of these updates through the academic year. The Quality and Standards Sub-Committee may also seek reports on the progress of items requiring oversight at University level.
29. Schools are required to comment upon the progress against their previous APR action plan in the subsequent year's APR process.
30. The Quality and Standards Sub-Committee may use evidence gathered through the APR process to identify where a school would benefit from closer analysis and support via a Periodic Review, the process for which is set out in Section B.

Section B

Periodic Developmental Review (note SUBJECT TO REVIEW)

Introduction

1. Periodic developmental reviews are an important means by which the University satisfies itself that departments, schools and collaborative partners are fulfilling its requirements for the maintenance of academic standards and teaching quality. The reviews are informed by annual developmental review reports and other regular reviews of academic provision undertaken by departments.
2. The University's aim is that the process should be a positive and beneficial experience which, in opening up practices to wider scrutiny, should stimulate discussion and comparison, and encourage standardisation in those areas where the University might be expected to operate consistent and coherent policies.
3. The promulgation of good practice and identification of areas where University procedures might be developed or enhanced is considered to be another important feature of the process.
4. Periodic developmental reviews are also the means by which the University meets the requirement of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education that an institution should review the continuing validity and relevance of its programmes of study (*Chapter B8 Programme Monitoring and Review*).

Periodic Developmental Review Processes

5. The Quality and Standards Sub-Committee undertakes periodic developmental reviews of academic departments on a rolling six year programme through the establishment of Periodic Review Panels.
6. The Schedule of reviews will be agreed by the beginning of each academic year. A department/school due for review will be given at least two term's notice of the intended review and a final date for the review meeting will be agreed at least two months in advance.
7. Arrangements for the production of the required documentation and the format for the review meeting will be agreed between the Review Secretary and the Head of the relevant department or school. The Review Secretary will be a member of staff of the Quality Office.
8. Support for the review process is provided by the Review Secretary and guidance is published to provide the information required for departments to undertake the process (Appendix 3).
9. The Review will incorporate:
 - the drafting by the Department or School of a Self-Evaluation Document (SED) and the preparation of a range of documentation with support from the Quality Office;
 - review by the Panel of documentary evidence to confirm the standard of the awards within the Department or School, the management of learning opportunities for students and the quality of the public information overseen by the Department/School;
 - a review day when the review panel will meet the Head of Department and a range of staff and students drawn from across the Department to explore a range of issues, including those raised in the SED.

10. In addition a review may include:
 - A visit by panel members to observe a teaching session within the Department;
 - Attendance by panel members at meeting with representatives of the student body, such as a Student/Staff Committee meeting.
11. During the review the Panel will assess departmental arrangements against best practice defined nationally through the UK Quality Code and at institutional level through Senate Regulations, Codes of Practice, and other procedural documents approved by Senate.

Composition of Review Panels

12. All periodic developmental reviews will be conducted by a panel which will undertake the review on behalf of the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee, the membership of which comprises:
 - A Chair approved by the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee
 - An External Assessor
 - The Dean of Education of the College in which the Department is located or their nominee
 - An academic member of the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee, or Learning and Teaching Committee
 - A lay member of Council
 - A member of the Students' Union Sabbatical Team
 - A member of the University's Quality Office will act as Secretary to the Review Panel
13. All panel members, including student members will receive briefing and guidance on their roles (Appendix 4 and 5).

Nomination of External Assessors

14. The Head of the Department/School under review will be asked to nominate three potential external assessors to serve on the review panel.
15. Nominations should be made on the standard form (included in the Guide for Departments). Nominations will be reviewed by the Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee who will determine whether one of those nominated should be approved.
16. An invitation to serve as an external assessor will be sent by the Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee.
17. The Secretary to the review panel will be responsible for making all arrangements with the external assessor.
18. The assessor will be a senior member of academic staff of another University with appropriate disciplinary knowledge and experience and knowledge of the requirements of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
19. Where appropriate, an assessor from industry, commerce, or the public sector may be selected, in addition to the external academic assessor. Current and recent (i.e. within the last

five years) external examiners may not serve in this capacity. More than one external assessor may be appointed where this is necessary to cover the full range of a department's activities.

20. The following criteria should be considered in the nomination of an external assessor:
- knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality
 - standing and breadth of experience within the discipline
 - an understanding and awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of curricula and of designing and operating assessment procedures
 - fluency in English, and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s)
21. External Assessors will be asked to focus specifically on the curriculum content and the quality and standards of a department's provision, to provide assurance to the University that the programmes offered continue to meet threshold standards for the discipline.

Preparation of Review Documentation

22. The Secretary to the Review Panel will liaise with the Head of Department and their nominated representatives to agree a schedule for the production of documentation relating to the review.
23. With the exception of the Self-Evaluation Document, it should not be necessary to produce new documentation for the review and departments are encouraged to use existing documentation.
24. The Quality Office and other sections of Student and Academic Services will assist with the identification of certain documentation which is available at University level, for example, data from the Student Records System (SITS).
25. A list of the typical documentation required for a review is given in the Guide for Departments (Appendix 3).
26. Documentation should be provided by one of the following means:
- via a secure page on the departmental website or Blackboard site to which access can be arranged for all panel members. (The responsibility for creating and maintaining the webpage rests with the Department under review with support from the Quality Office staff, who will be able to provide electronic versions of centrally provided information)
 - on a USB Memory stick, providing an appropriate indexing system is incorporated with the files.
27. Exceptionally, if neither of the above options is possible, the documentation may be provided in hard copy format for reproduction for the Panel.
28. In addition one full paper copy of all of the documentation should be provided to the Quality Office by a deadline which will be agreed in advance of the review.

Self-Evaluation Document (SED)

29. One of the main aims of the Periodic Developmental Review process is for the Department under review to undertake an evaluation of, and reflect upon, the provision and processes under review. To this end, departments are required to produce a Self-Evaluation Document (SED). Advice on the production of the SED is provided to departments in the *Guidance Notes for writing the Self-Evaluation Document for Periodic Developmental Review* which form part of the Guide for Departments on Periodic Developmental Review.
30. Through the preparation of the Self-Evaluation Document (SED), the Department is given the opportunity to explore and identify areas for possible strategic growth and development of the curriculum and, ways of improving its delivery with a view to enhancing the quality of the student experience and learning and teaching opportunities offered while assuring the standards of awards.
31. The SED should conclude with a summary of the areas the department wishes to highlight for particular discussion with the Panel at the review meetings.
32. The Panel will review the SED and use it to identify areas it wishes to explore in detail with particular staff or students at review meetings.

Nomination of staff and students to attend meetings with the Review Panel

33. On the review day the Panel will meet a range of staff and students drawn from across the Department.
34. In advance of the review day the Head of Department will be asked to nominate the following members of staff and students:
 - Three members of staff with extensive current experience of undergraduate teaching*;
 - Three members of staff with extensive current experience of postgraduate teaching*;
 - Three members of staff responsible for supervising and supporting research students*;
 - Between five and seven undergraduate students at different stages of their studies, drawn from across the Department's programmes. Each year cohort should be represented. If the department offers any joint programmes, these should also be represented;
 - Between four and five postgraduate students drawn from across the Department's postgraduate taught programmes;
 - Three doctoral students at different stages of their research;
 - If distance learning programmes are offered, a range of distance learning students (where attendance is not possible feedback will be sought via other means, including questionnaires, organised by the Review Secretary).

* Within these categories, the Panel would expect to interview the Director of Learning and Teaching for the Department (or equivalent), the Director of Taught Postgraduate provision (or equivalent) the Director of Distance Learning (if appropriate) and the Postgraduate Research Tutor (or equivalent).

Before the review day

Code of Practice for Annual and Periodic Review

35. In the two weeks immediately preceding the review day one or more members of the Review Panel may visit the Department to observe a teaching session, if the academic calendar permits. This will be organised between the Secretary and the Department under review.
36. A member of the review Panel or the Secretary may also attend a Student/Staff Committee meeting.
37. Shortly before the review day the Panel member representing the Students' Union and the Secretary will arrange to meet with the student representatives who will take part in the review to explain the review process and in order to identify in advance any issues for discussion.
38. Additionally, the Review Secretary will arrange to meet with the Chair of the Review Panel to discuss issues which may arise from the documentation or discussions with student representatives.

Schedule for the Review Day

39. The Review Secretary and Head of Department will agree a schedule of meetings for the day and a location for the review. Where possible the review meetings should take place at an appropriate location in the relevant department.
40. A sample schedule for a review day is included in the PDR Guide for Departments. This will be adapted to meet the needs of a particular department's provision
41. The review day will normally commence with a meeting with the Head of Department. The order in which the meetings take place thereafter will be tailored to suit the particular provision within the Department.

Feedback and Reporting

42. At the end of the review day the Chair and Secretary will provide feedback to the Department on key issues which have arisen through the review including likely areas for commendation, consideration and action.
43. A written summary of these conclusions will be agreed by the Chair and circulated to the Department within a week of the Review Panel. The full report will be agreed by all members of the Panel and issued to the Department within 6 weeks. If required, the report can be supplemented by a meeting between the Chair of the Review Panel, Secretary and Head of Department.

Departmental Response

44. The PDR report should be considered by the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee (or equivalent) and any other relevant departmental committees. It is also good practice for the Department or School to share the report and, where appropriate, the departmental response with their students via the Student/Staff Committee.
45. The Department will be required to provide an initial response to the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee addressing any issues raised in the report, normally within two months of its publication.
46. One year after the publication of the report the Department will be required to provide a full report to the Quality and Standards Committee detailing the actions taken in response to the review.

Code of Practice for Annual and Periodic Review

47. An annual report of the operation of the PDR process will be submitted to the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee, with a summary submitted to the Learning and Teaching Committee.