



Periodic Developmental Review: A guide for Student–Staff Committee (SSC) Members

This guide is intended to be used by student members of the Student-Staff Committees. It explains what a periodic developmental review is, how the reviews operate and how student SSC members become involved in elements of the review.

What is a Periodic Review?

Periodic developmental reviews are an important process by which the University satisfies itself that departments, schools and collaborative partners are fulfilling their requirements for the maintenance of academic standards and teaching quality.

Purpose

The periodic developmental review gives the School/Department an opportunity to reflect on and evaluate the successes and issues faced and how they are being tackled to enhance provision in the future. The intention of the PDR is that the outcome is a positive and beneficial experience which should stimulate discussion, comparison and encourage standardisation in areas where the University might be expected to operate consistent and coherent policies. The discussion of good practice and identification of gaps in guidelines and procedures should be a feature of the exercise.

Periodic developmental reviews are also the means by which the University meets the requirements of the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) that an institution should review the continuing validity and relevance of its programmes of study.

The Periodic Developmental Review process has been updated to reflect external changes in the HE environment, specifically The Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF).

As part of the Periodic Review process the School/Department, student groups and panel consider:

- Student feedback;
- Student experience – student support, attention to issues raised by students; student handbooks etc;
- Relevance and currency of the curriculum in the light of changing needs and the eventual aim of maximising the employability of students;
- the appropriateness of the intended learning outcomes and how well they are being met;
- quality of teaching and learning opportunities (including inclusive approaches);
- levels and methods of assessment and how they contribute to the intended learning outcomes;
- Resources (availability and use of technology to support learning, rooms; equipment; staff and support);
- Management of the programmes;
- Progression, retention and achievement information;

- How programmes under review fit with other programmes on offer and with the Department/School/College strategy;
- Future developments;
- External sources of data e.g. the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework and the National Student Survey.

In general the review considers what has worked well, how good practice is disseminated, issues faced, how improvements can be made and plans for the future.

Composition of the Panel

The evidence provided by the Department and supporting documentation is considered by a panel made up of independent external and internal representatives and comprises of the following:

- **Chair:** a senior member of academic staff from a College other than that in which the department/school under review sits;
- **External Assessor:** there will normally be at least one external panel member, nominated by the Head of Department/School. On occasion externals may also be drawn from industry or professional bodies;
- **Director of Learning and Teaching:** the Director of Learning and Teaching of the College in which the Department/School is located or their nominee;
- **Learning and Teaching Committee member;**
- **Lay member of Council:** members of the [University Council](#) who are neither staff nor students of the University;
- A member of the University's Quality Office will act as Secretary to the Review Panel;
- **Student representative** not associated with the Department/School under review

Student Panel Member

The student panel member is able to bring the student perspective to the process and knowledge and expertise relating to University quality assurance procedures. The student member may raise any issues arising from the Department's Self Evaluation Document and briefing meetings with students (see below). A particular focus will be:

- The overall student experience and satisfaction
- Ways in which the Department/School engages students in the management of quality and standards
- The operation and effectiveness of staff student committees
- Turnaround times for marking and student feedback
- Academic support and guidance, including the personal tutor system
- Clarity and accessibility of information

During the Review

On the review day the Panel will meet a range of staff and students drawn from across the Department/School. In advance of the review day the Head of Department/School will be asked to nominate members of staff and students.

Before the Review Day

In the two weeks immediately preceding the review visit one or more members of the Review Panel may visit the Department/School to observe a teaching session, if the academic calendar permits.

In addition, a member of the review Panel or the Secretary may attend a Student/Staff Committee meeting.

Shortly before the review visit the Panel member representing the Students' Union and the Secretary will arrange to meet with the student representatives due to take part in the review in order to provide more detail about the process and identify in advance any issues for discussion.

After the Review

At the end of the review day the Secretary will provide feedback to the Department/School on the points of commendation and issues the Panel has identified for further consideration and action.

A written summary of these conclusions will be agreed by the Chair and circulated to the Department/School within a week. The full report of the Panel will be issued to the Department/School four weeks after the review and it will be given two weeks to check it for factual accuracy.

The report should be considered by the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee (or equivalent) and any other relevant departmental/school committees. It is also good practice for the Department or School under review to share the report and, where appropriate, the departmental/school response with their students via the Student/Staff Committee.