

## CODE OF PRACTICE FOR ANNUAL AND PERIODIC DEVELOPMENTAL REVIEW

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### Purpose

- This Code of Practice sets out the University's requirements for annual and periodic developmental 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 annual developmental review process provides an opportunity for a regular review of the on-going learning and teaching provision at departmental level;
  - the periodic developmental review process provides an opportunity for the review of the management and standards of academic provision across a department and identification of areas for development and examples of good practice;
  - the University meets the requirements of Chapter B8 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education which requires that: *Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic process for monitoring and review of programmes.*

### Responsibilities

## Code of Practice for Annual and Developmental Periodic Review

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 developmental review processes. Some aspects of this responsibility are delegated as follows:
  - The Learning and Teaching 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 Developmental Review Panels;
  - College Learning and Teaching Committees have delegated powers to implement the requirements of this Code with respect to Annual Developmental Review.
3. Senate maintains oversight of these activities through regular reports from the Academic Policy Committee and through annual reports on the operation of annual and periodic developmental review processes.

## Section A

### Annual Developmental Review

#### Introduction

1. Annual Developmental Review (ADR) is a reflective and evaluative quality assurance and quality enhancement process, which provides departments and schools with the opportunity to reflect on their provision formally on an annual basis, with the intention of improving the quality of student learning opportunities, and the learning and teaching experience as a whole. It also provides an opportunity to identify student successes and disseminate good practice.
2. The requirements of ADR strengthen the process of annual review and monitoring which are implemented through a range of mechanisms at departmental level, and has a specific focus on enhancement.
3. Annual Developmental Review informs the Periodic Developmental Review process.
4. College Learning and Teaching Committees play a key role in the management of ADR 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 Developmental Review Process

5. Each department is responsible for identifying the number of ADR reports to be completed to ensure monitoring across the full range of programmes offered. Departments should identify clusters of programmes for which separate ADR reports will be submitted to College Learning and Teaching Committees for approval in each academic year.
6. As a minimum it is recommended that a separate ADR report is produced for undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision and possibly one for each cognate group of programmes.
7. As part of the process for identifying clusters for the ADR process departments are required to identify ADRs for joint provision. Where there is sufficient overlap a single ADR may be produced if there are joint programmes in cognate disciplines. Where joint programmes span two departments, both must contribute to the ADR report.
8. Where departments offer higher education provision with other partners a separate ADR report should be produced for arrangements which involve module delivery, validation, dual or joint awards.
9. 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 departmental ADR.
10. ADR reports should be produced to a standard template (Appendix 1).
11. Data required for the ADR report will be provided to departments from the University's Student Record System (SITS).
12. ADR reports will incorporate the following:

## Code of Practice for Annual and Developmental Periodic Review

- Features of good practice which make a positive contribution to the assurance of academic standards, quality or enhancement of student learning opportunities
  - An update on the previous year's enhancement plan
  - Student recruitment, including number of applicants, number of applicants who hold offers (CF/CI), admissions through clearing, registrations and average UCAS points score
  - Summary statistics on student progression and degree classifications, compared to previous years
  - Consideration of first destination data, student employment records, student engagement with the Career Development Service, participation in the Leicester award and other measures associated with employability
  - Confirmation that all modules have undergone annual review
  - Summary of all proposed amendments to programmes resulting from ADR and other reviews
  - A summary statement on student feedback, including the NSS, Student-Staff Committees, module questionnaires, and any other methods used to collect feedback
  - A summary statement confirming that the Department has engaged in peer observation of teaching or marking and feedback as relevant to the year under review
  - Identification of key issues arising from External Examiners' reports and action taken in response to these
  - An update on any actions arising from Periodic Developmental Review or Programme Approval Panels, where these have taken place during the course of the previous academic year
  - Summary of any activities relating to PSRB accreditation
  - Review of learning resources, their design and contribution to the overall student learning experience
  - Developments/Enhancements to public information at programme level
  - An enhancement plan for the academic year
13. A Guide for Departments on Annual Development Review is published (Appendix 2) and support is provided as required by College Academic Advisors in the Quality Office.

### **Process for Approving and Monitoring Annual Developmental Review Reports**

14. Each ADR report should be considered at departmental level by the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee or equivalent and approved for submission to the College Learning and Teaching Committee. A record of issues to be monitored should be noted in the Committee's minutes.
15. Annual Developmental Review reports will be considered and approved by the appropriate College Learning and Teaching Committee.

## Code of Practice for Annual and Developmental Periodic Review

16. 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 Learning and Teaching Committee.

## Section B

### Periodic Developmental 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 Developmental 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 Developmental 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.

**Supplementary guidance is available in the following supporting documents**

- 1. Annual Developmental Review Template**
- 2. Collaborative Annual Developmental Review Template**
- 3. A Guide for Departments**
- 4. A Guide for Panel Members**
- 5. A Guide for Student Panel Members**
- 6. Guidance Notes for Writing the Self-Evaluation Document**