Periodic Developmental Review: A guide for Student Panel Member

On behalf of the Quality Office and UoL Students’ Union thank you for agreeing to act as a Student Panel Member for a Periodic Review. This important role provides an opportunity for you to gain an insight into a course other than your own; it also helps to make sure students are at the heart of decisions and the student experience continues to be enhanced.

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 (Chapter B8 Programme Monitoring and Review).

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;
- levels and methods of assessment and how they contribute to the intended learning outcomes
- Resources (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/College strategy
- Future developments

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.
Timescales

An outline of the timescales and process is included on page five.

Once you have been confirmed as a Panel member you will receive the documentation, this will give you time to read through and seek clarification if needed.

You will:
- Receive the documentation
- Receive a summary of the outcomes within one week of the review
- Receive a draft of the final report within two weeks of the review, with the expectation you will confirm approval or return comments within three weeks of the review

Composition of the Panel

The evidence provided in the SED and supporting documentation is considered by a panel made up of independent external and internal representatives and comprises of the following:
- **Chair**: a Pro-Vice Chancellor from a College other than that in which the department under review sits;
- **External Assessor**: there will normally be at least one external panel member, nominated by the Head of Department. On occasion externals may also be drawn from industry or professional bodies;
- **Academic Director**: the Academic Director of the College in which the Department is located or their nominee;
- **Academic Policy Committee member**;
- **Lay member of Council**;
- **Student representative** not associated with the Department under review;
- A member of the University's Quality Office will act as Secretary to the Review Panel

Self-Evaluation Document (SED)

The purpose of the review is to examine the departments existing provision, and to this end the review panel do not require departments to produce significant amounts of new information. The SED will reflect on curriculum, resources and delivery and will consider student feedback, statistical data, self-evaluation and external examiners reports.

The information in the SED will be drafted in the following sections
- Strategic and Department Overview
- Curriculum and Award Standards
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Student Support, Development and Employability
- Research

The documentation is circulated to the review panel approximately three weeks prior to the review event. You will also be granted access to the designated Blackboard site for the review, and informed by the Secretary when this is available. As a panel member you are asked to review the documentation bearing in mind the aims and purpose of the review.
Schedule

The schedule of interviews and location of the review will be agreed between the Head of Department and Secretary. The day begins with introductions and a private meeting of the panel members to agree priorities for discussion. Throughout the day the panel will meet with a number of different groups. The event will conclude with feedback from the panel. A typical review day would run as follows:

30-45mins **Private meeting of the review panel**  
*For discussion of particular themes and issues each panel member may wish to address*

60mins **Meeting with Head of Department**

45mins **Meeting with staff members responsible for undergraduate programmes**  
*3 or 4 staff members with specific responsibilities for the teaching, support, review and development of undergraduate programmes and processes*

45mins **Meeting with staff members responsible for postgraduate programmes**  
*3 or 4 staff members with specific responsibilities for the teaching, support, review and development of postgraduate programmes and processes*

30mins **Meeting with samples of students (UG)**

30mins **Meeting with samples of students (PGT)**

15mins **Private session for the Panel**  
*For discussion of particular themes and issues arising from initial interviews*

30mins **Meeting with sample of research students**  
*2-3 research students at different stages of their research, preferably including one student who has not yet undergone the APG/PhD upgrade process*

30mins **Meeting with research student supervisors**  
*3 members of staff with responsibilities for the supervision, monitoring and training of research students, including where possible the Departmental Postgraduate Tutor*

45mins **Private session for the Panel**  
*For discussion of outcome of the review, and identification of points of commendation and points for action.*

30mins **Feedback session to the Head of Department**  
*Panel Chair and Secretary only*

A session may be inserted to interview staff that have specific responsibility for Distance Learning provision and can be a 30 to 45 minute session or built into an extended PGT staff session depending on the scale of provision.

Roles and Responsibilities

As a student panel member you are a full member of the panel and are expected to be fully participative, actively contributing to the discussions and the decision making process. Your views will be equal to those of any other panel member.
You will be expected to

1. Acknowledge receipt of the SED and supporting documentation

The documentation at first glance may appear vast and overwhelming, however do not be put off by this. The main focus is the SED; the remainder of the documentation will be supporting evidence which can be referred to as you read the SED. Guidance is available from the review secretary if you have any concerns regarding the documentation or your role in the review; ask as many questions as you need, we want to ensure you feel supported in this important role.

2. Read the SED and make notes

Spend some time reading through the SED and student commentary; make notes of key points as you read. Highlight good practice and any areas on which you want further clarification on.

It’s important not to worry that you are not an expert in the subject matter or in educational quality standards; you are on the panel to offer the student viewpoint, the other panel members will be happy to answer any questions you have in relation to the more complex issues.

You will be asked to consider, in your view some specific issues which will be relevant to the department under review.

3. Provide comments on the documentation
4. Attend the full day of the review
5. Ensure you review the final report and approve or suggest amendments within the timescales.

Benefits of being on the Panel

You will gain experience of being an integral part of the review process, making change happen and ensuring students’ views are accounted for in the process.

For the Periodic Developmental Review of INSERT DEPARTMENT the contact in the Quality Office is INSERT NAME; email and ext# and the contact in the Department is INSERT NAME ; email and ext #
Periodic Developmental Review: A guide for Student Panel Member

Six months
- Memo to HoD notifying them of the PDR

Term prior to the Review
- Initial brief meeting with HoD and relevant dept representatives
  - agree the scope of the review
  - agree dates
  - start nomination of external and internal panel members

Term of the Review
- Meeting with Blackboard Developer is held

6 weeks before
- Observations of Student Staff Committees and teaching sessions by Panel members

5 weeks before
- Blackboard site to be complete and available
- Hard copy of SED and supporting documentation submitted

4 weeks before
- Schedule will be confirmed
- Blackboard site is available for documents to be uploaded
- Questionnaires are sent to Distance Learning students

3 weeks before
- Blackboard site is reviewed
- Questionnaire responses to be collated
- Paperwork checked and printed

1 week before
- Panel members access to Blackboard available
- Documents to the panel members

1 week after
- Preparation meeting with the Chair of the panel
- Student member briefed

1 week
- Conclusions are sent to the Department

within 2 weeks
- Report sent to the panel for response

within 3 weeks
- Department is sent the report
Notification of PDR sent to Head of Department

- Initial brief meeting with HoD and relevant department representatives
  - agree the scope of the review
  - agree dates
  - start nomination of external and internal panel members

- Student views gathered

- SED written by the Department

- Data and documentation required

- Panel Agreed

- Administrative arrangements take place

- SED Completed and submitted

- SED and Documentation circulated to Panel Members

- Briefing meetings with Panel Chair and Student member

- Periodic Review Event

- Report to Panel Members for Response

- Report to Department

- Department response within 2 months of the reports publication and considered by APC

- Department update APC with a full report on actions taken

- 12-18 months after the review

- Within 3 weeks after

- Within 2 weeks after

- 3 weeks before

- Term before

- Two terms before