

## **Guidance Notes for writing the Self-Evaluation Document (SED) for Periodic Developmental Review**

The purpose of the Periodic Developmental Review (PDR) is to monitor the quality and standards of the programmes and awards offered by each department/school and to identify areas for development and for the dissemination of good practice in learning and teaching.

The Periodic Developmental Review guidance, the review documentation and the Self-Evaluation Document (SED) Form have been updated to reflect external changes in the HE environment, specifically the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF). The PDR's reviewed structure, focus and outcome report will enable Departments/Schools to reflect on data and themes in preparation for subject-level TEF submissions. In addition, the PDR process has been reviewed to reduce duplication where parallel processes exist within the University where data is shared.

The Self Evaluation Document (SED) is the key document for a PDR. It enables the department/school under review to reflect upon its provision using data and it enables the periodic review panel to set the agenda for the review visit. This guidance covers writing the Self-Evaluation Document (SED) for PDR.

The SED should be an evidenced, evaluative and reflective document exploring what the Department/School believes is working well and what is working less well. The SED should include appropriate reference to sources of information and data to support the analysis. **The SED should draw upon qualitative and quantitative data from relevant internal and external sources. Where possible, the SED should evaluate the effectiveness of provision in comparison with internal targets and external benchmarks, and in relation to specific demographic/protected characteristics in order to identify improvements and good practice for particular student groups.**

**You are not required to provide a detailed description of what you do.** Some background information may be necessary to set the scene but the emphasis should be on the Department/School's evaluation of the effectiveness of its provision and its management within the department/school.

You may find it beneficial to comment on the quality of data and contextualise the data relating to teaching quality, the learning environment, students' outcomes and learning gain. This may be useful to highlight considerations for use in the provider evidence required for the subject level Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF).

The following guidelines should be used to structure your SED. Please highlight strengths and areas of good practice, including examples, as well as those areas you are working to improve or enhance. You need not reproduce in the SED detailed information available in another existing document; instead, you can either append that document or summarise the contents of the document and explain its relevance.

### **Word Length**

There is no formal requirement for the length of the SED.

### **Structure**

The SED should be structured around the following six sections

1. [Strategic and Department/School Overview](#)
2. [Curriculum and Award Standards](#)
3. [Teaching Learning, and Assessment](#)
4. [Student Support, Development and Employability](#)
5. [Research](#)
6. [Topics for discussion](#)

See [Appendix 1](#) for style the cover sheet template to use.

See [Appendix 2](#) for sources of internal and external information

## 1. Strategic and Department/School Overview

This section should highlight the key challenges facing the Department/School and key strengths which enable it to meet its strategic challenges. The summary should also reference current, planned and/or future developments in the Department/School to support the University in meeting its strategic aims.

This section should provide commentary on how the School/Department embeds its commitment to University's strategic priorities through its operation of the following strategies at a departmental/school level:

- Assessment Strategy
- Learning Strategy
- Digital Strategy (Digital Learning Environment/eLearning)

In addition, in this section the School/Department may wish to reflect on how the School/Department engages with and supports the implementation of the key University level strategies relating to:

- Recruitment and Admissions
- Curriculum Development
- Collaborative Provision
- Management of Learning Resources

The overview should refer to the Department/Schools undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision and organisational structure to include staff and student numbers relevant to the scope of the Review. Where applicable it should include reference to collaborative provision for which the Department/School is responsible.

The overview should list the UG and PGT programmes within the scope for the review including

The Award (including exit awards)	
Programme Titles	
Mode of Study (FT/PT/CB/DL)	
Partners involved in the delivery and management of programme	
Recognition or affiliation of a <b>Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body</b>	

### Aims and Context

The SED should define the overall strategic aims of the Department/School, and explain how these relate to the wider University strategy. Comment on strengths and characteristics that define the Department/School. This may reference how students are enabled to develop their

capacity to learn, how provision meets international; national; regional and local needs – including widening participation/access to education and employment and how provision prepares students for employment, further study or professional practice.

The SED should consider the extent to which provision aligns to the aims, ILOs, strategy and mission where cumulative changes have been made to programmes as they have developed over time.

### **Maintenance of Standards and Enhancement of Quality**

The SED should evaluate the effectiveness of the measures taken to enhance the quality and standards of provision. In section 2 onwards please use evidence (including statistical indicators) to outline and evaluate the effectiveness of measures taken to maintain and enhance the quality and standards of provision (including for students with different demographic characteristics) under the relevant headings (curriculum, award and standards; teaching, learning and assessment; student support, development and employability; and research). Specific tactics for closing the loop and demonstrating the responses taken to feedback should be included where relevant.

## **2. Curriculum and Award Standards**

This section of the SED provides details of the programmes and awards offered. It is an opportunity to explain the vision and philosophy for the subject, highlighting not only the aims of the provision but also the skills students will be able to demonstrate on completion of their programmes and accessibility of the curriculum. Describe how intended learning outcomes are designed and reviewed, and how they meet/exceed the QAA Subject Benchmark Statements.

The SED should reflect on how the structure and content of the programmes are designed and developed appropriately, referring to

- Opportunities to achieve ILOs
- Opportunities for academic and intellectual progression
- Good practice in teaching and learning
- Feedback from External Examiners
- Subject Benchmark Statements
- Consider other topics relating to curricular planning and University consultations and reviews
- Providing equal opportunities for students with different demographic characteristics

### **a. Progression and Completion**

Indicate how successful the Department/School is in supporting and monitoring students' progression through their programmes, indicating the proportion of students who successfully complete their studies.

The SED should cover:

- Student retention and withdrawal and where appropriate review the effectiveness of strategies adopted to reduce or limit the rate of non-continuation
- Trends relating to student progression and completion with respect to students' demographic characteristics

- Student achievement (including degree classifications awarded), identifying where action or support may be required at Departmental/School, College or University level
- Student complaints/appeals and any emerging themes

The SED should highlight what measures are in place to monitor graduate destinations and maintain links with alumni, including any significant trends in data resulting from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Survey/Graduate Outcomes data.

### 3. Teaching Learning, and Assessment

This section of the SED should include reflection on the Departments/School's provision in respect of the following;

**a. Curriculum: Learning and Teaching**

The effectiveness of the modes of delivery of teaching and learning, where the Department/School employs innovative teaching methods and opportunities for development of new teaching methods. This could include, for example, discussion on –

- The range and appropriateness of teaching methods
- The variety of ways in which student participation is encouraged and achieved
- Opportunities for innovation such as engagement with the Leicester Learning Institute
- Developments in pedagogy
- The use of technology to support learning and teaching
- The effectiveness of team teaching, where appropriate
- Providing equal opportunities for students with different demographic characteristics
- The percentage of teaching staff with academic teaching qualifications

Make reference to external data sources e.g. NSS/TEF where applicable.

**b. Curriculum: Assessment**

The effectiveness of student assessment in measuring achievement of the intended outcomes of courses and in particular in

- The effectiveness of the assessments in promoting student learning (especially through formative assessment)
- The range and variety of assessment methods used, evaluating their effectiveness in enabling students to demonstrate achievement
- The range of assessments used to support students with different demographic characteristics

Make reference to external data sources e.g. NSS/TEF where applicable.

**c. Feedback Mechanisms (to and from students)**

This section should include policies and practices for providing feedback to students and obtaining feedback from students.

The SED should consider:

- The mechanisms in place in the Department/School to ensure good feedback to students
- How the department/school knows that mechanisms for student representation and feedback are functioning effectively.
- How effective is the feedback and what impact does it have?
- How students are engaged in decision making and curriculum development and how feedback is obtained from students and used to enhance and improve programmes and how feedback loops are closed
- Feedback from alumni: its collection and use (where available)
- Specific tactics for closing the loop and demonstrating the responses taken to feedback

#### **4. Student Support, Development and Employability**

This section would normally include details on the operation of the personal tutor system, communication with students, the monitoring of progression, study skills, transferable skills and employability, and address any issues relating to widening participation, internationalisation and equality and diversity.

##### **a. Recruitment and induction of students**

This section should outline Department/School arrangements for student recruitment and admission. It should also summarise what induction programmes take place and how the Department/School evaluate and develop them.

##### **b. Student Support**

This section should review the effectiveness of strategies of academic support, and the extent to which they take account of entry profile of the student intake in relation to the aims of the programmes. The SED should articulate and evaluate the student support systems in place for the whole student journey both within the Department/School and relationship with University services.

Demonstrate how the Department/School knows whether support for students is effective, consistent and how it ensures it meets the needs of all students (across demographic characteristics) with the student profile within the context of provision and any learning needs, including:

- Identification of and action on any special learning needs
- Written guidance
- Academic advising
- Tutorial support
- Feedback to students on their progress
- Overall academic guidance and supervision

##### **c. Student Experience**

Explain how the Department/School knows whether students and staff have a clear understanding of their respective responsibilities and whether they have a sense of belonging within the Department/School/College/University.

**d. Learning Resources**

Explain the systems and strategies in place for ensuring the effectiveness of the deployment of learning resources in the Department/School, linked through to the discussion of the student learning environment provided, including:

- availability of equipment and IT facilities for staff and students
- availability of learning and teaching accommodation available, and to what extent the environments in which learning occurs are conducive to effective learning
- accessibility of resources provided by the library
- Effectiveness of technical and administrative support available
- The appropriateness of the student:staff ratios

Explain how effectively the Department/School feels the students use the learning resources available to them.

**e. Learning and Study Skills**

The SED should:

- Articulate how the Department/School identifies the study skills students require
- Explain how the Department/School supports the development of study skills through curriculum and working with University central services
- Identify opportunities for further development.

**f. Employability**

The SED should include how the Department/School:

- identifies the employability skills that are relevant to and needed by its students
- supports the development of employability through curriculum and working with University central services
- assesses the effectiveness of its employability strategies and its engagements of interactions with employers

**g. Work Placements**

If work placements are provided as part of the Department/School's provision the SED should explain how they are managed and evaluate their value to the student experience. Indicate how work placements are monitored in relation to the Code of Practice on the University's Procedures for managing HE provision with others.

**h. International Study**

The SED should explain what opportunities exist, if any, and articulate plans for developing international study opportunities and how study abroad opportunities are managed in relation to the Code of Practice on the University's Procedures for managing HE provision with others.

**5. Research Degrees**

For reviews which include research degree provision, the following additional information should be included as part of the evaluation of this area of the Department/School's work:

**a. Recruitment**

The SED should reflect on the quality and nature of the student intake and any specific factors which affect student recruitment.

**b. Studentships and awards**

The SED should explain the financial support available for research students in the Department/School, the success of your research students in obtaining awards and any action to increase the provision of financial support.

**c. Supervision arrangements**

The SED should indicate frequency of supervisions, arrangements for joint supervision, special arrangements for part-time students, dealing with study leave, change of supervisor arrangements and the distribution of students amongst supervisors.

**d. Special arrangements**

The SED should review special arrangements for support, induction and guidance including for overseas and part-time students.

**e. The research training course**

The SED should evaluate the research training including the skills which the research training course aims to develop, whether it is assessed and if it has Research Council recognition.

**f. Resources**

The SED should explain any systems and strategies in place for ensuring the effectiveness of the deployment of learning resources and the effectiveness of resources to support research students (e.g. Library, study or work space, IT, equipment, and funds for research travel and conference attendance).

**g. Student progress**

The SED should cover the mechanisms in place for monitoring and recording outcomes of probation review and dealing with unsatisfactory progress.

**h. Submission & completion rates**

The SED should include the Department/School's Research Council submission rates (i.e. the proportion who submit within 12 months of the end of their award). The completion rate should include the percentage of the relevant cohort who completed their research degree (i.e. passed the examination, made any required amendments and were eligible to be awarded the degree). Please note: students who were awarded a lower award should be explicitly differentiated from the overall completion rate. Employment rates should also be included where available.

**i. Graduate Teaching and Research Assistants**

The SED should explain the role of GTAs and GRAs play in supporting teaching or research including the general nature of their responsibilities, number employed in each category, maximum workloads, training and supporting research students (including graduate assistants) in respect of their work for the Department/School.

## **6. Topics for discussion**

This section summarises issues raised in the SED and will often form the basis for opening discussions with the Panel and inform the agenda for the review visit. These will include identification of:

- Strengths and possible areas for improvement identified throughout the SED which the team would like to focus on during the Review day

- How any key areas for improvement and enhancement will fit into the future strategic plans of the Department/School

At the end of the review process Schools/Departments and the Review Panel should feel that the issues raised have been addressed either directly or indirectly.