Faculty Quality Team (FQT) arrangement for 2017/18

1. Introduction

1.1 Faculty Quality Teams (FQTs) will operate under an interim arrangement in 2017/18 to maintain a crucial academic and student scrutiny role. A new approach based on a University Quality Team (UQT) is under development and will be implemented in 2018/19. This document sets out the structure for the interim FQT arrangement.

2. FQT Objective

2.1 The FQT objective for 2017/18 is to provide assurance on the quality and standards of educational provision at undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research levels, which is light touch but sufficiently robust, before the introduction of UQT in 2018/19. Good practice examples will also be captured. There may be some faculty variance in how this is operated in terms of coverage of schools and programmes due to existing FQT practices within each faculty.

3. Strategic connections

3.1 There will not be an explicit list of FQT themes in 2017/18 but as the priorities in school Education Action Plans were set within a strategic context, the interim FQT arrangement will connect to the University’s strategic objectives by reviewing those plans. There are also particular University developments that FQTs will connect with: programme-level assessment, curriculum development and the impact of Bristol Futures.

4. Academic and student scrutiny role

4.1 FQTs will maintain academic and student scrutiny of quality and standards by:

4.1.1 Conducting a paper-based review of the following aspects of the Quality Framework:
- Education Action Plans (EAPs), considering both prioritised and other actions;
- PGR Annual Programme Reviews (APRs); and
- External examiners for taught programmes reports and responses.

4.1.2 Considering student views of quality and standards through:
- Reviewing school Student Staff Liaison Committee minutes and, if available, other relevant student feedback documentation; and
- Direct feedback obtained by student quality reviewers through the student representation system.

4.1.3 Utilising previous FQT work by:
- Following up on FQT recommendations made to schools and faculties from 2016/17 and any strategically relevant outstanding recommendations from previous FQT reports. Schools should be asked to comment on any outstanding FQT recommendations that are not already included in the EAP, including whether they have been prioritised for action. AQSC will follow up on University-level actions.
• Referring to the FQT visit reports from 2016/17 if they provide useful contextual information for the review activities.

5. **Light-touch FQT visits**

5.1 FQTs will make light-touch visits on a triage basis to follow up on particular aspects of the paper-based review, including capturing good practice as well as potential areas for improvement, if FQTs deem this to be necessary. This may involve visiting the School Education Director (or equivalent), a small number of staff in the school and a sample of students. The structure and content of each visit will be determined by the nature of the matters raised by the review. Full-scale FQT visits will not be made to all schools; there will only be tailored visits, as necessary, to explore identified areas in particular schools based on the FQT review activities.

6. **PSRB requirements**

6.1 Any schools/programmes that require the scrutiny provided by FQTs as part the confirmation of quality and standards for their PSRB accreditation will continue to receive the necessary FQT engagement in 2017/18, including tailored visits if needed.

7. **Review outcomes**

7.1 As a result of the review activities, FQTs will produce a short commentary for each school covering commendations/good practice, and any recommendations for improvement. There is a template for the commentary (available at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/fqt.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/fqt.html)).

7.2 An FQT overview report will be produced to provide an overview of FQT activities in 2017/18 for presentation to the relevant Faculty Board and to the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC). The overview report, for which a template has been provided (available at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/fqt.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/fqt.html)), will cover:

a. Summary of the outcomes from previous FQT recommendations;
b. Analysis and conclusions on the FQT review activities;
c. Commendations and highlighted good practice examples; and
d. Recommendations for improvement at school, faculty and University level. (The recommendations for improvement will be monitored by UQT in 2018/19.)

8. **FQT membership**

8.1 FQTs will remain in place for 2017/18 and will consist of the FQT Chair, existing FQT staff members and student quality reviewers. Role descriptions for each role are available at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/fqt.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/fqt.html).

8.2 There will be four student quality reviewers appointed for each FQT, with each level of study (UG, PGT and PGR) covered. More information of fees and the responsibilities of student quality reviewers is set out in the Student Quality Reviewer Agreement (available at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/fqt.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/fqt.html)). The appointment of student quality reviewers will normally be for the duration of their time at the University after their appointment so that they develop expertise over the course of their participation.
9. **FQT method of working**

9.1 FQTs will hold an introductory meeting to set out the work to be undertaken and the plan of action. The FQT members will be allocated documentation to review, with each member or sub-team reviewing different aspects of the paperwork, plus the student quality reviewers will be requested to contact student representatives to gather feedback.

9.2 Once the documentation has been analysed by FQT members and the student feedback has been gathered, FQTs will hold a review meeting to consider the initial findings, to arrange and hold any necessary light-touch FQT visits to schools, and to produce a combined commentary, agreed by FQT members, for each school.

9.3 FQTs will send the commentary to each school, and will use them as a basis for the development of the FQT overview report, which will be presented to the relevant Faculty Board and to AQSC. Schools should include any recommendations for action in their EAP.

**Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov-Dec 2017</td>
<td>Student quality reviewers are appointed from the pool of existing reviewers who wish to continue in the role and through a recruitment process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 2018</td>
<td>Student quality reviewers participate in a training event.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb-May 2018</td>
<td>FQT introductory meeting is held. Evidence is gathered and analysed by FQT members. (EAPs will have been updated by schools in March.) FQT review meeting is held. Light-touch FQT visits to schools, if necessary. Commentaries are shared with schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 July 2018</td>
<td>FQT overview reports (and commentaries) are submitted to AQPO and will be presented to AQSC early in 2018/19. (Faculties decide when the report is presented to the Faculty Board.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>UQT follows up on recommendations from the commentaries and overview reports.</td>
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10. **Test case for UQT**

10.1 The FQT interim arrangement will be similar in some respects to a possible approach for UQT (paper-based review of the Quality Framework and conducting visits on a triage basis). This will therefore offer a test case in the organisation and operation of a more paper-based approach, which could feed in to the development of the UQT. AQSC will evaluate the method, progress and outcomes of the interim arrangement at the end of the annual cycle.