

# Guidance on conducting annual review of programmes

## 1. Annual Stage One Review meeting (UG, PGT & PGR)

### Timing and format of stage one meeting/s

- 1.1. A stage one meeting relating to all taught programmes, taught components of PGT programmes should be held shortly after the school final exam board meeting/s **in late June or July** to review the academic year. The stage one review meeting for the taught element of PGR programmes including those delivered through a DTE may take place at any point in the year, including alongside the research stage review and by the end of February.
- 1.2. Multiple review meetings may be held within a school, depending on the composition of the school and the number and level of individual programmes on offer.
- 1.3. Attendees of the review meeting/s will typically include:
  - School Education Director or equivalent (e.g. Director of Teaching and Learning)
  - PGR Directors (for taught component of PGR programme reviews)
  - Centre managers (for programmes delivered through DTEs)
  - Programme and Unit Directors
  - Senior Tutor
  - Student Administration Manager
  - Student representatives (if possible)
- 1.4. Where programme(s) to be reviewed are delivered through an external partnership/collaborative arrangement, attendees would typically include the collaborative partner where appropriate, e.g. for joint awards. It must be ensured that appropriate representatives of all such partners have access to the supporting information that contributes to the review meeting.
- 1.5. For joint honours programmes and interdisciplinary postgraduate programmes, it is the responsibility of the host school, in consultation and with the involvement of the partner school, annually to review the programme(s). See the [AQPO website](#) for further guidance on joint honours. The host school may wish to invite a representative from the partner school to attend the review meeting.
- 1.6. Unit Directors are responsible for ensuring that any interdisciplinary units, which are not connected to a 'programme', are reviewed as part of the stage one review for their home school. Further information on the management of interdisciplinary units is available on the AQPO website.
- 1.7. Where student representatives attend the main review meeting, schools may have a reserved section of the meeting agenda for any discussions to be attended by staff members only.
- 1.8. Section 4 gives a suggested list of discussion items for the stage one review meeting.

### Content of stage one review meeting/s

- 1.9. The stage one review meeting will include consideration of the following:
  - External Examiner feedback (External Examiners are required to present their initial reflections, either verbally or in written form, on the quality and standards of the programmes they examine at the final exam boards, including any immediate recommendations for action);
  - student feedback – including from internal surveys, unit evaluations and SSLCs/staff reflections on the curricula;
  - exam board outcomes;
  - currently available student metrics/data<sup>1</sup>
  - programme and unit changes since the last review meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> such as information available from the Student Systems & Information Office and any internal school data.

- 1.10. The stage one meeting must consider how the school, via the delivery of its programmes and management, is meeting education priorities and associated actions in the [Education Strategy](#).
- 1.11. The school must consider progress against relevant actions in the EAP from the previous year.
- 1.12. The outcomes from the stage one meeting will be captured in the relevant EAP. Any actions the school is taking forward with the faculty, professional services or the University must also be included.
- 1.13. If any urgent changes to units, or in exceptional circumstances programmes, are proposed following the stage one review, schools should seek to implement these in time for the next academic year. If agreed by the Faculty Education Director the [fast-track programme approval process](#) will be applied, with a **deadline of 31st July**.
- 1.14. One outcome of the review (stage one or stage two) must be confirmation that all programme specifications are up to date and accurate.

## **2. Annual Stage Two Review meeting for Taught Programmes/Research Stage Review for PGR**

### Timing and format of stage two/research stage review meeting/s

- 2.1. A stage two meeting relating to all undergraduate programmes should be held in August or September following receipt of External Examiners reports and NSS scores.
- 2.2. A stage two meeting relating to the research stage of taught postgraduate should be held in February of the calendar year following the stage one review.
- 2.3. A research stage review relating to postgraduate research programmes including DTEs should be held by the end of February.
- 2.4. As for stage one, multiple review meetings may be held within a school, depending on the composition of the school and the number of individual programmes on offer.
- 2.5. Typically, attendees of the review meeting/s will be the same as, or a sub-set of, stage one, including representatives from any partners.
- 2.6. Section 4 gives a suggested list of discussion items for the stage one review meeting.

### Content of stage two for taught programmes and research stage review meeting/s

- 2.7. The taught programmes meeting will consider the following:
  - any progress on actions from the stage one meeting;
  - school taught student survey results (NSS and YBS if not covered in stage one);
  - available data on student progression and attainment (this may not be complete at the time of review but schools should appraise what is available);
  
- 2.8. The research stage meeting for PGR and DTEs will consider the following:
  - any progress on actions from the stage one meeting;
  - any feedback from examiners of research students from the previous year;
  - Review of the operation and outcomes of the Annual Progress Monitoring;
  - quantitative and qualitative results from internal and/or external surveys;
  - comments from supervisors of research students;
  - Research Funding Body annual review report, where applicable;
  - any other information relevant to the programmes in that year; e.g. the last UQT visit report, School Review report, any Research Council visit report(s);
  - minutes of relevant liaison meetings with postgraduate research students;
  - relevant feedback from partners, e.g. placement providers;

- Analysis of the student data dashboard
- 2.9. The EAPs should be updated following the stage two/research stage meeting with any further actions and progress on existing actions.

### **3. Outcomes of the Review meetings**

- 3.1. The school Education Action Plan must be kept up to date with progress on actions following the stage one, stage two, and research stage meetings.
- 3.2. Submission of a report or minute of either meeting is not required; however, it is recommended that any notes of the stage one and two meetings are held by the school to provide context to the recorded actions.
- 3.3. One outcome of the review (stage one or stage two) must be confirmation that all programme specifications are up to date and accurate.

### **4. Suggested discussion items for stage one meeting**

- 4.1. Review relevant actions in School EAP - how have the outcomes and actions been addressed?
- 4.2. Which programmes are covered by this review?
- 4.3. Initial response to verbal feedback from External Examiner(s) – are there any changes required to programmes or units for next academic year.
- 4.4. Response to External Examiner reports / feedback
- Review progress on any actions arising from the school's response to previous years' report, and identify outstanding issues.
  - Has the External Examiner(s) confirmed that the programme is meeting threshold academic standards?
- 4.5. Units - check Unit Specification, content, and learning outcomes and assessment
- Do the assessments enable all the unit aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?
  - Have any inter-disciplinary units (UNIV/FAC units, which are not connected to the programme(s) but where the unit director is a member of the school) been reviewed.
  - Have you made ANY unit changes (Yes/No)?
- If YES:**
- Have you revised your Unit Specification(s), via UPMS, to ensure they are up to date and complete?
- 4.6. Programmes - check Programme Specification, structure, content, and learning outcomes
- Review any impact of unit changes made on the programme. For joint honours programmes, given any unit changes, is the programme as a whole still appropriately integrated, with learning outcomes distinct from those of each single honours programme?
  - Are programme aims and learning outcomes still met by the mandatory units?
  - Is summative and formative assessment load and methods appropriate across the programme?
  - Is programme content still relevant?
  - Is content and outcomes of year abroad/in industry satisfactory?

- Is programme specification up to date?
- Have you made ANY changes to the programme (Yes/No)

**If YES:**

- Have any incremental changes had a cumulative effect on the programme? Has the Programme Specification been revised and approved to take account of these changes?

4.7. Student experience and support

- How has student support provision (including personal tutoring) worked during the year?
- Discuss the quality of the student experience (e.g. as arising from SSLCs or student survey comments) and any issues arising in relation to joint honours programmes or those delivered through external partnership /collaborative arrangements.
- Is the student experience on study abroad or work-based placements appropriate to the programme of study?

4.8. Review of student feedback

- What does analysis of the student feedback from unit evaluations and surveys (qualitative and quantitative) show?
- What were the key issues discussed at the SSLCs and what actions were identified? Did the SSLC structure enable issues arising from student feedback to be addressed and dealt with appropriately?
- What action is being taken/will be taken as a result of student feedback?
- Are there mechanisms in place for the school to communicate to students what is being done as a result of their feedback, and are these working?

4.9. Review of staff feedback

- How does staff feedback correlate with student feedback and discussions at the SSLCs?
- Any issues arising related to programmes, units, support, processes?

4.10. Other internal and external review

- Has there been an external review of any /all of the programmes this year e.g. School Review or Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body accreditation visit? Have actions been added to the EAP has there been any progress?
- Have actions from latest UQT report been added to the EAP has there been any progress?

4.11. External partnership programmes/ collaborative arrangements

- Is the collaboration with partners in the delivery of the programme(s) working effectively?
- Have any changes been made to the operation of the collaborative arrangement?
- Have any specific issues been identified (e.g. in relation to achieving learning outcomes, the student experience, support and facilities) arising from collaborative components of the programme such as professional / industrial placements, study abroad or partner contributions to teaching and assessment?
- Is the published [Partnerships Register](#) accurate and up to date for any external partnership programmes / collaborative arrangements?

4.12. Changes because of this review/update School Education Action Plan

- Have any changes to the programme specification resulted from this review? Has this been recorded in the School EAP? How will this be actioned?

- How will the school disseminate the outcomes and actions of this review – to both staff and students?

4.13. Areas of good practice/enhancement you wish to highlight.

## **5. Suggested discussion items for stage two meeting for taught programmes**

5.1. Review relevant actions in School EAP - how have the outcomes and actions been addressed?

5.2. Which programmes are covered by this review?

5.3. External Examiner reports / feedback

- Are there any additional comments in the written report not mentioned in the verbal report?
- Has school response been sent to External Examiner(s). If not, who will action this?

5.4. Do any comments in the written report from the External Examiner(s) require changes to the programme - how will these be actioned?

5.5. Review of student progress and attainment

- How is the school responding to any apparent trends in student progress
- Are the drop-out and re-assessment rates sufficiently low? Are there any trends for particular programmes or student groups?
- Are the proportions of degree classifications (for UG programmes) / the proportions of distinctions, merits and passes (for taught PG programmes) what you would expect? Have these changed significantly?

5.6. Review of student feedback

- What does analysis of any student feedback from surveys (qualitative and quantitative) and not reviewed in stage one, show?
- What action is being taken/will be taken as a result of student feedback?
- Are there mechanisms in place for the school to communicate to students what is being done as a result of their feedback, and are these working?

5.7. Changes because of this review/update School Education Action Plan

- Have any changes to the programme specification resulted from this review? Has this been recorded in the School EAP? How will this be actioned?
- How will the school disseminate the outcomes and actions of this review – to both staff and students?

5.8. Areas of good practice/enhancement you wish to highlight.

## **6. Suggested discussion items for research stage (PGR) review meeting**

6.1. Review relevant actions in School EAP - how have the outcomes and actions been addressed?

6.2. Which programmes are covered by this review?

6.3. Review of Supervisors/Examiners' Feedback

- How does staff feedback correlate with student feedback and discussions at the staff/student liaison committee (or equivalent)?
- How does the school intend to address any issues regarding supervisor/student ratio, trends, distribution of students among staff?

- Any general feedback from examiners of research students from the previous year?
- 6.4. Review of Processes
- How are procedures relating to research students, including the annual monitoring process, working?
  - What arrangements are in place for students whose supervisors are away e.g. on research leave?
- 6.5. Review of the Student Progress and Attainment
- How is the school responding to any trends in postgraduate student numbers?
  - Characteristics of the intake population (e.g. gender balance, home/overseas); are these significant?
  - How is the school responding to any apparent trends in student progress, submission and completion rates?
- 6.6. Other Internal and External Review
- Has there been an external review of any/all of the programmes this year e.g. school review or Research Council visit? If so, what issues/actions arose from this review?
- 6.7. Student Development and Support
- Consideration of the suitability of the induction and support provided for research students, and any issues identified regarding the student experience
  - Analysis of research student skills /development opportunities, including training to teach and the take-up of this training by students
  - Discussion of recent student destinations on completion of their research degree
- 6.8. Review of Student Feedback
- What does analysis of the student feedback show?
  - What were the key issues discussed at the SSLC and what actions were identified? Did the SSLC structure enable issues arising from student feedback to be addressed and dealt with appropriately?
  - How does student feedback collected compare with the results/comments from any internal and/or external surveys?
  - What action is being taken/will be taken as a result of student feedback?
  - Are there mechanisms in place for the school to communicate to students what is being done as a result of their feedback, and are these working.
- 6.9. External Partnership Programmes/Collaborative Arrangements/Doctoral Colleges
- Is the taught element of the programme taught elsewhere? Did the lead institution for the taught element share the annual QA outcomes with the partner institutions and were there any issues arising?
  - Are there PhD co-supervision arrangements with external academic or industrial supervisors? Are there any issues arising (e.g. for progress monitoring)?
  - Have any specific issues been identified (e.g. in relation to the student experience, research environment, support and facilities) arising from programmes delivered through external partnerships, professional placements or split site delivery?
  - Is the collaboration with partners in the delivery of the programme(s) working effectively?

- Have any changes been made to the operation of the collaborative arrangement?

## **Inputs to the school's internal Review meetings**

- feedback from external examiners, either in the form of their most recent report or an extract of the minutes of the exam boards if the report is not yet available;
- copies of all external examiner school response forms that were sent to the externals;
- student and staff feedback on units (quantitative and qualitative);
- outcomes of student surveys including NSS and YBS;
- TEF Subject data;
- feedback from supervisors of research students;
- Feedback from independent reviewers of research students;
- Research Funding Body annual report (for DTEs);
- staff feedback on units;
- review of the operation of student support provision, provided by the Senior Tutor;
- relevant feedback from partners e.g. placement providers;
- a report of unit changes that were approved by the Faculty during the last academic year, provided by AQPO on the UPMS reporting pages;
- programme specifications as shown in the Programme Catalogue, including the sections of descriptive text;
- unit specifications (as shown in the Unit Catalogue, see above);
- school and faculty student data dashboards.