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PROGRAMME PERIODIC REVIEW PROCESS

Preamble

The Quality Code states that:

“Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student’s achievement to be reliably assessed”
[Expectation for quality, UK Quality Code for Higher Education].

Annually, the programme annual review (PAR) process enables programme teams to reflect upon the performance of the programme and identify points for action through the standards, quality and enhancement plan which is considered at each meeting of the programme board. Periodic review takes a longer view over a five-year cycle and is a process of evaluation, re-design and revalidation of the programme against a range of indicators. The review and re-design of the programme should involve student representatives and external advisers. Through periodic review, the University aims to:

- enhance the University’s academic offer
- boost recruitment by ensuring there are market-facing programmes
- enhance the student experience as measured by retention, attainment, NSS and employability data
- ensure success in the TEF
- ensure efficient programme delivery to underpin financial viability

The starting point is an evaluation of the existing programme against performance indicators, which should result in a set of recommendations for change to the programme.

STAGE 1: Evaluation of the existing programme

1. The Academic Office will produce a schedule of periodic reviews over a five-year period, which is approved by CSC and will notify programme teams of the date of the periodic review. The Academic Office also offers advice on the process and the documentation required.

The relevant documentation is available on the [Academic Office](#) web pages.

2. An initial review of the existing programme should take place at the beginning of the process. Programme teams should review the existing programme in relation to the following:
 - Applications, recruitment and enrolment data, including the international market for the programme
 - Impact of changes to A Levels and BTEC, as appropriate
 - Progression, retention and attainment data
 - Contact time data
 - Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies requirements, where applicable, for example, stakeholder, service user and carer feedback

- Student feedback (NSS, module evaluations, other student surveys – e.g. first year survey and rejecters)
 - Employability data
 - Current student profile (socio-demographics, tariff entry, etc.)
 - Measures of internationalisation (e.g. students going on study abroad)
 - Subject Benchmark Statements
 - Sector-leading programmes
 - PAR reports
 - External Examiner reports
3. You will also need to consider the current design and delivery of the programme in relation to:
- The University's Design and Delivery Framework
 - The new academic calendar and expectations regarding contact time and academic guidance
 - The Assessment and Feedback Framework (you should map the current assessment across the programme and consider assessment loads for a typical student)
 - Graduate Attributes (for undergraduate programmes).
4. When reviewing the programme against the above indicators, the following questions should be considered:
- To what extent does the current programme meet the Subject Benchmark Statements?
 - To what extent does the programme match competitor and sector-leading programmes?
 - How do applications compare with the sector and the competitor set?
 - How does the entry tariff compare with the competitor set?
 - What is the impact of changes to A Levels and BTEC?
 - What are international students looking for in UK programmes in the subject area?
 - What changes could be made to make the programme more competitive and sustainable?
 - Looking at NSS and module evaluation data, what are the areas of strength and weakness in the programme? How could these be addressed in the revalidation of the programme?
 - Using KIS data, how does the programme compare with sector on contact hours?
 - Looking at progression, retention and attainment data, what is the track-record of the programme? How might the revalidation of the programme support high levels of progression and attainment?
 - Looking at current patterns of assessment, to what extent is there duplication? Learning outcomes only need to be assessed once. Is there too much assessment?
 - What significant issues were raised by external examiners that could be further addressed in the revalidation of the programme?
 - What significant issues were raised in PARs that could be further addressed in the revalidation of the programme?
 - What feedback and issues have been raised by stakeholders, service user and carers, where relevant?

STAGE 2: Preparation and consideration of the periodic review outline plan

5. The Periodic Review Outline Plan (PROP) should be completed for consideration by a Periodic Review Outline Plan Panel, which has delegated responsibility from CSC. The outline plan should capture the key elements of the initial review of the current programme that will inform the revalidation of the new programme. The panel will be particularly concerned with issues around sustainability (both recruitment and design and delivery) and with ensuring that proposed programme changes address any significant issues around student retention and attainment; the academic student experience more broadly; the alignment of the programme to student intake; and student employability and the changing needs of stakeholders, including service users and carers, where applicable. The outline plan should summarise key changes you are proposing to make to the programme, recognising that programme development is an iterative process and further changes are likely. You should also identify any resource implications; and attach the current curriculum map from the full programme details.
6. The Periodic Review Outline Plan Panel will either approve the proposal, with or without recommendations, or ask that the proposal be resubmitted in response to feedback from the panel. The outcomes from the panel meetings are submitted to CSC for information. Any recommendations set by the panel must be satisfied before the periodic review event.
7. Once approval of the outline plans has been granted by the panel, programme teams should continue the review in more depth, develop the proposal and produce the programme specification, module specifications and context paper which will be considered by a University Review Panel.

STAGE 3: Periodic review documentation and event

8. The programme team should nominate two external advisers who will be university review panel members and scrutinise the proposal. The external advisers will normally be academics from a comparable academic department in another UK university, with relevant subject expertise. In some cases, it may be appropriate to appoint an academic from outside the UK, or where professional/industry input is key to the programme, a senior employee from the relevant profession/industry. For Nursing and Midwifery (NMC) Programmes, a service user/carer representative should also be appointed to join the review panel.
9. The external advisers should be nominated on the basis of subject expertise and of prior approval experience. Examples of this experience might include previous experience of panel membership in programme approval; programme convener for a comparable programme; or membership of a PSRB. The externals' independence from the academic department and the University is crucial. They should not be a member of staff, student, or a current external examiner for the University nor should they have acted in this capacity in the last five years.
10. The programme team should make initial contact with the nominees to ensure that they are willing to take part. They will be invited to submit their CVs to the Academic Office. They will be approved by the Deputy Provost and reported to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee.
11. The programme team should produce a context paper, and develop programme and module specifications with guidance from the following departments:

Department	
Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Unit	Advice on learning, teaching and assessment strategies for the programme, as well as applying the University's frameworks on design and delivery, assessment and graduate attributes. This may include a programme planning away day.
Academic Office	Advice on the documentation and procedure for the review process.
Digital Learning Services	Advice on blended learning techniques, e-learning and study skills.
Library	Advice on reading lists and hard copy and electronic library resources. Programme teams should complete the Library Services Resources Requirements Form in collaboration with the Library's Academic Engagement Team.

12. Quality control for the programme documentation rests with the head of academic department, and internal academic scrutiny will take place through a mechanism determined by the head of academic department. For example, this may be through a nominated individual with responsibility for learning and teaching or through the academic department's Learning, Teaching and Quality Group. The purpose of this scrutiny is to ensure that the documentation is at a standard to go forward for external scrutiny. This should happen in sufficient time before the scheduled University Review Panel meeting as the documentation will need to be submitted to the Academic Office approximately 2.5 weeks before the date of that event. The confirmation to proceed to programme approval/periodic review form should be completed and submitted together with the other documentation to the Academic Office.
13. The Academic Office will liaise with the programme convener (designate) and the head of academic department to provide guidance and support, and will advise on the administrative aspects of completing the documents, e.g. where to obtain new module codes.
14. The University Review Panel will review the programme, approve any changes or make recommendations for further action.

The Panel comprises:

Chair	An experienced senior member of academic staff
External Advisers	Two external advisors with subject expertise
Internal Members	Two members of academic staff from within the University
A Student Representative	One student representative
Secretary	A member of the Academic Office

For Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) approval, the panel will also comprise a Service User/Carer Representative.

15. The agreed agenda includes time for the panel to meet with those who have prepared/will deliver the programme. Normally, full attendance by the programme team is expected. It is the responsibility of the programme convener (designate) to issue the invitations/agenda to their team members. Typically, the day's schedule will follow the following outline:

10.00 – 11.30 Private meeting of the Panel

11.30 – 11.45 Meeting with Head of Department/School (if required)

11.45 – 12.30 Resource visit (as appropriate)
12.30 – 13.30 Meeting with students and lunch
13.30 – 15.00 Meeting with Programme Team
15.00 – 15.45 Private meeting of the Panel
15.45 – 16.00 Feedback

16. An important part of the review is the meeting with students on the programme and the programme team should ensure that a range of students are available for that part of the meeting. This normally takes place over lunch.
17. The outcome of the approval panel is communicated to the academic department. The outcomes include:
 - Approved with no conditions/recommendations
 - Approved with conditions and/or recommendations
 - Not approved

All conditions must be fulfilled prior to commencement of the programme. If recommendations are not accepted the programme convener (designate) is required to give reasons.

18. Once all conditions have been satisfied the response is sent to the Chair for approval in full.
19. The programme will then be monitored annually through the Programme Annual Review Process (PAR) and will be subject to periodic review every five years.