

5 ANNUAL QUALITY MONITORING

INTRODUCTION

- 5.1 Annual quality monitoring processes collectively provide a means of assuring the standards and quality of the university's provision, and seek to enhance the quality of the student learning experience. Within a devolved quality management framework, they enable the university to manage quality assurance and enhancement at an institutional level and in line with national expectations. The processes seek to encourage development of a reflective, open and analytical approach, to facilitate managed risk-taking in relation to curriculum development and quality enhancement, and to ensure rapid identification and mitigation of quality assurance issues.

SCOPE

- 5.2 The provisions of this section apply to all taught provision offered to registered students, including that validated by SQA, other HEIs and validating bodies.

OBJECTIVES

- 5.3 The objectives of these processes are:
- a. to ensure that taught provision is delivered in line with the requirements of approval
 - b. to ensure that quality issues relating to curriculum and delivery are identified and acted upon at appropriate levels
 - c. to encourage engagement with institutional and national enhancement themes
 - d. to identify examples of good practice in curriculum and delivery and ensure that these are disseminated
 - e. to enable staff to contribute to the ongoing development and enhancement of provision.

PRINCIPLES

- 5.4 Quality monitoring processes are based on the following principles:
- a. the core of all processes is reflection on the student learning experience and the ongoing enhancement of curriculum and student support
 - b. the cycle includes annual engagements with representatives from all subject networks and all academic partners, conducted by a Quality Monitoring Group (QMG) comprising internal and external membership
 - c. the processes are transparent, with all reports being made available to all staff
 - d. the evidence base for evaluation depends on analysis of key performance indicators (KPIs) derived from a robust dataset
 - e. target and objective setting for subject networks, academic partners and the university enables systematic monitoring and evaluation
 - f. outcomes from annual quality monitoring will feed into subject review
 - g. these processes do not obviate the responsibility of programme teams and academic partners to address emerging quality assurance issues immediately, where this is practicable.

RESPONSIBILITY

- 5.5
- overall responsibility for quality monitoring rests with Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) acting, subject to other awarding body requirements in respect of their awards, on behalf of Academic Council
 - the first line of responsibility for programme monitoring is carried by programme committees, including participation from all Home Academic Partners (HAPs)
 - module leaders are responsible for submitting a self-evaluation document (SED) at the end of the semester of delivery
 - programme leaders are responsible for submitting a self-evaluation document (SED) on behalf of the programme committee annually
 - in the case of SQA programmes, the named contact at each site of delivery is responsible for submitting a site-specific SED for that programme. Where the programme is formally networked, a single overarching SED from the programme leader should be submitted
 - Subject network leaders are responsible for submitting a SED covering all provision within the subject network
 - academic partners are responsible for submitting annual academic partner quality monitoring reports and may also choose to submit further information or reports prior to the academic partner meeting
 - QMG will meet with each subject network and each academic partner to discuss relevant issues, agree targets and objectives and will report to QAEC and other committees as appropriate.

QUALITY MONITORING PROCESS

- 5.6 The quality monitoring process and indicative timescales are as follows:

February	Degree module leaders submit semester 1 module-level SEDs to quality monitoring officer and 'lead' programme leader. To be taken to exam boards to inform external examiners.
June	Degree module leaders submit semester 2 module-level SEDs to quality monitoring officer and 'lead' programme leader. To be taken to exam boards to inform external examiners.
August	UHI Principal receives reports from external examiners. UHI Academic Registrar acknowledges receipt of report and copies it to programme leader, quality manager, chair of exam board, chair of Academic Partner Quality Committee (APQC) and dean.
September	Appropriate monitoring statistics available to academic staff via UHI Records. Programme leader produces programme-level SED (drawing on external examiners' reports, KPIs, issues raised through programme committee, and EV reports where appropriate), ensuring that site-specific issues are addressed for networked programmes and sends SED to quality monitoring officer, subject network leader and quality managers. Similar processes operate for SQA programmes. Faculty sends response to external examiner(s), copied to faculty officer, quality manager and subject network leader (degree programmes only).
October	Subject network leader sends SN SED to QMG via quality monitoring officer.

	APQCs consider programme-level SEDs. All module, programme and SN SEDs available to all academic staff and quality managers. QMG receives academic partner quality monitoring reports (via quality monitoring officer) from APQC Chair / quality manager / other nominated quality contact.
November / December	QMG members meet with each subject network leader and SN members to discuss issues raised in the SN SED and any other issues brought forward by either party. QA / QE / curriculum-related targets and objectives agreed for the next 12 months. QMG produces written report of each meeting, to be approved by subject network leader.
December	QMG produces overarching document on completion of all subject network meetings, drawing out common issues and good practice. All reports made available to all staff.
January / February	Internal members of QMG meet with senior representatives (usually the quality manager) from all APs and SNs to discuss issues relating to student support and infrastructure raised through AP quality monitoring reports, SN meetings or identified through any other mechanism, and any issues brought forward by the APs. Issues for further action will be agreed at this meeting, to be considered by QAEC.
February / March	QAEC consider reports and agree specific actions / responsibilities in light of recommendations.

SELF EVALUATION DOCUMENTS

- 5.7 Detailed guidance and pro-formas will be made available for each type of self-evaluation document (SED) required within the quality monitoring process (see appendix) and these will be kept under review.
- 5.8 Academic partner quality monitoring reports:
- should be produced by the APQC chair / quality manager / other nominated individual
 - should focus on issues relating to student experience and feedback, student support activities, physical resource and staffing, in so far as these relate to the learning environment
 - should be reflective / evaluative, while summarising key points concisely
 - will be made available to all staff.
- 5.9 Module / programme / subject network self-evaluation documents:
- should focus on issues relating to the curriculum and the student experience and make appropriate reference both to the monitoring statistics available through UHI Records and to annual enhancement themes
 - should be reflective / evaluative, while summarising key points concisely
 - should, as far as possible, be drafted in a manner which is inclusive of the teaching team and supporting academic partners (including quality and curriculum management teams)
 - should clearly indicate the locus (eg programme, module, delivery site) of issues of concern or good practice, while avoiding naming individuals
 - will be made available to all staff.

ANNUAL MEETINGS AND OUTCOMES

Subject network meetings

- 5.10 The meetings will be organised and supported by Academic Directorate. At each meeting there will be a minimum of three members of QMG, including at least one external member as well as an officer or representative from Academic Directorate.
- 5.11 The principal documentation required for the meeting between QMG members and subject network will be the subject network SED, although other existing documents may be used.
- 5.12 The meeting will be attended by the subject network leader plus other subject network representatives agreed by the subject network committee. Normally, this should not exceed a total of six individuals.
- 5.13 The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss issues raised in the SED and any other issues brought forward by either party. During the meeting, there will be discussion and agreement of QA / QE / curriculum-related targets and objectives for the subject network for the next 12 months. There may also be recommendations and actions identified for referral elsewhere, including committees, academic partners and Executive Office.
- 5.14 A report will be drafted within two weeks of the meeting and sent to the SNL for comment. Once approved, all reports will be made available to all staff.
- 5.15 As well as the individual reports, QMG will produce a summary institution-level report, drawing out common issues and good practice, and recommendations for action.

Academic partner meeting

- 5.16 The meeting will be attended by all academic partner quality managers, internal members of QMG, and subject network leaders.
- 5.17 Academic partners will submit an academic partner quality monitoring report within which they may be invited to comment on agreed enhancement themes. Academic partners will also be invited to make any further submissions they feel would be useful prior to the meeting but this is not mandatory. Outcomes from the subject network meetings, particularly the summary report, will be available and will also inform discussions.
- 5.18 The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss student experience, support and infrastructure issues identified during the subject network meetings or through other mechanisms and any issues brought forward by the academic partners. The summary report from the subject network meetings will be reviewed and further issues and/or recommendations for action may be added.

Institutional overview

- 5.19 The summary institution-level report, comprising common issues and good practice, and recommendations for action identified through both the subject network and academic partner meetings will be considered by QAEC, who will agree lead members of staff to progress each one. There may be recommendations and actions identified for referral elsewhere, including committees, academic partners and Executive Office.

5.20 This summary report, developed and monitored by QAEC, will constitute an annual overview of all reports and outcomes, identifying common issues and themes.

EVALUATION OF PROCESS

5.21 QAEC shall undertake evaluations of the effectiveness of the quality monitoring process at regular intervals.

QUALITY MONITORING FLOW CHART

