

**MONITORING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES****PURPOSE**

*'Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.'* QAA Quality Code Chapter B8: *Programme Monitoring and Review*.

Programme monitoring and programme review enables higher education providers to reflect on the learning opportunities students have experienced, the academic standards achieved, and their continuing currency and relevance. Programme monitoring and programme review takes place in a planned cycle based on a transparent rationale which may include assessment of the risks involved in the provision concerned. Programmes are regularly and systematically reviewed in order to consider the continuing currency and validity of programmes in light of developments in research, professional and industry practice and pedagogy, changes in the external environment such as requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, and continued alignment with the provider's strategy and mission. Programme monitoring and review are not isolated events but are part of a continuous engagement with a programme by both staff and students.

**OBJECTIVES**

Programme monitoring and review considers the following objectives:

- (i) programmes and modules remain current, valid and attractive to applicants;
- (ii) students receive an appropriate balance of knowledge and skills and are prepared for employment, further study, or the first stage of professional practice (where relevant);
- (iii) students are provided with appropriate learning opportunities which enable the intended learning outcomes of the programme to be achieved.
- (iv) students experience appropriate assessment methodologies and they are performing to the expected standard;
- (v) there is a continuous process of self-reflection and any action plans arising from the Annual Programme Review (APR) process are implemented;
- (vi) the quality of the student learning experience is advanced through effective teaching, deployment of learning resources and academic support and guidance to students, and that consideration is given to the enhancement of this experience;
- (vii) the quality of public information made available about the learning opportunities on offer is fit for purpose, accessible and reliable;
- (viii) the quality assurance processes and mechanisms are working effectively and there are sufficient opportunities for students to engage with these.

**PROGRAMME MONITORING**

The Colleges ensure that an Annual Programme Review (APR) is undertaken for each programme validated by the University. The reports of these reviews (APR reports) are considered internally as part of the standard quality assurance procedures for the programme. There is strategic oversight of these reports and the APR process within the College. Lancaster representatives attend an annual meeting for review of the College APR reports in order to monitor the quality of the programmes it validates at its Associate Colleges. Mechanisms are in place to enable the cumulative effect of small

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and more significant changes to programmes to be considered through the Minor and Major Amendments process. There is also an agreed and planned procedure for managing the closure of a programme which includes protecting the academic interests of all students.

**PROGRAMME REVIEW**

In addition to annual monitoring, College programmes validated by the University are reviewed on a five yearly cycle and it is considered whether or not validation should be renewed for a further five years (**revalidation**).

Revalidation has three stages:

1. **Outline planning Permission (OPP):** In addition to a summary of the proposal, the OPP includes an introductory consideration of the continuing relevance of the programme, alignment with the college strategy, anticipated market demand, resource implications and any significant planned changes to the existing programme. Evidence of consultation with the Programme Consultant and the external examiner must be provided.
2. **College Internal Stages:** Developmental internal stages are where the draft revised validation and programme specification documents are reviewed and initial advice and guidance on next steps is provided in the form of conditions and recommendations. This involves panel review of documentation, meetings with the delivery teams, current students and employers where appropriate. The panel also includes an external subject specialist.
3. **Lancaster University Revalidation Event:** The Lancaster University revalidation panel event involving a Lancaster University Chair and Subject Specialist and a member of Academic Quality Standards & Conduct. From 2015/16 the panel will also include an external subject specialist known as an External Assessor. Reference to the periodic review of a programme in terms of any issues identified and changes made to develop/enhance the programme at revalidation are included within the rationale of the programme document presented to the revalidation panel. The revalidation panel make a decision regarding whether to continue to validate the programme for a further five years and this may include conditions and/or recommendations.

The following factors are considered at revalidation:

- currency of the programme
- maintenance of the standards of the award
- satisfactory student achievement
- continuing demand for the programme
- sufficient resources for programme delivery
- effective implementation of QA procedures for the programme

The **stages of revalidation** provide opportunities for periodic reflection and for reviewing the currency and continuing relevance of the programme(s).

The processes for programme monitoring and review are regularly evaluated to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and are not unnecessarily burdensome. Up to the end of 2013/14, programme review was occurring throughout the stages of the revalidation process, however, part of the Lancaster

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University revalidation event was classed as the programme's Periodic Review and a separate Periodic Review document was prepared for this. Following an evaluation of monitoring and review processes, it was decided that part of the Lancaster University revalidation event would no longer be classed as the Periodic Review in order to recognise that review occurs throughout the stages of revalidation. It was also decided that the separate Periodic Quality Review document was no longer necessary as the process and outcomes of a programme's review could be documented within the rationale of the programme document presented for revalidation. Following discussions with the Colleges, it was agreed that the changes would be implemented from 2014-15 onwards, thus devolving the requirements of monitoring and review to the Colleges from this academic year.

**OUTCOMES**

The outcomes of the processes of monitoring and review are reported at the appropriate level within the Colleges and also at the University's Collaborative Provision Teaching Committee (CPTC). This allows for oversight of the outcomes of the processes, in order to identify any overarching themes. Any strategy actions will be identified to address the themes highlighted and the outcomes of the processes are used to inform organisational planning.

Where improvements to provision can be made in order to enhance student learning opportunities and encourage the development of more inclusive approaches to learning, teaching and assessment, these will be taken forward in the appropriate way. Programme monitoring and review helps identify where changes to enhance a programme may be made and how they may be acted upon. These are formally recorded and their implementation monitored through an action plan. The Colleges are required to review their programme monitoring and review procedures and analyse outcomes within the Annual Quality Report which is presented to the January meeting of the University CPTC. The action plan is monitored as a standing item at each committee meeting.



## APPENDIX 2

**Date:** April 2015

### **Report: Programme Monitoring and Review: current position, B8 mapping and proposals for enhancements**

#### **Purpose of report**

To consider current practice, to map against chapter B8 of the QAA Quality Code and to make recommendations for further enhancements

## REPORT

### **Summary of key points**

- Current programme, school and college monitoring and review processes are very detailed, effective and consistent
- They provide opportunities at a range of levels annually and periodically for the assurance of standards and the identification of ongoing enhancement to the student experience.
- The mapping exercise against the indicators of B8 (see appendix) and a review of existing templates and guidance suggests however that there opportunities for further development:

## REPORT

### **B8 Expectation**

**Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.**

- **The purpose of programme monitoring and review**

The processes of programme monitoring and programme review ensure that the provider's academic provision has made, and continues to make, available to students appropriate learning opportunities, which enable the intended learning outcomes of the programme to be achieved. They also evaluate student attainment of academic standards and allow higher education providers to confirm that their portfolio aligns with their mission and strategic priorities.

- **Definitions**

Programme monitoring and programme review are particular stages within an ongoing process, and are not isolated events but part of a continuous engagement by staff and students with a programme. Opportunities for changes to a programme may be identified at any time, but the processes of monitoring and review provide a formal opportunity for higher education providers to reflect on their academic provision and consider how it may be changed to enhance student learning opportunities. The processes should provide assurance, and identify any problems which need to be

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resolved, but also enable good practice to be identified, built upon and shared, providing opportunities for continuous improvement of the programme and enhancement of the student experience.

**Programme monitoring** refers to a regular, systematic process. It may take place annually or at shorter or longer intervals and provides a check on ongoing learning and teaching provision at an operational level.

**Programme review** occurs less frequently, but periodically and to an agreed cycle. It has a broader remit and is informed by a view of trends over time. The review of a programme may be related to its re-approval, if the original approval was time limited; if the original approval was open ended, review is designed in a way that fulfils the function of re-approval.

In both cases, B8 suggests that the unit of learning under consideration may be a module or group of modules, or a programme or group of programmes, or monitoring and review may take place at the departmental, subject or organisational level.

- **Organisational oversight**

The outcomes of the processes of monitoring and review must be reported at the appropriate organisational level. Higher education providers must put in place mechanisms which enable them to exercise oversight of the outcomes of the processes, in order to identify any overarching themes. They determine whether strategic action is required to address the themes identified, in addition to using the outcomes of the processes to inform organisational planning at an operational level. The level of scrutiny and reporting involved in the processes of programme monitoring and review is proportionate to the scale and risk of the provision being considered.

- **Expertise from outside the programme**

Feedback on programmes from those not directly involved in their delivery, from individuals either internal or external to the provider, enables higher education providers to identify areas for improvement and enhancement, as well as offering assurance of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities. Possible sources of feedback in addition to current and former students and staff of the higher education provider directly involved with the programme may include:

1. staff of the higher education provider, from other academic subject areas or with professional services expertise, such as educational development, library and learning resources staff, learning technologists, disability practitioners and equality and diversity practitioners
2. staff from other higher education providers, including those with whom they work to deliver learning opportunities
3. contacts from academic subject associations, the Higher Education Academy and relevant sector networks, such as those concerned with developments in pedagogy and technology-enhanced learning
4. external examiners and their reports
5. professional, statutory and regulatory bodies
6. organisations in the communities with which the higher education provider works
7. contacts made through working with others, at other higher education providers, in industry or professional practice, or through research collaborations

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8. employers, who may be directly involved in the programme, for example, in offering placement opportunities, or have employed students who had previously studied on the programme.

- **Current practice**

In addition to termly HE QAMs and programme quality meetings which obviously have a key role in programme monitoring and review, a key process is the **Annual Programme Review (APR)** which provides an opportunity for annual reflection on teaching, learning and assessment, cohort analysis, student support, recruitment, progression and achievement, feedback from students, external examiners and others and a consideration of physical and staffing resources. Data packs provided facilitate three year trend analysis as well as consideration of annual data. APRs are completed for all provision.

Following completion of the APR, each one is subject to peer review by the Curriculum Manager from a different academic school, with feedback incorporated into a final draft which is then reviewed by student representatives and the APR panel. The APR panel consists of:

- Vice Principal for HE and Student Enhancement
- Director of HE
- Director of Quality and Standards
- HE Learning and Scholarship Manager
- Students Union Sabbatical Officer
- Awarding Body representatives

The academic school Self Evaluation process provides a similar opportunity to reflect on the scope, range and continuing relevance of the provision and the quality of the student experience and culminates in the production of an annual **Self-Evaluation Document (SED)**. The annual SEDs include analysis of key data over time facilitating the identification of trends, a consideration of academic standards, and the quality of student learning opportunities and the identification of opportunities for enhancement at the school/cognate subject level. The SED also includes a discussion of the strengths of all the school's the provision and key areas for improvement and facilitates a consideration of the effectiveness of quality management and enhancement processes within the school. The review is very much situated in a strategic context and includes a thematic element.

As with the APR process, the SEDs are peer reviewed by the head of another academic school with a subsequent panel providing appropriate challenge and identifying areas for enhancement. Panel members include:

- The Deputy Principal (Chair)
- The Director of Quality and Standards
- The Director of HE
- The Head of HE Development
- The SU President

The different panel membership for the SED review provides a further level of objectivity and a focus on strategic themes. There are currently no formal terms of reference or criteria for the panels, however these are well understood through effective operational practice over a number of years. Both students and staff

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receive regular training and development on the process and the standard templates are regularly reviewed. An annual report provides an organisational overview and in both cases the identification of areas of good practice is integral.

The annual **College SED** provides a strategic college-wide overview and the identification of overarching themes and any resulting areas for enhancement. Oversight of the College SED is provided principally by HE Academic Board. There is therefore a hierarchy of monitoring and review both of the year of delivery and over time which serves to effectively facilitate ongoing enhancement.

**Re-validation** provides an opportunity for periodic reflection and for reviewing the currency and continuing relevance of the programme(s) at five yearly intervals. Revalidation has four stages:

4. **Outline planning Permission (OPP):** In addition to a summary of the proposal, the OPP currently includes an introductory consideration of the continuing relevance of the programme, alignment with the college strategy, anticipated market demand, resource implications and any significant planned changes to the existing programme. Evidence of consultation with the awarding body consultant/link tutor and the external examiner must be provided.
  
5. **Stage 1:** This developmental internal stage is where the draft revised validation and programme specification documents are reviewed and initial advice and guidance on next steps is provided in the form of conditions and recommendations. The revalidation document includes:
  - rationale for the programme
  - market demand and research
  - market intelligence
  - employer and local needs
  - current and prospective students
  - other stake holder engagement
  - alignment with the college HE strategy 2013-2016
  - alignment with the school portfolio of programmes
  - national developments in the subject area
  - external reference points
  - summary of relevant academic guidelines
  - programme design & structure
  - programme learning outcomes
  - programme themes and strands
  - programme teaching, learning and assessment strategy
  - professional and statutory regulatory body requirements and/or national occupational standards
  - programme specific resources
  - programme delivery details
  
6. **Stage 2:** This involves a panel review of the updated documentation from stage 1 plus the module specifications and will involve a meeting with the delivery team, plus current students where appropriate. For Lancaster programmes the panel includes an external subject specialist. The

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purpose is developmental in nature with a decision being made as to whether or not to proceed to stage 3. Again there may be conditions and recommendations made.

7. **Stage 3:** This is currently the external panel and involves representatives from the awarding body/subject specialist (not Lancaster University currently) with the aim of approving the programme.

Currently all provision validated by a university awarding partner is subject to formal revalidation. However Higher Nationals awarded by Edexcel and SQA are subject to more informal curriculum review processes in addition to APR and SED which may not provide the depth of overview that a formal process would provide. Up to the end of 2013-14, **Periodic Review** was also part of the monitoring and review cycle. This was a separate document that was completed as part of the standard revalidation process and considered at the stage 3 external event. However over time it had become clear that this document had been largely superseded by much more refined and detailed internal stages and processes with the possible exception of two potential areas:

Periodic Review heading	Where this is also now considered
Developments in the subject area	APR Revalidation process
Recruitment and Demand Patterns and Trends	APR and SED Revalidation process
Stakeholder Feedback	APR and SED Revalidation document
Issues Raised by External Examiner/course consultant and Actions Taken	APR and SED however the overview since the previous validation is not currently explicitly covered In the revalidation document
Issues Raised by Students and Actions Taken	APR and SED
Programme Amendment Summary	Revalidation document
Summary of Minor/Major Amendments Made Since Validation	APR and SED however the effect of cumulative small changes in addition to minor/major amendments is not currently explicitly covered in the revalidation document
Proposed Changes Within This Revalidation	Revalidation document
Summary of Related Staff Development Activity	APR and SED Considered as part of the revalidation process
Staffing Changes Within the Programme	APR and SED and as arising through staffing approvals
Additional Resource Requirements	APR and SED Revalidation document
Changes in government and/or professional/ accrediting body requirements	APR and SED Revalidation document
Review of Employer Engagement and Consultation	APR and SED Revalidation document



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Following discussions with Lancaster University in 2014-15, it was decided that the periodic review document was no longer fit for purpose and that partner colleges could determine how they would meet the requirements of periodic review through existing processes where appropriate.

- **Recommendations**

Current programme, school and college monitoring and review processes are very detailed, effective and consistent, providing opportunities at a range of levels for the assurance of standards and the identification of ongoing enhancement to the student experience. The mapping exercise against the indicators of B8 (see appendix) and a review of existing templates and guidance suggests however that there are opportunities for further development:

- The APR and SED templates should be reviewed to ensure they fully reflect the requirements of B8
- The revalidation document template should be amended to include a clear consideration of the cumulative impact of changes and feedback on the programme over time
- There should be a comparable revalidation process introduced for HN provision to enable a more formal periodic evaluation
- There should be terms of reference for the APR and SED panels to include membership
- There should be formal reference in the academic regulations to monitoring and review processes

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APPENDIX			
B8 - The Indicators of sound practice	Programme monitoring	Programme review	Organisational oversight
<p><b>Indicator 1</b> Higher education providers maintain strategic oversight of the processes for, and outcomes of, programme monitoring and programme review, to ensure processes are applied systematically and operated consistently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PQM/HE QAM</li> <li>• Annual Programme Review (APR)</li> <li>• Annual Self-Evaluation Documents (SED)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revalidation cycle (Outline Planning Permission (OPP), stages 1, 2 and 3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APR panels</li> <li>• SED panels</li> <li>• College SED</li> <li>• Reports to ASDC/HEAB and awarding body partners</li> </ul>
<p><b>Indicator 2</b> Higher education providers take deliberate steps to use the outcomes of programme monitoring and review processes for enhancement purposes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APR QIPs</li> <li>• SED QIPs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes at each stage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College SED QIP</li> <li>• Regular reviews of QIPs and reporting on outcomes to HEAB etc</li> </ul>
<p><b>Indicator 3</b> Higher education providers operate a process to protect the academic interests of students when a programme is closed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Closure document</li> <li>• Consideration in APR/SED as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only where, for example, a pathway as part of a wider suite of provision might have been closed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASDC consideration and agreement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Indicator 4</b> Higher education providers define processes, roles and responsibilities for programme monitoring and programme review and communicate them to those involved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SharePoint</li> <li>• HE Committees Handbook</li> <li>• Academic regulations</li> <li>• Staff development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SharePoint</li> <li>• Academic regulations</li> <li>• Staff development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASDC/HEAB oversight</li> </ul>
<p><b>Indicator 5</b> Higher education providers evaluate their processes for programme monitoring and review and take action to improve them where necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular review of APR and SED processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular review of re-validation processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASDC/AMT</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Indicator 6</b> Higher education providers make use of reference points and draw on expertise from those outside the programme in their processes for programme monitoring and review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APR peer review and panel membership</li> <li>• SED peer review and panel membership</li> <li>• Students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External subject specialist in revalidation</li> <li>• Awarding body partners</li> <li>• PSRBs, employers etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASDC/HEAB oversight</li> </ul>
<p><b>Indicator 7</b> Higher education providers involve students in programme monitoring and review processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are integral to the revalidation process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASDC/HEAB oversight</li> </ul>
<p><b>Indicator 8</b> Higher education providers enable staff and other participants to contribute effectively to programme monitoring and programme review by putting in place appropriate arrangements for their support and development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual staff development plus consultations around templates etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full supporting staff development offer around B1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASDC/HEAB oversight</li> </ul>

## Guidance for Periodic Review Panel Members

### PURPOSE OF THE APPROVAL PANEL

Its purpose is -

- To review the past period of validation of the programme (s).
- To facilitate discussion on potential changes to the programme (s) as part of the revalidation process.

In doing so the panel shall:-

- Advise how the quality of provision and student experience could be enhanced, including giving recommendations for actions.
- Identify good/innovative or commendable practice.
- Advise on the currency of the programme(s) in the context of academic, professional, statutory, or regulatory changes, and wider changes in the employment market.

### ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

The panel will consider the following documentation

- The last three Annual Programme Reviews of the programme (s) under consideration.
- A brief critical commentary produced by the programme team. The commentary should be reflective, address key issues, and give the panel an honest indication of how the programme has been running while identifying key strengths.

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE PERIODIC REVIEW PANEL

The approval panel shall be conducted by: -

- A UCBC Head of School (Chair).
- A Validation Officer.
- An external subject specialist.

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- A current student.

The **Chair** shall –

- Manage the agenda for the day.
- Guide the Panel in its deliberations and consideration of issues.
- Ensure engagement of all members of the panel in deliberations and consideration of issues.
- Ensure that the panel operates within its terms of reference.
- Provide formal feedback.

The **External Subject Specialist** shall –

- Provide guidance on the curriculum and other subject-related issues.
- Consider the equivalence of academic standards and quality of learning opportunities with other institutions.
- Advise on wider academic and contextual changes within the subject area that may impact upon the future direction of the programmes.

The **Student Panel Member** shall –

- Review the proposals from a student perspective and assist the panel in assessing the quality of student experience on the programme.
- Explore student opinion and feedback.

The **Validation Officer** shall -

- Provide guidance on procedures and regulations.
- Assist the Chair in ensuring that the panel operates within its terms of reference.
- Assist the panel in collating and summarising the main points of the review and ensure that a written report of the panel is produced.

**Periodic Review indicative agenda –**

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<b>Timings</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Required Attendees</b>
09.10am	Panel Meeting	Panel
09.30am	Review of employer feedback	Programme Leader Business Engagement / HE Placement team
10.00am	Panel meeting with current students	Student Representatives: at least one from each level of the programmes
10.30am	Review of the period of validation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance and enhancement of standards and quality</li> <li>• Review of recruitment, retention and achievement</li> <li>• Review of programme resourcing</li> <li>• Review of learning, teaching and assessment</li> </ul>	Academic Registrar Centre Management Programme team
12.00 pm	Preparation for revalidation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of QAA Subject Benchmark Statements</li> <li>• Review of academic developments</li> <li>• Review of Professional, statutory and regulatory body frameworks</li> <li>• Strategy for the programmes and subject area</li> <li>• Discussion of potential changes to the programmes</li> </ul>	Academic Registrar Centre Management Programme team
20 mins	Panel Meeting with lunch	Panel
20 mins	Identification of good practice and agreement of action plan	Academic Registrar Centre Management Programme team