



University of
Strathclyde
Glasgow



INTERNAL REVIEW FRAMEWORK

Policy and Procedure for Professional Services Review

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Purpose of Policy/Procedure
<i>This Policy and Procedure sets out the approach to the periodic review of student-facing professional services and forms part of the Internal Review Framework. It supersedes the Institution-Led Review: Thematic Review of Student- Facing Professional Services Policy & Procedure.</i>
Scope of Policy/Procedure
<i>This Policy and Procedure applies to all professional services that deliver student-facing provision. It sits within the Internal Review Framework and is compliant with SFC Guidance on Quality for Colleges and Universities 2024-25 to 2030-31 (refresh) - Scottish Funding Council.</i>





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GLOSSARY

Education Strategy Committee (ESC)	The committee with delegated responsibility from Senate for the University's strategic educational priorities. ESC oversees the Professional Services Review process.
Internal Review Framework (IRF)	The overarching structure for the monitoring and evaluation processes that review core practices, the outcomes of which are used to drive improvement and enhancement, in line with the UK Quality Code of Higher Education. The IRF informs the SEAP (see below).
Professional Services	Non-academic services that engage with students outside of their standard academic interactions, including support provision within all professional service Directorates and non-academic support within Faculties and Departments.
Professional Services Review (PSR)	A quality enhancement and assurance process for reviewing student-facing Professional Services, comprising annual reflective reporting with periodic review panel scrutiny within a maximum six-year cycle.
Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)	The committee with delegated responsibility from Senate for the University's Quality Assurance and Academic Standards. QAC receives PSR reports and considers outcomes.
Quality Enhancement and Assurance Team (QEAT)	The team within the Education Enhancement Directorate responsible for the operational oversight of quality assurance mechanisms including Professional Services Review.
Reflective Report	An annual submission from each Professional Service Directorate that describes and reflects on student-facing provision, service utilisation, and areas for development.
Review Panel	An appointed group tasked with conducting periodic review of Professional Services, comprising internal and external members and including student representation.
Scottish Funding Council (SFC)	The body responsible for funding and monitoring higher education in Scotland. SFC requires institutions to review professional services contributing to the student experience within a maximum six-year cycle.
Self-Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP)	Annual report to the SFC detailing internal quality assurance and enhancement activities, responses to external reviews and plans for future development.
Senate	The academic governing body within the University, responsible for all academic matters including academic standards and quality.
Strath Union	The trading name of the University of Strathclyde Students' Association.
Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF)	Scotland's enhancement-led approach to quality in Scottish higher and further education.

POLICY

INTRODUCTION

1. Professional Services Review (PSR) is a quality enhancement and assurance process that is a key mechanism for reflecting on student-facing Professional Services provision. PSR is designed to be holistic and forward-looking, evaluating the non-academic services that contribute to the whole student journey.
2. Professional Services Review forms part of the University of Strathclyde's [Internal Review Framework](#), which includes the Policies and Procedures used to undertake Institution-led Review of all student-facing provision. In producing this Policy, account has been taken of the [QAA's Advice and Guidance on Monitoring and Evaluation](#) and the [Scottish Funding Council's \(SFC\) Guidance on Quality for colleges and universities AY 2024-25 to 2030-31 \(refresh\)](#).
3. The SFC requires Scottish higher education institutions to conduct systematic, planned, and timely reviews of professional services that contribute to the student learning experience within a maximum six-year cycle. PSR at the University of Strathclyde achieves this through an annual reporting model and a periodic review panel process, ensuring all student-facing Professional Services are reviewed within each cycle.
4. The purpose of Professional Services Review is to:
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of non-academic, student-facing services and enhance the overall student learning experience;
 - Ensure the University is providing high-quality support to students across all Professional Services;
 - Identify common themes across the Institution and potential opportunities for further enhancement and alignment of provision;
 - Facilitate closer collaboration between Professional Service areas and services delivered through academic Departments and Faculties;
 - Identify and share examples of good practice;
 - Ensure active engagement with students as a component of the review process;
 - Gain external perspectives on our student-facing Professional Service provision.
5. PSR supports the [University's Strategic Plan](#) objective to deliver an outstanding and distinctive student experience with high-quality student support throughout the learner journey. The review process is driven by self-evaluation and reflection, with an enhancement-led approach and aligns with the annual Self-Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP).
6. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the [Internal Review Framework](#).

SCOPE

7. This Policy and Procedure applies to all Professional Services contributing to the student experience. This includes but is not limited to services within:

- Student Experience Directorate;
- Education Enhancement Directorate;
- Library and Information Services Directorate;
- Campus Services Directorate;
- Estates Directorate;
- Campus Safety and Security Directorate;
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Directorate;
- Recruitment and International Office;
- Finance Directorate;
- Other services with direct student-facing provision.

8. Professional Services Review considers provision for students. Provision exclusively for staff is out of scope.

GOVERNANCE

9. This is a policy of Senate, implementation of which is delegated to Education Strategy Committee (ESC). ESC oversees the Professional Services Review process, approves the review schedule, and receives annual key themes reports.

10. Student representation is ensured through Strath Union membership on Senate, ESC and QAC, and through student participation in Periodic Review Panels.

11. The Quality Enhancement and Assurance Team (QEAT) within the Education Enhancement Directorate is responsible for oversight and monitoring of the Professional Services Review policy and schedule. Areas under review are responsible for the operational management and delivery of individual reviews.

12. Annual Reflective Reports are submitted to QEAT and Key Themes papers are submitted to the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) & Learning Enhancement Committee (LEC) at their annual joint meeting, as well as to ESC and Senate, via the ESC Report, for information. Periodic Review Panel Reports are submitted to QAC for discussion and subsequently reported to ESC for information. ESC may refer outcomes to other strategic committees as appropriate. QAC considers outcomes in the context of its responsibilities for the oversight of Institution-led Review processes.

13. QAC receives the 12-month follow-up report and determines whether a review can be closed off. ESC is informed via the QAC report to ESC.

PROCEDURE

TIMELINES

14. Professional Services Review operates through two complementary processes:

- **Annual Reflective Reporting:** All student-facing Professional Services submit annual Reflective Reports, with a Key Themes paper produced for QAC, LEC, ESC and Senate.
- **Periodic Review Panel Scrutiny:** Within the six-year review cycle, each Professional Service area will be subject to more detailed review by a Review Panel, incorporating external membership and direct student engagement.

Annual Reflective Reporting Timeline

Timeline	Activity	Responsibility
Mid-September	QEAT issues Reflective Report template to Directors of Professional Services	QEAT
October - December	Directorates prepare Reflective Reports in consultation with relevant services and stakeholders	PS Directors
End of January	Reflective Reports submitted to QEAT	PS Directors
End of February	QEAT produces Key Themes paper	QEAT
March	Key Themes paper shared with Directors of Professional Services, QAC, LEC, ESC and Senate	QEAT

Periodic Review Panel Timeline

15. Periodic Review Panel scrutiny will be scheduled to ensure all Professional Services areas are reviewed within the six-year cycle. The following timeline applies to each periodic review:

Timeline	Activity	Responsibility
12 months before review	QEAT facilitates discovery workshop attended by colleagues from the Professional Service(s) under review – key theme(s) for review scoped and Deputy Associate Principal (or equivalent) with linked portfolio identified as Convener for the Review Panel Professional Service begins preparing Self-Evaluation Document and supporting evidence	QEAT
9 months before review	Director of Service confirms Review date(s) and Review Panel with QEAT	QEAT & Director of Service under review
6 months before review	Director of Service, Review Manager and QEAT to meet to confirm plans for review event and confirm that Service is on track for evidence submission	QEAT & Director of Service under review
3 months before review	Professional Service submits Self-Evaluation Document and supporting evidence to QEAT for distribution to Review Panel	Director of Service under review & QEAT

6 weeks before review	Review Panel preliminary meeting; agenda confirmed	Review Panel & QEAT
5 weeks before review	QEAT makes operational arrangements and Service under review identifies and contacts selected staff and students to meet with the review panel	QEAT & Director of Service under review
Review Day(s)	Review event (one or two days depending on scale of Service(s) under review)	Review Panel & QEAT
2 weeks after review	Draft Review Panel Report circulated for comment	Review Panel & QEAT
4 weeks after review	Final Report issued; Professional Service provides initial response	QEAT & Director of Service under review
Next QAC meeting	Report and response submitted to QAC	QEAT
12 months after review	Follow-up report submitted to QAC	Director of Service under review

PROCESSES

ANNUAL REFLECTIVE REPORT

16. Each Professional Service Directorate is required to submit an Annual Reflective Report using the template provided on the QEAT SharePoint site in the [Internal Reviews](#) section. The Reflective Report should be critically reflective and evaluative in nature, providing a data-informed analysis of student-facing provision.
17. The Reflective Report should address the following key areas:
 - **High-Level Overview:** Service aims, objectives, locations, and contribution to student achievement and wellbeing, including data on student utilisation where available;
 - **Student Engagement, Experience and Support:** Initiatives to collaborate with students, methods for capturing and responding to student feedback, accessibility considerations;
 - **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** Activities supporting a diverse student population, identification and removal of barriers to access;
 - **Student Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Activities promoting positive mental health, staff training, collaboration with internal and external services;
 - **Plans for Development:** Three to five intended areas for development in the coming academic year.
18. The Reflective Report should be succinct, with a suggested length of no more than five pages (excluding appendices). Reports should signpost existing information where possible and avoid duplication.
19. In preparing the report, Directors should consult with relevant colleagues and, where possible, student representatives. Reports should be reviewed at a Service or Directorate-level Leadership team (or equivalent) and shared with the Senior budget holder prior to submission.

PERIODIC REVIEW PANEL

20. Periodic Review Panel scrutiny provides external input and direct student engagement as required by the SFC guidance. Review Panels are convened to conduct a thorough review of Professional Services provision within specific areas or themes (identified by the area(s) under review).
21. The Review Panel will comprise:
- Panel Convener: Deputy Associate Principal with relevant portfolio or nominee;
 - Review Manager: appointed by Director of the Service under review from within their area;
 - At least one external member from another Higher Education Institution or relevant sector body;
 - One internal academic staff member from outside the area under review;
 - At least one internal Professional Services staff member from outside the area under review;
 - At least one student representative (nominated by Strath Union).
22. Panel members will be selected, where possible, because they have professional experience and knowledge relevant to the area under review. Panel members will not be drawn from the Professional Services under review. The Director of the Service(s) undergoing the next periodic review in the cycle will be given the opportunity to be one of the PS panel members. Panel constitution is approved through QAC.
23. The Review Panel is tasked with:
- Critically reviewing the Self-Evaluation document and supporting evidence;
 - Meeting with staff from the Professional Service(s) under review;
 - Meeting with students who use the service(s);
 - Identifying areas of good practice and areas for development;
 - Producing a Review Panel Report with commendations and recommendations.
24. The review event will typically take one or two days, depending on the size of the Service(s) under review, structured around meetings focused on the remit of the review. Student participation in the review is mandatory. At the conclusion of the review event, the Panel Convener will provide initial feedback to stakeholders.

OUTCOMES

Annual Reporting Outcomes

24. Following submission of Annual Reflective Reports QEAT will produce a Key Themes paper identifying:
- Common themes across Professional Services;
 - Examples of good practice for sharing across the Institution;
 - Priorities for the following academic year;
 - Any matters requiring escalation or cross-institutional action.
25. The Key Themes paper is shared with Directors of Professional Services, QAC, LEC and ESC. Key themes inform the University's annual SEAP process.

Review Panel Outcomes

26. Following a periodic review event, the Review Panel will produce a Report including:
- Summary of the review process and meetings held;
 - Commendations highlighting areas of good practice;
 - Recommendations for enhancement;
 - Any matters requiring escalation to institutional level.
27. The draft Report will be circulated to Panel members for comment within two weeks of the review. Following Panel approval, the Report will be issued to the Director of the Professional Service to check for factual accuracy. The Director and key stakeholders will provide an initial response to recommendations.
28. The Review Panel Report and initial response are submitted to QAC for discussion and subsequently reported to ESC for information.

Follow-up Monitoring

29. Recommendations and actions from periodic reviews will be monitored as follows:
- Twelve months after the review, a follow-up report will be submitted to QAC;
 - QAC will review progress against recommendations and determine whether to formally close the review or require further reporting, and this will be reported onward to ESC;
 - Outstanding recommendations will continue to be monitored through subsequent annual Reflective Reports.
30. It is the responsibility of each Professional Service Director to take forward recommendations arising from reviews in conjunction with relevant stakeholders and to report progress through the annual reporting process.