

INTERNAL REVIEW FRAMEWORK

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1.0	Framework describing how the University internally reviews its provision	Directorate of Education Enhancement	Education Strategy Committee	December 2021



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
INTRODUCTION.....	3
ANNUAL PROGRAMME MONITORING.....	3
FACULTY ANNUAL REPORTS.....	3
QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW OF ACADEMIC PROVISION	4
TRANSFORMING THE EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS THROUGH ASSESSMENT (TESTA).....	4
THEMATIC REVIEW	5
MODULE EVALUATION	5
QAC MONITORING ACTIVITIES	5
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT MONITORING	6
APPENDIX 1 – ANNUAL PROGRAMME MONITORING.....	7

INTRODUCTION

1. Through the process of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Scotland's (QAA Scotland) [Enhancement-led Institutional Review \(ELIR\)](#) process, institutions are judged on their ability to manage the standards of their academic awards and the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students. The University of Strathclyde utilises several methods to review its provision and the student experience, and this Internal Review Framework is designed to provide an overview of these activities. Evidence from these internal review activities enables the University to highlight and share good practice, determine areas for development and to evidence the outcome of internal review activities as part of the ELIR process.
2. The Internal Review Framework describes the monitoring and evaluation processes in place to review core practices, the outcomes of which are used to drive improvement and enhancement, in line with the [UK Quality Code of Higher Education](#).
3. This Framework should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
 - a. [Policy & Procedure for the Quinquennial Review of Academic Provision](#);
 - b. [Policy on Faculty Annual Reports](#);
 - c. [Student Module Evaluation Policy](#);
 - d. [Thematic Review Policy and Procedure](#).

ANNUAL PROGRAMME MONITORING

4. Annual Programme Monitoring is undertaken annually by programme teams who are tasked with producing module and programme-level reports.
5. The aim of Annual Programme Monitoring is to contribute to the maintenance of standards and the enhancement of learning and teaching through the regular scrutiny of the University's programmes. Annual Monitoring also seeks to identify good practice and to encourage staff to reflect on enhancements to the student learning experience.
6. Annual Programme Monitoring reports form part of the supporting information set for Quinquennial Reviews of Academic Provision and are also utilised by Faculties in the preparation of the Faculty Annual Reports (see paragraphs 7 to 9 below), which are subsequently scrutinised by Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and the Learning Enhancement Committee (LEC).
7. Further details on Annual Programme Monitoring can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

FACULTY ANNUAL REPORTS

8. The Faculty Annual Report (FAR) process is focused on reflecting on the Faculty's activities to enhance learning and teaching and to confirm that appropriate quality assurance mechanisms are in place across the Faculty.
9. The FAR Template is designed to focus on the Faculty's enhancement activities and reflect on how these contribute to the delivery of overall strategic priorities. FARs present a valuable resource for sharing good practice. The reflection and action detailed within the Reports provide a critical link between Institutional and local oversight of learning and teaching activities.

10. QAC approves the FAR Template at its first meeting of the academic year and confirms a timeline for submission. Once submitted, the FARs are peer reviewed by a Sub-Team of QAC, the Vice-Deans (Academic) and Faculty Academic Quality representatives. This peer review meeting is used to identify key themes across each of the FARs which results in the production of a Thematic Report. The Thematic Report also identifies cross-Faculty recommendations.
11. Following the peer review process, the Faculties are informed of any recommendations and commendations identified. They are then required to submit their final report to the joint meeting of QAC and LEC with a written response to the recommendations identified.
12. Final reports are submitted together with the Thematic Report to the joint meeting of QAC and LEC. The key themes arising from the Thematic Report are used as the basis for discussion at the joint meeting, with any Faculty specific points highlighted as appropriate.
13. For further information on the FAR process, including timelines and a link to the FAR template, please refer to the [Policy on Faculty Annual Reports](#).

QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW OF ACADEMIC PROVISION

14. Quinquennial Review of Academic Provision is a holistic review of an academic Department/School's academic provision, student experience and wider strategic aims. A Review Panel is established to review a Self-Evaluation Document, produced by the Department/School, and subsequently meet with a representative group of students and key staff from within the Department/School. The Review Panel then produces a report that is a balanced account of strengths, challenges, opportunities and risks, and makes both commendations and recommendations, which the Department/School is required to respond to directly after the review and approximately 9-12 months later.
15. The Quinquennial Review Report and the follow-on 12-month update are reported to QAC for approval. From 2021/22 onwards, a report of emerging themes from Quinquennial Review will be produced over the summer and considered in the first Semester of the following academic year.
16. Each Quinquennial Review includes scrutiny of all credit-bearing provision at undergraduate and postgraduate level for all modes of study. Any collaborative provision, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and continuing education provision, is also scrutinised by the Quinquennial Review Panel, as is the supervision and experience of postgraduate research students.
17. The [Policy & Procedure for Quinquennial Review of Academic Provision](#) contains full details of the process, including timelines, templates and guidance.

TRANSFORMING THE EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS THROUGH ASSESSMENT (TESTA)

18. The University's Quinquennial Review process incorporates [TESTA](#) as part of its methodology. TESTA is a programme-level educational research and development exercise undertaken in every academic unit (Department or School) at the University in the academic year prior to their scheduled Quinquennial Review.

19. TESTA seeks to provide programme teams with detailed analyses of students' reflections on how assessment and feedback practices shape their learning experience. The focus of TESTA is on supporting programme teams to identify areas of good practice and areas for development and to facilitate discussions and actions which address these.

THEMATIC REVIEW

20. Thematic Review is a quality enhancement and assurance process that focuses on all services contributing to the student experience, and is designed to be holistic and forward-looking. Approaches within the Institution are reviewed, and best practices and emerging initiatives from across the sector inform discussions.
21. Provision for students is evaluated around themes to ensure the University is providing high-quality support to students. Thematic Review is also intended as a means of identifying common themes across the Institution and potential opportunities for further enhancement and alignment of provision. The review process is driven by self-evaluation and reflection, with an enhancement-led approach.
22. Please refer to the [Thematic Review Policy and Procedure](#) for further information.

MODULE EVALUATION

23. The fundamental purpose of Student Module Evaluation is to enhance teaching and learning, and the experience of students, through a clear and consistent institutional approach with agreed procedures for gathering, analysing, acting upon and responding directly to student feedback. Student Module Evaluation is required to take place across all credit-bearing modules.
24. Module-level feedback from students is gathered via [Myplace](#) (the University's Virtual Learning Environment) as part of online and face-to-face learning and teaching delivery. Module evaluations can take place at mid-semester, at end-of-semester, or at both mid- and end-of-semester. A summer semester evaluation option is also available for modules that do not follow the two-semester calendar.
25. For further information on student module evaluation, including timelines, the responsibilities of staff and students and the types of reports that are produced and available within the system, please refer to the [Student Module Evaluation Policy](#).

QAC MONITORING ACTIVITIES

26. Senate has overall responsibility for institutional standards and quality of the University's awards and the academic standing of the University. QAC has delegated authority from Senate to review and assess academic standards. It does this by annually monitoring and assessing trends of the following key areas:
- a. Retention rates for undergraduate programmes;
 - b. Completion rates for postgraduate taught programmes;
 - c. Honours degree classifications and integrated masters results;
 - d. Summaries of External Examiners' annual reports and department/school responses.
27. QAC receives annual reports on retention rates for undergraduate programmes, completion rates for postgraduate taught programmes and undergraduate attainment analysis. These are reviewed at QAC by looking at trends across the previous four

academic years. Any actions arising from this review process are directed towards the appropriate Faculty and/or Professional Services area and are also addressed via the FAR process.

28. QAC has institutional oversight of the external examining reporting process, while scrutiny of external examiners' reports is primarily undertaken within programme teams and other faculty/department/school platforms. QAC receives an annual report which contains an analysis of external examiner feedback based on annual reports from the previous years' reporting cycle, including a summary report, numerical breakdown of responses, and extracts of external examiner reports. There is an expectation that the content of external examiner reports and the department/school responses are disseminated to students and discussed via Student-Staff Liaison Committees.
29. In addition, QAC has oversight of the review and approval of new/revised programme regulations. The administrative process of reviewing the regulations is overseen/managed by staff from the Quality Enhancement and Assurance Team (QEAT) and faculty representatives, with a Sub-Group of QAC reviewing and confirming final approval. The University's general and programme regulations for all levels of study can be found [here](#).
30. QAC is also responsible for overseeing the implementation of a number of institutional policies including the Student Module Evaluation and Assessment and Feedback policies. QAC meets five times throughout the academic year, with the output from each meeting being reported to Education Strategy Committee (ESC) and Senate. Further information about QAC can be found in the [QEAT Sharepoint site](#).

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT MONITORING

31. Regular monitoring of research student progress and supervision is carried out at department/school and/or Faculty level in accordance with the [University's Policy and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes](#).
32. The University maintains oversight of postgraduate research student progression and supervision. Outcomes of this process are also considered as part of Quinquennial Review of Departments/Schools.

APPENDIX 1 – ANNUAL PROGRAMME MONITORING

1. For each of the University's award bearing programmes, the Programme Team prepares an annual programme report that is reviewed by the relevant Faculty on an annual basis. This process may be initiated through annual discussions involving Faculty Teams led by the Vice-Dean Academic, Heads of Department/School and Directors of Teaching. Outcomes of this process are also considered during Quinquennial Reviews of Departments/Schools and inform the Faculty Annual Reports.
2. The Programme Team for each award-bearing undergraduate and postgraduate taught programme (or the Departmental Teaching Committee) monitors the effectiveness of the programme and produces an annual report that is reviewed by the relevant faculty.
3. The detailed processes used by Departments/Schools and Faculties for producing and reviewing the annual programme report may differ, however the University expects that the review will be based on the following common features:
 - a. The report includes consideration of student feedback, external examiners reports, accreditation reports and input from other stakeholders together with an account of follow-up actions resulting from these inputs;
 - b. The Faculty Academic Committee with delegated authority from the Board of Study, reviews all programme reports on an annual or biannual basis and summary paperwork is held in the Faculty Office;
 - c. Departments/Schools or the Programme Team hold the detailed documentation associated with annual programme monitoring/review;
 - d. Outcomes of the process are considered in the quinquennial reviews of Departments/Schools.
4. In preparing the annual self-evaluation report, the Programme Director/Programme Team considers the effectiveness of the programme in terms of:
 - a. Learning, teaching and assessment strategies;
 - b. Student recruitment and completion rates;
 - c. Student employability, professional and careers education;
 - d. Key skills and progress files;
 - e. The University's Equality and Diversity and Widening Access policies;
 - f. Provision for students with disabilities.
5. Evidence reviewed by Programme Teams in producing the annual programme report includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Programme Specifications;
 - b. Programme/Department/School Student Handbooks, curriculum, examination papers;
 - c. Student intake: number, quality, balance (e.g. age, gender, equality and diversity and disability data);
 - d. Student progress and completion rates for the total student population and, where appropriate, cohort analysis balance (e.g. age, gender, equality and diversity and disability data);
 - e. Information on subsequent employment of students;
 - f. Student feedback (module/programme evaluation questionnaires, student/staff committees etc.);
 - g. External Examiners' reports and any Departmental/School Responses;
 - h. Outcomes of any external reviews by QAA, Professional Bodies etc.;

- i. Statistical information – this is provided to Departments/Schools and Faculties via SUnBIRD (Strathclyde University Business Intelligence Reports and Dashboards) system.