



# Periodic Programme Review Procedure

## Documentation Management

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### Version Control

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2.0	Procedure replacing Academic Programme Review	Head of Quality Assurance	November 2016	Quality Assurance Committee
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## **Periodic Programme Review (PPR) Procedure**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 All higher education providers are expected to have effective procedures in place to routinely monitor and periodically review their programmes. This procedure adheres to the expectations set out in the QAA UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Monitoring and Evaluation, and the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) 2015 Part 1.
- 1.2 The opportunity to periodically reflect on the academic experience by students, the academic standards achieved, and the continuing currency and relevance of its provision, is central to an institution's quality and standards assurance processes.
- 1.3 Periodic Programme Review (PPR) is the process whereby the College's educational provision is reviewed through self-evaluation and peer review. It is normally conducted every 5 years, and has the following aims:
- To enable Senate to have confidence in the standards, currency, coherence, and relevance of the provision;
  - To evaluate the effectiveness of the student academic experience including quality of learning opportunities; to identify impact and good practice; and to make recommendations for improvement and enhancement;
  - To identify and correct any deviations from alignment with external points of reference such as QAA subject benchmark statements, sections of the Quality Code Advice and Guidance, national qualifications framework, ESG Part 1, and requirements of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs);
  - To inform the College and University in strategic planning and future developments of the portfolio.
- 1.4 The review takes place in the context of fostering the continuing process of reflection and evaluation required to improve and enhance of the quality of learning opportunities provided and students' academic experience.
- 1.5 The review is data-driven, using both qualitative and quantitative data, and recommendations arising from the review form the basis of quality improvement and enhancement plans at department/discipline, college, and University, which are monitored through the Annual Monitoring process. The standard PPR dataset specification is shown in Appendix 1.
- 1.6 **PPR is a paperless process and, therefore, all documentation should be gathered and provided in electronic format.**

### **2 Membership of Review Panel**

- 2.1 Membership, from Colleges other than that under review, will normally consist of the following for each meeting:

#### **Chair:**

Dean, Vice-Dean (Education), or Deputy Dean (Academic Affairs)

### **Internal members:**

Minimum one experienced academic staff with expertise covering learning, teaching and research.

### **External reviewers:**

For each discipline to be reviewed, there must be, at minimum, one subject specialist.

Additionally, Colleges should seek to appoint either of the following to enhance panel membership:

1. A representative from industry;
2. A representative from a professional, statutory or regulatory body;
3. An alumnus drawn from recent graduates.

### **Student representatives:**

One taught student and one research student, which can include a Union of Brunel Students Vice President from another College.

The Union of Brunel Students Vice President for the College under review.

### **Professional Services:**

Up to two representatives from appropriate professional service areas

### **Review Manager:**

Appointed by Quality Assurance

- 2.2 Nominations for review panel membership will be made by the College, and approved by the Vice-Provost (Education).
- 2.3 Recruitment of students to review panels will be managed by the Review Manager.
- 2.4 It is recognised that a consistent Panel may not be achievable across all disciplines / departments under review.

### **PPR process**

#### **3 Scoping of the review**

- 3.1 The scoping exercise, based around at least one meeting between the College (including department and discipline representatives), the Review Manager and the PPR Chair, should take place ideally 9 months prior to the review. The meeting will be organised by the Review Manager.
- 3.2 Purpose of the Scoping Exercise:

- Agree grouping of provision to be reviewed, including any partnerships;
- Consider opportunities to amalgamate parts of concurrent or associated external reviews (e.g. by PSRBs);
- Identify any issues or modifications to process necessitated by PSRBs;
- Agree structure and timing for the review meetings;
- Agree required attendees for the review meetings.

3.3 As each grouping will be reviewed over one day, careful consideration should be given to the number of disciplines included so that there is sufficient time for the Panel to meet in private to agree questions/lines of enquiry; meet with students and staff (from each discipline); and agree recommendations and areas of good practice.

3.4 Additional scoping meetings may be scheduled as required.

#### **4 Documentation required**

4.1 Each Panel will be provided with a document set to review, the list of which is provided in Appendix 1.

4.2 The only document required that does not already exist as a result of annual processes is the Self Evaluation Document.

4.3 Bespoke or updated data sets will be provided as required by the relevant discipline/department.

#### **5 Preparation of the Self Evaluation Document**

5.1 Self-evaluation documents are to be produced at a level defined by the College under review. For example, a College may wish to group some disciplines/provision together, whereas others should be reviewed on their own.

5.2 The self-evaluation document should be informed by the data and existing documentation. The following areas should be addressed:

Section 1 - Relevant aims and objectives from Division/Department and College plans.

Section 2 - Context (maximum 1 page), which should address a summary of the programme portfolio under review; a summary of staff and other resources; a summary of relationships with PSRBs or other stakeholders (including collaboration with other Colleges); a summary of any partnerships; and a summary of PGR provision.

Section 3 - Evaluation (maximum 9 pages) **drawing on the assembled documentation and data**, addressing each of the following topics. The evaluation should highlight matters of particular concern to the discipline, Department or College, and areas of good practice:

##### Topic 1: Relevance, currency and coherence of the programmes

Evaluate briefly developments in the programmes and their curricula since the last PPR with reference to:

- changes in the national or Brunel context;
- subject benchmark statements;

- trends in student demand;
- employer expectations and career opportunities;
- student progression and outcomes;
- external examiners' reports;
- annual module and programme monitoring;
- programme approvals and modifications;
- feedback from students and alumni.

### Topic 2: Students' Academic Experience – Taught students

Evaluate how effectively learning, teaching and assessment support student achievement through consideration of how:

- Teaching provides effective stimulation, challenge and contact time that encourages students to engage and actively commit to their studies;
- Curriculum design is effective in stretching students to develop independence, knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect their own potential;
- Assessment and feedback are used effectively in supporting students' development, progression and attainment;
- Resources are used effectively to aid students' learning;
- Students are exposed to and involved in scholarship, research and/or professional practice;
- Students from all backgrounds are supported to achieve;
- Students acquire knowledge, skills and attributes that are valued by employers and that enhance their personal and/or professional lives.

### Topic 3: Postgraduate Research Students' Experience

Evaluate how effectively the:

- students' progression and timely completion is supported through the admission, monitoring and supervision arrangements;
- research environment contributes to their development;
- skills training provides support for their future professional aspirations.

### Topic 4: Enhancements

- Highlight innovations and developments that have improved the student's academic experience and outcomes, including evaluations of their effectiveness and impact;
- Provide a plan for further enhancements, including how these will be taken forward, the timeline, and process for evaluation.

## **6 Review**

- 6.1 Prior to the Panel meeting with individual groupings, a meeting with the College's senior management team will take place. This meeting, which serves as a scene-setting for the PPR, will focus on the College's strategy, current challenges, and examples of enhancement and good practice. A formal report on this meeting is not produced.

- 6.2 Following the meeting with the College's senior management team, for each grouping there will be one meeting, not exceeding one day, which will incorporate a meeting with staff (academic and professional) and students (from across the provision).
- 6.3 For each grouping, the Panel will scrutinise all information provided and determine the issues to be explored at the Review Meeting. Where possible, groupings will be informed of the Panel's areas of particular interest.
- 6.4 The following principles apply to ensure appropriate scrutiny of the College's education provision:
- Review at discipline-level, informed by external subject specialists, remains fundamental to PPR to ensure sufficient scrutiny is given to the taught programme provision;
  - Review of PGR provision is embedded within the process;
  - In recognition of the fact that the College is the academic unit within which divisions/departments operate, discussion with College senior management team, informed by the discipline reports, will be held.

## **7 Outcomes of the Review**

- 7.1 Panels will offer immediate generalised feedback to each grouping at the end of the review meeting.
- 7.2 Following the meeting, a grouping level report will be produced. All grouping level reports should normally be available 6 weeks after the last review meeting.
- 7.3 The grouping level reports are used as the basis for a final meeting between the PPR Review Panel Chair, Review Manager, and the College's senior management team.
- 7.4 Following this final meeting, a Summary Report of the College PPR is produced, setting out the main findings (common strengths and weaknesses), actions and recommendations (including any recommendations for the University). The report will be drafted by the Review Manager and reviewed by the Panel before being sent to the College for comments on factual accuracy, normally within 6 working weeks of the meeting with the College's senior management team.
- 7.5 Based on the outcome of the grouping level meetings, the Panel, through the Summary Report of the College PPR will confirm that:
- The College has secure control of the academic standards of the University's awards;
  - Learning, teaching and assessment are effective in allowing students to achieve those academic standards, and programmes are current, coherent and relevant and are aligned to external reference points;
  - The student academic experience fosters a culture of partnership and supports students to achieve their intended award;
  - Disciplines are effective in enhancing their taught and research provision;
  - Innovation and good practice is identified, evaluated and shared, and impact measured.

## **8 Consideration and Dissemination**

- 8.1 Each grouping will consider the Panel's recommendations through Board of Studies and Department Academic Committees and confirm within quality improvement and enhancement plans (grouped as per the College's needs) the actions to be taken.
- 8.2 The grouping level reports, associated action plans, and the College PPR summary report and College action plan to the recommendations, will be approved by the College Education Committee.
- 8.3 It will be the responsibility of the Vice-Provost (Education) to ensure that any recommendations for the University and dissemination of identified good practice are considered at the most appropriate level, and that actions are followed up and monitored.
- 8.4 The College PPR summary report and College's (and if applicable, the University's) response to the recommendations are presented to Senate by the Chair of the PPR Review Panel. Senate will be asked to note the reports, recommendations and action plan(s).

## **9 Monitoring of Action Plans**

- 9.1 The quality improvement and enhancement plans are monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Programme Monitoring and Review process, which requires updated actions and evaluations to be submitted. These are monitored by the College Education Committees and reported to Senate.
- 9.2 The University action plan is monitored by the University Education Committee and reported to Senate.



## **Appendix 1 Periodic Programme Review – Documentation Required**

**PPR is a paperless process and, therefore, all documentation should be gathered by the College and provided in an electronic format.**

### *University-Level Documentation [links]*

1. Senate Regulations
2. Periodic Programme Review Policy
3. Postgraduate Research Code of Practice

### *College-level Documentation*

1. Report of last PPR and action plan
2. College strategic plan
3. Report of any strategic review undertaken since the last PPR
4. Current list of academic staff's administrative responsibilities
5. College Education Committee minutes for the last 3 years
6. Department Academic Committee minutes for the last 3 years
7. Board of Studies minutes for the last 3 years
8. Report from Vice-Provost (Education) confirming completion and appropriate follow-up from
  - Annual Programme monitoring (reports for the last 3 years)
  - External Examiner reports and responses (for the last 3 years)
  - Regulatory Audit reports (for the last 3 years)

### *Grouping-level Documentation (if existing)*

1. Self-Evaluation Document
2. Report of last PPR and action plan
3. All current programmes and modules [link]
4. Current Staff/Student Handbooks [link]
5. Current Subject benchmark statement(s) [link]
6. The most recent external examiners reports
7. Partnership Quality Audit reports and resulting action plans
8. PSRB reports (if applicable)
9. Student Experience Committee minutes for taught and PGR provision [link]
10. Board of Studies minutes [link]
11. Student Partnership Strategy Action Plan
12. Data:
  - Annual Monitoring data sets for the last 3 academic years, including postgraduate research degree provision, and provision delivered in partnership
  - Graduate level employment rates (DLHE)
  - NSS, YourView, PTES, and PRES results for the last 3 years
  - external benchmark data for the subject
13. Grouping level PGR handbooks
14. PGR Data:
  - Student numbers and funding
  - Supervision monitoring
  - Submission and completion rates
  - Destinations

**Appendix 2 Periodic Programme Review Process**

