Programme Accreditation Protocol

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Introduction and Scope

The purpose of this Protocol is to define roles and responsibilities regarding external academic accreditation activity for Brunel University of London's Colleges, and the programmes they offer.

External academic accreditation refers to the accreditation of one of the University's degree programmes by a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB).

Accreditation can be in the form of:

1. A regulatory or statutory confirmation that successful completion of a degree grants a student the right to work in a particular profession. For example, BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy.

2. The recognition of a degree's curriculum as meeting certain standards, which enhances the quality and relevance of the degree. For example, Beng (Hons) Civil Engineering.

3. Recognising a Brunel module as an exemption for another external module or examination. For example, BSc Accountancy

The types of activity covered by this Protocol include:

- Significant Accreditation Events such as:
    - initial accreditation
    - re-accreditation
    - periodic review
- Routine reporting to an accrediting body

This Protocol does not relate to following, which are subject to different arrangements:

- The University's relationship with the Office for Students, Ofsted, or the Quality Assurance Agency.
- Accreditation by the General Medical Council

Accreditation Information

Accreditation information is available internally and externally via the following means:

Source	Location	Published/maintained by
Programme Specification	Programme Specification Repository	Quality Assurance
Programme webpage	External Website	Marketing, Communications and Recruitment
Accreditation Registers	University Accreditation Teams Group	Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration

College Information

Comprehensive information for each College's accreditation will be maintained on the University's External Academic Accreditation Teams site, owned and maintained by the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration. This site will include, amongst other items:

1. The master copy of each College's accreditation register, accessible to all relevant staff
2. Records of accreditation event outcomes, such as reports issued by an accrediting body

College Accreditation Registers

Each College's Accreditation Register includes all key information regarding a programme's accrediting body, including:

- The Lead Academic
- The type of accreditation
- The start and where applicable the end date for the current period of accreditation
- The timing and format of annual monitoring
- The format of re-accreditation

Information Accuracy

Whilst accreditation information is published via a number of channels and by different staff/teams, the accuracy of that information is primarily the responsibility of the Lead Academic associated with the accreditation, who is responsible for ensuring that any changes in accreditation are communicated to the relevant stakeholders.

At the beginning of each academic year, the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration will present each College's Accreditation Register to their College Management Board and College Education Committee, providing the opportunity to highlight any discrepancies or significant accreditation activity for the year.

Updates/Changes in Accreditation

Where there are changes in the accreditation status of a programme, which should be reflected in the sources listed above, it is the responsibility of the Lead Academic to communicate the information to the relevant parties, and in careful consideration of published information and marketing/recruitment activity.

Accreditation Outcome Reports

For each accreditation event (for example initial accreditation/re-accreditation), a final report (or similar document) will be issued by the accrediting body. Upon receipt of this report, it is the responsibility of the lead academic to:

- Submit a copy to the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration for publishing in the University's External Accreditation Teams site.
- Inform their College's Quality Assurance manager of any changes to programme documentation
- Inform the University's Marketing Team of any changes to be made to webpages, communications@brunel.ac.uk

Lead Academics for Accreditation

The accreditation of a degree programme by a PSRB is based on the academic content of the programme, which is designed and developed by academic staff, typically programme leads. Additionally, accreditation applications, self-assessment or review documents typically focus on the academic content of a programme, the experience and success of its students, and how the programme aligns with professional expectations.

For the above reasons, a Lead Academic is required for each accreditation, so that there is appropriate leadership on the programme's relationship with the accrediting body, and the programme's ongoing development and delivery.

Lead Academics shall be responsible for:

- Primary liaison with their accrediting body

- Leading on significant accreditation events, including:

- the production of review documentation

- Leading on the production and organisation of evidence for review, working with other University departments as appropriate

- Coordination of accrediting events

- Providing outcome reports to the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration

- Communicating accreditation changes to the relevant stakeholders

A Lead Academic should be appointed per accrediting body, and they should be supported by the relevant programme leads.

Where there are different disciplines accredited by the same PSRB, it is recommended that a single Lead Academic is still identified for the PSRB, supported by subject/programme leads as necessary.

Where an accreditation is agreed to be delivered as a joint event between the University and the PSRB (for example, a joint approval event or a Programme Curriculum Review (PCR) conducted alongside a reaccreditation visit), the Lead Academic must work closely with the College's Quality Assurance Manager to ensure that both the University's requirements and the PSRB's requirements are fully met.

Managing Accreditation Activity: Roles and Responsibilities

Lead academics are responsible for leading on the engagement with their associated accrediting body. They are supported in this work by staff and teams within the College and central University services. The typical roles and responsibilities for staff and departments in accreditation activity are as follows.

Role	Responsibilities (in addition to meeting with accrediting bodies as required)
Lead Academic - The academic member of staff responsible for liaising with the accreditation body and maintaining a programme's accreditation. - Listed in the relevant College's Accreditation Register	• Overall leadership of accreditation events • Liaison with accrediting body • Production of review documentation • Production and organisation of evidence for review • Coordination of accrediting events • Providing outcome reports to the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration • Communicating accreditation changes to stakeholders

Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration	• Maintenance of the University External Academic Accreditation Teams site
	• Maintenance and publication of each College's Accreditation Register
	• Conducting an annual check of the Accreditation Register via College Management Boards
	• As required:
	  o Production of review documentation
	  o Contribution to review documentation
	  o Production and organisation of evidence
	  o Liaison with accrediting bodies
	• Maintaining the College's central repository of accreditation outcome reports.

Assessment and Curriculum Office	• Administrative support for accreditation activity where required, for example:
	  o Minuting meetings
	  o Formatting documents for submission (not proof reading)
	  o Uploading documents to external websites (where there is a large volume)
	• As required:
	  o Production of review documentation as required
	  o Contribution to review documentation
	  o Liaison with accrediting bodies

Quality Assurance	• Providing QA related documentation, such as programme specifications, block outlines, annual monitoring data and external examiner reports • As required: o Minuting meetings

Role	Responsibilities (in addition to meeting with accrediting bodies as required)
	o Production of review documentation o Contribution to review documentation o Production and organisation of evidence o Liaison with accrediting bodies
Academic Placement and Partnerships Manager	As required: • Production of review documentation • Contribution to review documentation • Production and organisation of evidence • Liaison with accrediting bodies
Planning	• Provision of student data
Student Data and Timetabling	• Provision of student data
Associate Director of Student Support Services	• As required: o Production of review documentation o Contribution to review documentation o Production and organisation of evidence o Liaison with accrediting bodies

Managing Significant Accreditation Events

Significant Accreditation events include an application for accreditation, re-accreditation, or periodic review. These activities typically include:

- The submission of a review document and supporting evidence by the University

- A visit by a PSRB

The recommended process for planning for an accreditation visit is presented under Appendix A.

Submission of Review Documentation

Major accreditation events, such as an application for accreditation or re-accreditation/periodic review will typically require the submission of a self/assessment document, supported by evidence. The Lead academic for an accreditation shall be responsible for leading this process, and the following process is recommended.

1. Lead academic reviews requirements and identifies support required

2. Lead academic meets with Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration to review evidence requirements and where support can be provided

3. Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration organises an initiation meeting attended by the relevant academic leads and staff who can support the accreditation. At this meeting, the following is confirmed:

    a. The deadline for submission of documents to the accrediting body

    b. The internal deadline for checking documents prior to submission

    c. The responsibilities of each of the attendees at the meeting in supporting the accreditation event

    d. The manner and format in which evidence is to be provided

    e. The location of where evidence will be stored

A template for recording the key details and responsibilities for a significant accreditation event is provided under Appendix B, with a downloadable version available here.

After this meeting has taken place, staff will be expected to produce or locate the evidence assigned to them, and submit it by the internal deadline and to the correct place.

The recommended process for producing a submission for accreditation is presented under Appendix C.

Accreditation Visits

In most cases, a significant accreditation event, such as an application for accreditation or a re-accreditation/periodic review will involve a visit to the University (or other teaching location) by a PSRB. This will in turn require the organisation of rooms, IT access and AV equipment, parking and accommodation, and the confirmation of schedules/agendas for each day of a visit.

Leadership for such events is the responsibility of the Lead Academic, with support from the relevant staff. Expectations for staff/teams for such an event are as follows.

Action regarding	Responsibility
Lead Academic	- Overall leadership of the visit - Day to day liaison with the accrediting body leading up to the visit and during the visit - Producing or sourcing of additional documentation required during the visit. - Attending meetings with the accrediting body - Briefing academic and other staff who are required to attend a meeting with the accrediting body

Action regarding	Responsibility
Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration	• Where relevant, producing or sourcing additional documentation required during the visit. • Representing the University in meetings with the accrediting body as required.
College Business Support Teams	• Organising rooms for the visit • Creating the schedule (where applicable) • Inviting staff to meetings • Inviting students or external parties to meetings • Inviting external parties, such as employers or service users to meetings • Organising IT access and AV equipment • Organising parking, accommodation, accessibility support as required • Arranging for catering
Assessment and Curriculum Office	• Where relevant, producing or sourcing additional documentation required during the visit. • Minuting meetings as required.
Quality Assurance	• Representing the University in meetings with the accrediting body as required. • Where relevant, producing or sourcing additional documentation required during the visit. • Where the event is being held as a joint event with the University (e.g. as approval of a new programme or as PCR): o Identifying Panel members o Circulation of documentation to the Panel o Setting the agenda for the day (along with the PSRB, Lead Academic and Chair) o Minuting meetings
Academic Placement and Partnerships Manager	• Representing the University in meetings with the accrediting body as required. • Producing or sourcing of additional documentation required during the visit.
Student Data and Timetabling	• Creation and maintenance of data sets to support accreditation activity.

The recommended process for managing an accreditation visit is presented under Appendix D.

Engaging with Students and External Parties

In most cases, PSRBs will want to engage with students or external parties, such as employers or service users as part of an accreditation. That can be in the form of written feedback, a student-led review, or meetings with students and external parties. The responsibilities for this type of activity are as follows.

PSRB Requirement	Responsibilities

Written feedback from students or external parties	• Lead Academic:
	  o Identifies students/external parties according to PSRB requirements
	  o Contacts students/external parties to request feedback
	  o Receives feedback

Student-led review document	• Lead Academic:
	  o Identifies students/external parties according to PSRB requirements
	  o Contacts students/external parties to request review or provides student/external parties' details to PSRB

Completion of PSRB survey	• Lead Academic:
	  o Identifies students/external parties according to PSRB requirements
	  o Contacts students/external parties to request completion of survey

Meeting with students or external parties	• Lead Academic:
	  o Identifies students/external parties according to PSRB requirements
	  o Contacts students/external parties to explain meeting and request that they take part
	• College Business Support Teams
	  o Schedule meeting
	  o Invite students/attendees
	  o Organise parking/accessibility support as required.

Significant Accreditation Event Outcomes

New accreditations will be reported by the Lead academic to the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration upon receipt of formal confirmation by a PSRB. The report and or letter provided by the PSRB must be provided to the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration for storing in the University's dedicated Teams site.

Re-accreditation will be reported by the Lead academic to the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration upon receipt of formal confirmation by a PSRB. The report and or letter provided by the PSRB must be provided to the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration, for storing in the University's dedicated Teams site.

Actions/Conditions/Recommendations

Actions/conditions/recommendations resulting from an accreditation event will be assigned in the first instance as follows:

Action regarding	Responsibility
Curriculum, teaching and assessment, and student experience	Academic Lead
Programme level regulations/policy	Academic Lead
Resourcing	Head of Department
University academic administration	Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration
University regulations/policy	Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration
Work placement	Associate Director of Student Professional Development
Student support, engagement and wellbeing	Associate Director of Student Support Services

Actions may be reassigned where appropriate.

The Head of Department will be responsible for ensuring that actions/conditions resulting from an accreditation event are achieved fully and by the required deadline.

College Monitoring

The outcome of significant accreditation activities, including accreditation and re-accreditation/periodic review, will be reported to College Education Committees via the relevant academic lead, or Head of Department.

College Education Committees will monitor actions resulting from accreditation.

Routine Reporting and Internal Monitoring

Routine Report to PSRBs

Most PSRBs require some form of annual monitoring/reporting per year. This can be in the form of a review document, or the completion of information via an online portal. Lead Academics are responsible for completing annual monitoring/reporting as they are most directly connected with the experience and outcomes for students on the related programmes. This responsibility includes:

1. Ensuring that they are the accrediting body's point of contact at the University

2. Completing the monitoring report

3. Requesting data or other information from University staff/departments

4. Submitting monitoring reports by required deadlines

5. Responding to any actions or requests by the PSRB

Internal Monitoring and Reporting

At the beginning of each academic year, the Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration will present each College's Accreditation Register to their College Management Board, providing the opportunity to highlight any discrepancies or significant accreditation activity for the year.

Sources of Information

Staff involved in accreditation activity will find the following sources of information relevant when preparing accreditation documentation or liaising with accrediting bodies:

Source	Location
Internal Access Only	
eVision reports	https://evision.brunel.ac.uk/
Helix data (annual monitoring, student characteristics)	General | GRP-Planning-HELIX | Microsoft Teams
Programme documentation	Programme Documentation Repository - Home
External Examiner reports	Published Reports
Available Externally	
University Regulations	Senate Regulations | Brunel University of London
University Policies	Policies and documents | Brunel University of London
Quality Assurance Policies and Guidance	Quality Assurance | Brunel University of London

Appendix A – Planning an Accreditation Visit

Accreditation – Notification and planning

PSRB
- Sets schedule and requirements

Lead Academic
- Sends notification
- Reviews requirements
- Sends notification

Assoc. Dir. Academic and Student admin
- Initial Planning meeting
- Contacts contributors
- Full planning meeting with responsibilities and deadlines confirmed
- Submission writing and evidence gathering

Contributors

Appendix B – Accreditation Planning Proforma (downloadable link)

Accreditation Event Planning Proforma

Section 1: Event Details	
Academic Year	
College	
Department	
PSRB	
Related programmes	
Type of event	*Accreditation/re-accreditation/periodic review/other*
Planned date for event	
Location of event	

Section 2: Staff Details	
Lead Academic/s	
Associate Director of Academic and Student Administration	
College Business Manager	

Section 3: Submission Overview	
What needs to be submitted	Please provide an overview. For example, a self-reflection with evidence
Submission date	
Format of submission	*Emailed to PSRB/Uploaded to an external portal/printed and mailed*

Section 4: Visit Overview	
Date of visit	
What will the visit include?	*Meetings/meetings with students/observation of teaching/tour of facilities/visits to external venuew*
University attendees	*Who from the University is required to attend?*
Third party attendees	*Employers? Placement partners?*

Section 5: Submission Contributors

This section should be used to identify which members of staff will be responsible for specific contributions of the submission.

Member of Staff	Contribution
Deadline	**Location (teams folder link)**

Appendix C – Managing a Submission

Accreditation – Submission

PSRB
Receives submission

Lead Academic
Submits documentation by deadline

Assoc. Dir. Academic and Student admin
Documentation and evidence completed and uploaded to repository

Review of submission

Ready for submission?
— YES

Administrative support for submission required?
No

Contributors
NO – refer back to contributors for additional evidence or amendments

Yes

Documentation finalised

ACO
Provides support as required

Appendix D – Managing an Accreditation Visit

Accreditation – Visits

PSRB

Lead Academic
- Agree visit date
- Contacts academic staff informing them of visit
- Deliver briefing to staff
- Confirms schedule to all parties

Assoc. Dir. Academic and Student admin
- Full planning meeting with responsibilities and deadlines confirmed
- Contacts PS staff informing them of visit
- Reviews and confirms schedule

College Business Manager
- Books meeting rooms and base room for PSRB, organises IT access and AV equipment
- Contacts PSRB regarding parking, accommodation and catering requirments