6a Academic Review
Reflective Analysis Document Guidance

Document Outline

Review / Evaluate
★
Current Practice
★
Taught / Research
★
All levels, modes, locations
★
Engage student body

- In advance of the Review event, the Discipline Team will undertake a ***review and evaluation of current practice*** (taught and research; all levels, locations and modes of study). All activities will be undertaken ***collectively*** and ***collaboratively*** between the School/Discipline Team and the student body.
- The report, recommendations and actions from the previous review should be used as a source of reference for the reflective exercise.
- Outcomes of the review and evaluation exercise will be used to produce the **Reflective Analysis** which will:
  - ★ provide brief and concise summarises of practices, procedures and activities – *to provide the Review Team with basic and sufficient understanding;*
  - ★ critically evaluate and analyse practices, procedures and activities, identifying strengths, weaknesses, future plans and developments.
  - ★ be written as a formal report and follow a basic structure;
  - ★ be approved through the School Committee structure and Senior Management Team;
  - ★ be submitted ***six weeks*** before the review event.
- Further information on the report's basic structure is provided within the following sections. Some useful hints and tips are provided on the final page of this guidance.

Section 1 Introduction and Overview

Portfolio
★
Disciplines
★
Taught Programmes
★
Research Degree Provision
★
Student Numbers
★
Approval

A brief introduction, to introduce the Review Team to the School and reviewed discipline. Information should be brief and concise; eg:

- ★ Brief overview of the School and its disciplines
- ★ Taught Programmes and Research Degree Provision *(within the discipline being reviewed)*, eg:
  - Management of Taught Programmes; Management of Research Degree Provision, eg:
    - *committees, key roles, administration; if CDTs or equivalent, how these integrate into structures*
  - Professional accreditation
  - IT Infrastructure
  - Other key information the Review Team should be made aware of
- ★ Overall student numbers (taught and research) by study level, location and mode of delivery
- ★ Brief explanation on the process followed for producing and approving the reflective document

Section 2
Student Experience
(Taught)

- ★ **All students, levels, locations & modes of delivery (including PGR student learning experience)**
- ★ **Brief and concise descriptions of processes, which are evaluated, analysed and summarised**
- ★ **Five recommended key headings (+ others as relevant)…..**

1. Teaching and Learning, eg
- Lectures, tutorials, labs
- Infrastructure (physical and virtual)
- Employability and Professional Development (eg PSRB, societies, industrial links, engagement initiatives and opportunities etc)

2. Student Support, eg
- Enrolment
- Induction
- Personal Tutoring
- Additional support requirements

3. Student Voice and Engagement, eg
- Student representation, feedback + consultation *(including closing the feedback loop)*
- Other forms of feedback *(eg graduates, employers, PSRBs, partners etc)*
- Working in partnership with students *(eg engagement in School committees)*

4. Student Overview
- Opportunity for UG and PGT students to contribute to the RA by commenting on their student learning experience (managed by the relevant School Officers). *See Document 6b: Student Engagement*

5. Summary
- Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

Section 3
Student Experience
(Research)

- ★ **All students, levels, locations & modes of delivery (including PGR student learning experience)**
- ★ **Brief and concise descriptions of processes, which are evaluated, analysed and summarised**
- ★ **Five recommended key headings (+ others as relevant)…..**

1. General Information, eg
- Overview of research degrees (eg types, funding etc)
- Management of research degrees (including management of CDTs and equivalent if you have them)
- Research environment (eg evidence of expertise, facilities etc)

2. Student Support, eg
- Selection and admissions
- Induction (eg for students starting in Oct, Jan and May)
- Supervisory arrangements / mentoring arrangements
- Development of Research and Generic Skills
- Progress Review

3. Student Representation, Engagement and Development, eg
- Student representation, feedback + consultation *(including closing the feedback loop)*
- Operation of Research Student Committee
- Research culture / community
- Engagement and development, eg:
  - Engagement with the RFA
  - Seminars, poster sessions, conferences, presenting, publishing
  - outreach, industry

4. Student Overview
- Opportunity for students to contribute to the RA by commenting on their student learning experience (to be managed by the PGR Student Representative). *See Document 6b: Student Engagement*

5. Summary
- Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

Describe
High level summary of the process

Evaluate
What works well and not so well?

Analyse
How do you know?
What might be the reasons?

Conclude
What conclusions have you reached?
What needs to be done?

Section 4
Quality and Standards
(Taught)

★ **Processes for assuring quality and standards, and in a multi-location / mode environment**

★ **Brief and concise descriptions of processes, which are evaluated, analysed and summarised**

★ **Five recommended key headings (+ others as relevant)……**

1. Academic Standards, eg
- Taught Programme oversight and decision-making
- Assessment policies and practices, eg:
  - Setting, marking, moderating
  - Assurances across multiple modes/locations
  - Boards
- Chief/External Examiners process (+ examples of key issues/actions)
- Induction and monitoring of new staff *(inc. familiarisation with policies, practices etc)*
- Monitoring and review processes; how outcomes are used/taken forward

2. Currency of the Curriculum, eg
- Development of skills (including graduate attributes)
- Use of research as a learning style
- Internationalisation of the curriculum
- Preparation for employment
- Incorporation of feedback from various sources (eg External Examiners, PSRBs, etc)
- Externality (eg comparison with other subjects and institutions; industrial advisory boards, employers)

3. Reference Points, eg
- SCQF and QAA Benchmark Statements
- Use of the QAA Quality Code and University Codes of Practices.
- Professional expectations: PSRBs; industry trends;
- Other reference points

4. Quality of Teaching, eg
- Monitoring teaching quality
- Processes to maintain quality (eg staff development, mentoring, peer review)
- Initiatives to enhance teaching (eg innovation in teaching)

5. Summary
- Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

Section 5
Quality and Standards
(Research)

★ **Processes for assuring quality and standards of research degree programmes**

★ **Brief and concise descriptions of processes, which are evaluated, analysed and summarised**

★ **Four recommended key headings (+ others as relevant)……**

1. Academic Standards, eg
- Research Degree provision oversight and decision-making
- Progress review arrangements
- Examination procedures (eg Examiner reports)

2. Quality of Supervision
- Induction, support and mentoring of less experienced supervisors
- Managing supervisory loads
- Initiatives to enhance supervision
- Processes to monitor and maintain quality of staff (eg staff development, mentoring, peer review)

3. Quality and Enhancement
- Monitoring and Review Processes and how outcomes are used/taken forward
- Feedback from other sources (eg funders, PSRBs, Industrial Advisory Boards, employers, etc)
- Use of the QAA Quality Code and University Codes of Practices.

4. Summary
- Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

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Section 6 Quality Enhancement (Taught)

- ★ Learning & Teaching Strategy
- ★ Analysis and comparison of statistics
- ★ Supporting international development
- ★ Four recommended key headings (+ others as relevant)….

1. Learning & Teaching Strategy / Enhancement Plan

- Engagement with and reflection upon activities in pursuit of the University's Learning & Teaching Strategy objectives (reference the School's L&T Strategy/Enhancement Plan):
  - enhancing student learning;
  - reshaping the learning environment;
  - developing staff;
  - growing and diversifying the student population.

2. Review and Analysis of Statistics

- A review and analysis of statistics and other performance indicators over recent years for all levels (UG, PGT) across all locations and modes of delivery.
- Comparisons over recent years should be included and trends reflected upon.

3. Internationalisation

- Activities and plans in support of international business development. eg
  - Intercampus Transfer, Student Mobility, Internships and Placements
  - Internationalisation of the Curriculum
  - International student recruitment

4. Summary

- Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

Section 7 Quality Enhancement (Research)

- ★ Innovation; Enterprise
- ★ Collaborations
- ★ Economic and Societal Impact
- ★ Thought leadership
- ★ Four recommended key headings (+ others as relevant)….

1. Research and Innovation Strategy

- Engagement with and reflection upon activities in pursuit of the Strategy 2025 Excelling in Research and Enterprise Implementation Plan:
  - Collaborations with funders and business
  - Research student 'thought leadership' (eg high profile publications, media engagement, social media profiles, communication with the public)
  - Economic and societal impact of research student work
  - Enterprise (eg commercial activity arising from research student work)

2. Review and Analysis of Statistics

- A review and analysis of statistics and other performance indicators over recent years for all levels and across all locations and modes of delivery, eg:
  - PGR - pass and failure rates, and rate of resubmissions
  - Thesis submission and completion timescales.
  - Complaints and appeals
- Comparisons over recent years should be included and trends reflected upon

3. Internationalisation

- Activities and plans in support of international business development and the University's internationalisation strategy, eg
  - Intercampus Transfer, Student Mobility, Internships and Placements
  - International joint and dual degrees
  - International student recruitment

4. Summary

- Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

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Appendices

★ As a minimum, documentation listed below should be appended to the Reflective Analysis document

- **Programme Specifications**
  For all taught programmes
  For all research programmes with taught elements
- **Academic Review**
  Previous review's action plan and progress report
- **Internal Audit**
  Most recent: report, action plan + progress report
- **Annual Monitoring and Review**
  Previous two years' report
- **Organisational Chart**
  Responsibilities for managing the discipline/programmes
- **School Learning and Teaching Strategy/Enhancement Plan**
- **School Research Strategy *(where available)***
- **List Enhancement activities/projects**

★ Other documents may be appended *(to be agreed with Academic Quality)*

★ Reduce the size of the Reflective Analysis by cross-referencing to appendices

Describe
High level summary of the process

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Analyse
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What might be the reasons?

Conclude
What conclusions have you reached?
What needs to be done?

Hints and Tips

★ Keep in mind the end purpose of the document

★ Each RA will vary in length, a rough guide is 15-30 pages

★ Reduce the size of the RA by cross-referencing to appendices

★ Keep factual information brief and concise

★ Emphasise the **evaluation** and **analysis** which will helpful

★ The content of the RA will help the Review Team prepare for meetings and reach conclusions……

Key Themes

Information in the RA will help the Review Team identify key themes, to then form questions to ask students (and may then be discussed with staff).

Exploration

If something is well described and evaluated there may be less of a need to explore in depth. **Standard topics** need to be explored to reach conclusions, **topics** include……

Conclusions

The Review Team will conclude on the effectiveness of processes for **maintaining academic standards** and will recommend whether programmes should be **re-approved** for ongoing delivery.

Example discussion topics……

Student Experience

- Student learning experience (taught)
  - eg induction, personal tutoring, IT, library, careers, employability, graduate attributes etc
- Student learning experience (research)
  - Eg induction, supervision, mentoring, development, teaching etc
- Quality of teaching
  - eg views on teaching, learning materials
- Assessment and Progress
  - eg criteria, feedback on assessment, progression, supervision, PGR review
- Student representation and feedback opportunities

Programme Quality & Academic Standards

- Progress and Assessment policies and practices
  - setting, marking, moderating (across multiple campuses)
  - PGR progress review
  - Quality of supervision
- Curriculum review and development (taught)
  - activity across multiple campuses
  - external benchmarks (eg incorporation of External Examiner comments; industrial relevance).
- Monitoring and Review processes and progressing outcomes
- Mechanisms for receiving and addressing student feedback (inc student surveys)