5 Academic Review
Guidance for Schools

This document, which serves specifically as guidance for staff within Schools, provides an overview of the main processes and procedures undertaken as part of an Academic Review. A 'Useful References and Web Links' document is available to use in conjunction with this guidance.

Purpose of Academic Review

Quality and Standards

To confirm that there are effective processes in place to ensure that academic standards are being maintained and that programmes, and the student learning experience, are of an appropriate quality.

Effectiveness

After reviewing documentation and meeting with students and staff, the Team will reach a conclusion on the implementation and effectiveness of such processes.

Re-approval

The Team will also make a recommendation to the University Committee for Quality and Standards with regard to the re-approval of programmes for ongoing delivery.

Scope of the Review

All locations and modes of study

Aggregated by discipline for UK Reviews); includes all programmes, modes and locations.

Aggregated by School for Dubai reviews; includes all programmes delivered at the Dubai Campus.

Experience of all students (undergraduate, postgraduate taught, postgraduate research).

Malaysia is subject to a separate bespoke process until all programmes receive full MQA accreditation.

Schedule of Review Dates

Five-year schedule

Five year schedule approved by the University Committee for Quality and Standards.

Dates agreed in consultation with Schools but distributed as evenly as possible between two semesters.

Sequence of Events

Pre- and post-activities

A 'Quality Assurance Briefing Paper' clearly sets out the sequence of events leading up to and following an Academic Review event, including:

o   School planning meetings
o   Selection and briefing of Teams
o   Submission of review documentation
o   The review event
o   Production of the outcome report and action plan
o   Approval by University committees

Planning, Preparation, Briefing

Planning meetings

Academic Review Advisors from the Academic Quality Team will meet with School representatives to discuss arrangements, such as:

> ➤ *Provision to be reviewed*
> ➤ *Groups of staff to be involved (and to lead)*
> ➤ *Nomination of external team members*
> ➤ *The schedule of meetings for the review event*
> ➤ *Review documentation to be produced and provided*

The Quality Enhancement Officer within the Academic Quality Team will discuss separately with School representatives preparations for, and delivery of, the Enhancement Workshop.

Briefings

Review Team members are required to attend a briefing session. Members will also receive briefing documentation.

Additionally, the Student Union provides training to student members of a review team.

Academic Review Documentation

The main review documentation is submitted in advance of the review. Other documentation should be made available at the event on request.

Reflective Analysis (RA)

In advance

(6 weeks)

Prepared by the Discipline Team/School and **signed off** by the School's Senior Management Team.

Submitted in advance: 6 weeks UK; 3 weeks Dubai

Existing documentation included as appendices:

Programme Specifications	**F**or all programmes being reviewed **A**ppended to the RA
Internal Audit	**R**equired only if there are high risk programmes **M**ost recent report, action plan, progress report **P**rovides a summary of high risk activities **A**ppended to the RA
Annual Monitoring and Review	**P**revious two year School reports *(and if available Discipline report)* **A**ppended to the RA
Organisational Chart	**S**etting out responsibilities for managing the programmes **E**ither detailed in the RA or appended
Learning and Teaching Enhancement Plan	**A**ppended to the RA *(unless already provided with AMR report)*
Enhancement Activities	**L**ist to be provided, either in the RA or as an appendix

Key and current activities to be discussed within the Quality Enhancement section of the RA

Other Documentation

In advance (2 weeks)	*Enhancement Workshop Brief*	**O**ne page; to include aims, objectives and intended outcomes **S**ubmitted 2 weeks in advance
At the event	*Course Descriptors Programme Handbooks*	**E**lectronic or online access only required **F**or all programmes being reviewed

Review Team Composition

Review Team	**R**oles and responsibilities are outlined within the document titled 'Review Team: Criteria, Roles and Responsibilities'. • **I**nternal academic members of staff *(one of whom will chair meetings with students and staff)* • **S**tudent members • **E**xternal academic subject specialist(s)
Review Advisors	• **Academic Quality Team**: Academic Review Manager/Facilitator/Co-ordinator • **S**tudent Union staff member *(pre- and post-review support)*

Review Event and Meetings

Structure	**T**he Review Team will meet with students and staff throughout the duration of the review. **T**he structure of the review will be agreed in collaboration with the School but it will follow a standard structure, customised to suit. **S**pecific lines of enquiry will be determined by the Review Team, although standard topics must be discussed with regard to quality and standards, and the student learning experience.
Duration	**T**ypical duration of a review is between 1.5 and 2 days.
Chairing	**M**eetings with staff and students are Chaired by the Chair of the Review Team. **P**rivate meetings are chaired by the Academic Review Manager.
Enhancement	**T**he event will include an enhancement workshop delivered by School staff.
Guidance	**F**urther information on discussion topics and the conduct of meetings can be found within the document titled 'Guidance for Review Teams'.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusion	**T**he Review Team will reach a conclusion regarding the overall effective management of processes, which are in place to ensure that academic standards

and the quality of programmes and the student learning experience, are able to be maintained and enhanced.

Conclusions should be evidence-based and represent the collective view of the Review Team.

Re-approval of Programmes	The Review Team will make a recommendation to QSC, with regard to the re-approval and ongoing delivery of programmes.
Recommendations	Where relevant, the Team may make recommendations, which the School/Discipline must respond to within an action plan, considered and approved by QSC. There are three types of recommendations:

> **For Action** *(must be undertaken)*
> **For Consideration** *(must be considered)*
> **For University** *(actions agreed by QSC)*

Feedback	The Review Team will feed back the conclusions, recommendations and points of positive feedback/good practice during a meeting with the Discipline's management team towards the end of the review event.

Post-Review Activity

Report	The Review Team will produce a report which will be submitted to the School within approximately 3 weeks.
Action Plan	The School will produce an action plan responding to the recommendations, within approximately 3 weeks. The report and action plan will be: approved by QSC; submitted to Senate and University Executive for information.
One-Year Progress	One year following the review, an update on the progress of actions will be submitted by the School for approval by QSC.
Completion	QSC will be asked to confirm completion of the review activity, which will be reported to the Senate.
Annual Summary	An annual summary report of all Academic and Academic-related reviews is presented to QSC.
Scottish Funding Council	Outcomes of Academic Reviews are reported annually to the Scottish Funding Council.
Ongoing Monitoring	School continues to monitor progress through the Annual Monitoring and Review process