Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy

Purpose of Policy

To outline the University's approach to annual monitoring, review and reporting.

Overview

Describes the University's annual monitoring, review and reporting processes.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

Applicable to all credit-bearing provision.

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Document control

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Consultation undertaken	Schools, Colleges, Senate Quality Assurance Committee
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Services
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	
UK Quality Code	Advice and guidance: Monitoring and Evaluation
Policies superseded by this policy	
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138.
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Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy

This document sets out the quality assurance processes for annual monitoring, review and reporting in place across all credit-bearing provision in the University. The University is responsible for its academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience. It is committed to reflecting on and systematically reviewing its provision and taking action to enhance it. The University is also answerable to a number of external bodies for the quality of its provision.

The University's quality framework is thus informed by the requirements of:
- The Scottish Funding Council
- The UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Expectations of external professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs)

The University's management of its academic standards and quality of the student experience is reviewed periodically by the Quality Assurance Agency (Scotland).

Annual Programme Monitoring

WHAT: Schools carry out annual programme monitoring, using a process which meets both local contexts and institution-wide requirements, considering a standard set of data and reporting using a standard template

WHEN: All programmes must be monitored annually and reports provided to the School Director of Quality in time to inform the preparation of the School annual quality report (due in late August each year).

Monitoring and review of provision is ongoing throughout the year through formal evidence-based discussion of student performance and progression data, teaching review meetings, taught and research programme monitoring, consideration of external examiner reports and student feedback. These inform the school annual quality report.

When conducting the annual programme monitoring process, Schools consider the sustainability of their courses and programmes (e.g. whether they are recruiting appropriately, whether any staffing issues need attention) and the strategic relationship between the programmes and the School's wider portfolio. As part of this, either via the annual quality review process or the annual planning process, Schools should explore those courses with student cohorts of less than 10 over the last three years and consider whether they remain financially sustainable and / or have a clear strategic rationale. In addition, three years after the introduction of a new programme, Schools revisit the original business case (including the Fees Strategy Group Programme Costing Template), revisit costings to ensure they remain appropriate, and review whether the programme is on track to be financially sustainable. Schools should have the flexibility to look at individual programmes separately, or to review their viability as part of a broader portfolio. This should either be done within the context of the annual quality monitoring processes or via an alternate School process.

> **Operational outline:**
> - **Schools** will decide on the optimum clustering of their programmes for Annual Programme Monitoring (i.e. single and/or joint honours programmes, clusters of similar programmes), to enable effective evaluation and reflection whilst avoiding duplication of effort. Annual Programme Monitoring does not require a separate process and can take place in existing

meetings, such as undergraduate/postgraduate/learning and teaching committees, or small groupings of programme directors and other relevant staff.

- **Schools** will consider the data listed in [Data to Support Annual Quality Processes](#) to support their reflection in a way that is meaningful to them.
- Annual Programme Monitoring will include consideration of course monitoring including both core and elective courses relating to the programme(s). Credit-bearing courses offered by a school which do not form a core part of a single programme (e.g. common courses, stand-alone courses taught by staff from several schools) and courses taken by large numbers of students from outwith the programme must also be reviewed annually within the Annual Programme Monitoring process. Stand-alone courses may be grouped together in a meaningful way (to be determined by the school) and an annual programme monitoring form completed for each group.
- Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), although not credit bearing, should be subject to appropriate course-level monitoring. Consideration should be given to aspects such as overall numbers, engagement, performance on activities, completion and student feedback. School Directors of Quality should be made aware of the outcomes of the monitoring of MOOCs in time to inform the preparation of the School annual quality report (due in late August each year).
- **Schools** can give consideration down to course level as relevant to the local context, however reporting will be at the level of the programme or programme clusters.
- Annual Programme Monitoring can feed in to school annual and strategic planning.
- **Colleges** will support schools and provide appropriate opportunities as necessary for briefing and support, with a particular emphasis on delivering an effective, streamlined approach.
- The effectiveness of Annual Programme Monitoring arrangements will be evaluated in internal periodic reviews.

School Annual Quality Report

WHAT: Schools report annually to Senate Quality Assurance Committee, considering a standard set of data and reporting using a standard [template](#)

WHEN: By late-August annually. Date will be confirmed by Academic Services.

Operational Outline:

The school annual quality report draws on the school's ongoing processes for review and reflection on its provision. All reflections should be evidence-based.

- The template makes provision for reporting on key institutional priorities.
- The annual reflection will draw on the school's annual monitoring and review processes where student performance and course-related issues are discussed, including annual programme monitoring based on the University template, Boards of Examiners' discussions, annual teaching review and programme review meetings.
- Themes identified in the annual report should contribute to the learning, teaching and research student experience element of the school annual plan.
- Schools will maintain a School quality model which is a description of how annual monitoring, review and reporting operates. The description states when and how the processes are carried out, and roles and responsibilities. If changes are made to the School quality model an updated copy should be submitted with the completed annual quality report

> in August. The process description will support continuity between School Director of Quality appointments.
> - The effectiveness of the school's monitoring and review arrangements will be evaluated as part of internal periodic reviews.

Timing

Quality reporting will be able to contribute to the learning, teaching and research student experience element of the school annual plan. The timescale means that issues arising after the reporting deadline will be reflected on in the next annual report, however, action to resolve urgent issues at all levels of provision should take place at the earliest possible stage.

The data available at the time of review in the [Data to Support Annual Quality Processes](#) should be considered. The outcome of resits and of taught postgraduate dissertations will be considered by schools in their next annual report. Postgraduate research issues which miss the summer reporting period can likewise be included in the next annual report. The majority of Boards of Examiners will have met by the time the annual report is being prepared and External Examiners' views will be available through the minutes of Boards of Examiners meetings: again the emphasis should be on reporting major issues, commendations relating to positive or innovative academic practice, or significant recommendations for action.

Student engagement with quality processes continues throughout the academic year, with issues identified during semester time from student-staff liaison committees or equivalent, student surveys and other mechanisms feeding into the school annual quality report. The school annual quality report will identify themes and actions being taken by the school which may be discussed in student-staff liaison committees (or equivalent meetings) at the start of the following academic year.

What Happens Next

School annual quality reports will be considered by Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), which will focus on recommendations for Schools to take forward, with support from colleges as appropriate.

> **Operational outline:**
> - Schools complete their annual quality reports by late August and send them to Academic Services and the college dean for quality.
> - Following receipt of the reports the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance will convene a meeting of a sub group of the college deans and the head of quality assurance and enhancement, Academic Services, to review the reports and prepare recommendations for consideration by SQAC at its first meeting in September. This consideration will also inform the University's annual report to the Scottish Funding Council, due at the end of September.
> - College quality committees will consider the report of the sub group.
> - SQAC will be responsible for tracking schools' actions planned and actions in response to SQAC's recommendations through schools reporting in their next annual quality report, and for reporting to schools on actions taken in response to issues they have raised for attention at University level. Colleges will similarly report to schools on actions raised for attention at college level.

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College Annual Quality Report

WHAT: Colleges report annually to SQAC using a standard template

WHEN: November (annually). Date will be confirmed by Academic Services.

Operational outline:
- College quality committees (or equivalent) will consider school annual quality reports and identify themes.
- Colleges will report annually to the SQAC meeting in November/December.

College Role in Annual Reporting and Quality Processes

Operational outline:
- Colleges will continue proactively to support schools in taking forward actions from annual reporting, including where colleges identify clustering of issues across schools where action would be more effective on a college-wide basis.
- Colleges will monitor Annual Programme Monitoring to ensure full coverage.
- In the first meeting of semester 1 following the August school quality report, college quality committees will identify good practice from school reports to share across the University.
- During the year college quality committees will support schools' preparations for annual reporting by: providing and discussing college benchmarked data for schools' reflections on performance, including degree classification, college level external examiners report themes, and student surveys data. Equality and diversity aspects will be highlighted where available.
- Colleges will support and develop student engagement in quality processes.
- College committees will support discussion and sharing of good practice.

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