GUIDELINES FOR ANNUAL QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

Approved by the University Board for Teaching and Learning, June 2019

[For the purposes of the processes described in this document, in Henley Business School, references to 'School' should be taken to mean 'programme area' and references to 'School Director of Teaching and Learning' should be taken to mean 'Programme Area Director' (except where the School Director of Teaching and Learning is fulfilling the function of the School Board for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience).]

Introduction and outline of process

1. The Annual Quality Assurance Review forms part of an inter-related set of quality assurance and planning processes (including Periodic Reviews and the School Planning for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning). These processes underpin the University's commitment to fostering a culture of continuing reflection and enhancement. Staff are consistently engaged in these practices and the Annual Quality Assurance Review seeks to capture the results of reflective discussions happening within Boards of Studies.

2. These guidelines on writing Annual Quality Assurance Reviews (AQAR) have had regard to the revised *Quality Code*[1] (published in May 2018) and associated *Advice and Guidance on Monitoring and Evaluation*[2] (published November 2018).

3. Through the Annual Quality Assurance Review process, Boards of Studies are asked to reflect critically on the management and operation of their programmes during the previous academic year focussing on successes, challenges, planned improvements (including those which arise from Schools' work on the Curriculum Framework), good practice which can be shared across the University, and evidence of impact on students' academic experience. Key points arising from this reflective process should be reported to the Sub-Committee on the Delivery and Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in the Annual Quality Assurance Review. Where improvements require central support or have wider implications beyond the School, this should be clearly flagged.

4. The Annual Quality Assurance Review should be no more than two sides of A4 in 11pt text. This should ensure that only salient points are reported and also help to minimise the burden of paperwork.

5. Work on the AQAR should be undertaken either over the summer or early in the Autumn Term, but needs to be completed in order that the report is submitted to the Autumn Term School Board for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience in mid-November. The advantage of earlier discussions is that that staff are able to consider the experiences of the year in review whilst they are still fresh and that they are also able to make plans to address any major issues for implementation at the start of the forthcoming session. It also provides the opportunity to inform

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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/monitoring-and-evaluation

the SPELT process by highlighting any major challenges which may need addressing. However, the full data will not be available until the Autumn Term once the results complete the annual cycle.

6. Boards of Studies should facilitate discussions to review the programmes for which they are responsible, including those delivered at branch campuses. Boards of Studies will have already reflected on many of the issues that will need to be reported via the AQAR during their normal course of business, as such any subsequent discussions may be relatively brief in order to draw together previous discussions and consider more recent data and events. The School (or Departmental) Director of Teaching and Learning, where possible, should be included in these discussions.

7. Initial thoughts with regard the AQAR should be shared with the School (or Departmental) Director for Teaching and Learning. This sharing of information can inform the creation of the School's Teaching and Learning Plan submitted as part of the School Planning and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (SPELT) process.

8. The Autumn Term Undergraduate Board of Studies should consider a draft of the AQAR and any outstanding data sets[3] and how they relate to the initial impressions captured in previous AQAR discussions or other observations about delivery of programmes in the previous session. If the final data sets are not available ahead of the BoS it may be necessary for the data to be reviewed outside of the meeting, with the AQAR being completed via Chair's Action. Some of this data will have been considered elsewhere (notably for the SPELT process) and Schools can use the outcomes of these discussions (if available) to inform this analysis.

9. The Autumn Term School Board for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience (SBTLSE) considers the Annual Quality Assurance Review submitted by the Boards of Studies (and their responses to reports of External Examiners). Where the UG AQARs are incomplete (because final data is unavailable), or PGT AQARs are not finalised, the SBTLSE will discuss the content available and provide feedback; the SDTL will then approve the Reports by Chair's Action.

10. The Annual Quality Assurance Review and External Examiners Reports (and School responses) are submitted to the appropriate Teaching and Learning Dean (TLD) (via the Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD) or the Programme Administration and Faculty Support Office, Henley Business School), who will consider and evaluate the reports in the context of the previous year's Annual Quality Assurance Review, the contextual data on which the reports rest and the most recent SPELT findings. This will happen early in the Spring Term.

11. The CQSD will support the TLDs in producing an overarching University Annual Quality Assurance Report (UAQAR), by identifying any issues that are common across Schools. The received AQARs (and any associated documentation) will form the University Annual Quality Assurance Report, which will highlight examples of good practice and set out any recommendations arising from common and/or significant issues identified. TLDs will also provide individual feedback to SBTLSEs (who, in turn, provide feedback to relevant Boards of Studies) at this stage on the content of their reports and any resulting actions/outcomes.

12. The University's Annual Quality Assurance Report is considered by DELT at the last meeting of the Spring Term. DELT produces a response to the reports and forwards the UAQAR and response to the University Board for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience at the end of the Spring Term. CQSD will refer back to the SBTLSEs (who, in turn, refer back to the relevant Boards of Studies) an extract from the minutes of the University Board for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience detailing its consideration of the reports and any relevant actions/outcomes.

13. In order to facilitate the effective dissemination of good practice, CQSD compiles a selection of examples of good practice from across the University for consideration by SBTLSEs and circulation

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[3] See paragraph 16 below

by the Teaching and Learning mailing list. CQSD then liaises with the TLDs in order to identify examples which can be developed into case studies and captured in the T&L Exchange[4].

14. CQSD and the TLDs will also identify examples of initiatives and developments which positively impact on the student academic experience. These will then form a useful bank of resources to be considered during curriculum reviews and the preparations for subject-level TEF. These will also be highlighted in the University Annual Learning and Teaching Report which is considered by Senate and Council.

Guidelines

15. The AQAR should not be undertaken in isolation. A discussion between relevant staff members should be held to identify items for inclusion in the report for submission to the SBTLSE.

16. The discussion should consider a range of data, available to the BoS at different times (see Timeline for Annual Quality Assurance Reviews for details). Data available in the **summer** includes:
    - Qualitative data, including student feedback (from module evaluations and Student-Staff Liaison Committees)
    - Comments from External Examiners (as noted in External Examiner Meetings)
    - Module Convenor/Programme Director discussions/reviews
    - Module results analysis
    - Student submissions from Course Reps (detailing student views on the successes and concerns arising from delivery of the programme during the academic session under review). (For relevant programmes, written feedback should also be requested from Student Reps at branch campuses.)
    - National Student Survey (NSS) results (available early-mid July
    - Provisional exam results

    And for consideration in the **Autumn Term**[5]:
    - Cohort Statistics Reports[6] (available late September), providing data on:
        i. progression;
        ii. withdrawals;
        iii. suspensions;
        iv. transfers;
        v. overall pass rates and Not Qualified rates; and,
        vi. degree classifications.
    - External Examiner Reports
    - Employability (Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) results)
    - League tables
    - Learning gain
    - Student retention and performance
    - Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) results (available September)
    - Progression and degree classification data broken down by equality and diversity characteristics (gender, ethnicity and disability status) (available in mid-late November)

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[4] The T&L Exchange in an online directory of teaching and learning expertise which captures examples of innovative practice in the University and makes them available to the teaching and learning community to promote the enhancement of teaching and learning. It can be found at https://blogs.reading.ac.uk/t-and-l-exchange
[5] Data is available on the Planning and Strategy Office website: www.reading.ac.uk/closed/planning/InternalReporting/PSO-IR-Teaching-and-Learning-T-and-L-Data.aspx
[6] These provide undergraduate and taught postgraduate cohort analysis data. Access to the Reports is arranged on request by the SIS Office (risis@reading.ac.uk). Schools should note that data contained in the Cohort Statistics Report should be considered as 'provisional' until mid-October.

17. In considering the data the Board of Studies may confirm or reject some of the assumptions made during earlier meetings and discussions. **Relevant contextual data should not be included in the narrative nor appended to the Report since they are considered elsewhere.**

Writing the report

18. There is no stipulated maximum word length for the report, since the amount of content will vary considerably depending on the number and nature of programmes covered by the relevant Board of Studies among other factors. However, Boards of Studies should seek to be concise and it is suggested that the length of the Annual Quality Assurance Review **should not normally exceed two A4 pages in 11 pt text**.

19. The report has no specified format and should be considered as a free-text activity (a short-form template is provided for convenience only). The report should list the programmes included in the review (as per the provided cover sheet). Schools are asked to address the following, and may find it useful to break up the report into similar sections:
    - **Successes** in the academic year (including positive actions undertaken to address issues highlighted in the previous AQAR)
    - **Challenges** in delivery programmes in the academic year (including where they have been unable to address issues highlighted in the previous AQAR)
    - **Enhancements** to the delivery of programmes (including those planned in response to identified challenges)
    - **Impacts** of changes to provision and how the School plans to capture/evaluate the impacts of any new or upcoming changes

20. In addition, Schools are asked to identify any **new** examples of innovative or **good practice** and an **action plan** to outline plans to address any significant challenges. These should be appended as separates table at the end of the report. The list of good practice should be limited to **five** items identifying the **theme/subject**, **example of good practice** and providing **contact details for further information**.

21. **Examples of good/innovative practice which have been reported in previous Annual Programme Reports should not be included**.

22. In detailing the **action plan** to address challenges and identified issues, the Board of Studies should complete the relevant table, outlining the **issue**, **performance indicators**, **person responsible for action**, **the proposed action**, and a **timeline for completion**.

23. **Boards of Studies are asked to report principally 'by exception'**. Where indicators show consistently good performance and no significant trends, changes or issues are to be reported, Boards of Studies should simply indicate this; no further commentary will be required. However, reasons should be identified and actions taken/proposed should be noted where:
    - significant issues are identified;
    - there is a significant deviation in data from one year to the next;
    - survey results are below the University average or there is a significant drop in score(s); or,
    - there is lack of progress in addressing previously identified issues.

24. **Boards of Studies are encouraged to adopt an evaluative approach in their reports**, reflecting upon various aspects of their programmes, rather than being overly descriptive. School Directors of Teaching and Learning should work closely with those responsible for producing the reports to promote this approach.

25. Boards of Studies are also asked to indicate how they plan to (or how programmes currently) fulfil the expectations of the Curriculum Framework.

26. For help and advice on writing your Annual Quality Assurance Review, please contact CQSD, School Director of Teaching and Learning or Teaching and Learning Dean.

Programmes involving a branch campus

27. Where Boards of Studies are responsible for programmes delivered at a branch campus these should be fully considered alongside other programmes in the AQAR process. Annual Quality Assurance Review should clearly distinguish between issues relating to delivery at the branch campus, issues relating to delivery in the UK and issues relating to provision at both campuses.

28. Any AQAR BoS meetings (or other 'discussion' meetings) should be timetabled at a time which is convenient for staff at both campuses to attend. Programme Leads should attend the AQAR meeting at the end of the year. Where this is not possible, Programme Directors should contact Programme Leads in advance of the AQAR meeting to ask for feedback to contribute to the discussions.

Programmes involving delivery with a partner

29. Where Boards of Studies are responsible for programmes involving delivery with a partner, such programmes may be considered by a Report which covers only those programmes or, where applicable, by a Report which covers cognate programmes delivered both at Reading and with a partner. In the latter case, each section of the Report should clearly identify issues relating to the delivery with a partner. In either case, Section 6 of the Report relating to the Management of Collaborative Provision should be completed.

30. Collaborative programmes will need to submit a Partner Programme Sub-report[7] for each partner to the Boards of Studies for consideration. This form should be completed by the partner institution and will inform the production of the relevant Annual Quality Assurance Review. Programmes which need to adhere to this requirement are listed on the Register of Collaborative Provision[8].

31. Programme Directors responsible for programmes involving delivery with a partner are additionally required to complete a Partnership Annual Review Form (Form 1)[9] at the same time as the AQAR. The purpose of the Form 1 is to monitor the financial and operational aspects of the collaborative programme, whereas the Annual Quality Assurance Review (and the associated Partner Programme Sub-report) focuses on academic quality. All Form 1s will be considered by the Global Engagement Strategy Board in the Spring Term.

Apprenticeship Programmes

32. Where a Board of Studies is responsible for an apprenticeship programme, the partnership between the University and the Client should be monitored on an annual basis to ensure that the articulation between the academic programme and the work-based learning is effective, that students are progressing as expected through the programme, and that good relations have been maintained between the University and the Client.

33. Programme Directors will be asked to complete the Apprenticeship Annual Review Form[10], covering provision across all clients for a particular programme, and this should be considered by Boards of Studies as part of their Annual Quality Assurance Review discussions.

34. The University Annual Quality Assurance Report, produced by DELT should include significant observations regarding the development and management of the University apprenticeship programmes. If provision increases in subsequent years an Apprenticeship Annual Report may be produced.

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[7] www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/Partner_Programme_Sub-Report_2017.docx
[8] www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/CollaborationWithOtherInstitutions/cqsd-register.aspx
[9] www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/Annual_partnership_monitoring_Form_1_Final_for_publishing.docx
[10] www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/Apprenticeship_Annual_Review_Form.docx

Timeline for annual quality assurance reviews

Summer Term 2019

Early June 2019	Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD) to publish the *Guidelines for Annual Quality Assurance Reviews* and circulate to TLDs. TLDs to circulate the guidelines to Schools.
Late June to mid Sep 2019	Chair of Board of Studies creates initial draft of report. Initial observations shared with SDTL to inform SPELT process

Autumn Term 2019

Late Sep 2019	Collaborative Provision Review documentation sent to relevant Programme Directors Cohort Statistics Report (from the SIS Office), External Examiners' Reports relating to undergraduate programmes, NSS results and other data to be made available to Schools and Departments[11].
Nov 2019	Final UG progression and degree classification data (by equality and diversity characteristics) to be made available to Schools and Departments[12].
Early Nov 2019	UG Boards of Studies to consider data and draft AQAR. BoS agrees the Annual Quality Assurance Reviews in respect of **undergraduate programmes.** The AQAR is then submitted for consideration by School Boards for Teaching and Learning by **mid November**.
Mid-late Nov 2019	PGT progression and degree classification data (by equality and diversity characteristics) to be made available to Schools and Departments.
11-22 Nov 2019	School Boards for Teaching and Learning should take place between **11-22 November**, with Boards of Studies taking place in the two-week window period prior to the SBTLSE
Nov 2019	Completed undergraduate AQAR to be sent to TLDs via CQSD by **Friday 29 November 2019**.
Late Dec 2019- early Jan 2020	External Examiners' Reports relating to taught postgraduate programmes and PTES results to be made available to Schools and Departments.

Spring Term 2020

Jan 2020	Boards of Studies (or the Chair of the BoS) to consider data and prepare Annual Quality Assurance Reviews in respect of **taught postgraduate programmes**[13] for submission to SDTL for consideration on behalf of the SBTLSE) by **Wednesday 29 January 2020**. Completed postgraduate AQAR to be sent to TLDs via CQSD by **Wednesday 5 February 2020**.

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[11] Data contained in the Cohort Statistic Report will be provisional and may not fully reflect the results of resits, complaints or appeals. Other data should be available via the T&L Dashboards here - www.reading.ac.uk/closed/planning/InternalReporting/PSO-IR-Teaching-and-Learning.aspx

[12] Details may be available in October, but this may not include results from Undergraduate examination resits

[13] Please note that this includes **all** programmes at level 7 (including MA, MSc, MA/MSc by Research, LLM, LLM by Thesis, MRes) and the taught element of professional doctorate programmes

Jan-Feb 2020	TLDs (with support from CQSD) to consider Annual Quality Assurance Reviews in order to draft the University Annual Quality Assurance Report. University Annual Quality Assurance Report to be submitted to DELT by **Thursday 20 February 2020**.
	TLDs to provide individual feedback to spring School Boards for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience (who, in turn, provide feedback to relevant Boards of Studies) on the content of their reports and any resulting actions/outcomes.
Jan-Feb 2020	CQSD to consider Annual Quality Assurance Reviews relating to collaborative programmes at undergraduate and taught postgraduate level and prepare the Annual Overview Report on Collaborative Provision.
27 Feb 2020	DELT to consider the University Annual Quality Assurance Report and the Annual Overview Report on Collaborative Provision 2018-19, and prepare a response for submission to the University Board for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience on **Tuesday 17 March 2020**.
17 Mar 2020	University Board for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience to consider the University Annual Quality Assurance Report, the Annual Overview Report on Collaborative Provision and the response from DELT.
	CQSD to refer back to the summer School Board for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience (who, in turn, refer back to Boards of Studies) an extract from the minutes of the University Board for Teaching and Learning and Student Experience detailing its consideration of the reports and any relevant actions/outcomes.

Summer Term 2020

Apr-May 2020	CQSD to compile a selection of examples of good practice from across the University to be shared with the Summer Term meetings of School Boards for Teaching and Learning and circulation via the Teaching & Learning mailing list.
	CQSD to liaise with TLDs to identify a small number of good practice examples which can be developed into case studies and captured in the T&L Exchange.