1. The periodic review took place on Wednesday 15 March 2006.

2. **Objectives of the review**

The objectives of the periodic review were to:

(i) Monitor the quality and standards of the programme.

(ii) Enable the teaching team to evaluate its provision, particularly student achievement of the appropriate academic standards, and the learning opportunities offered to students.

(iii) Enable an independent panel to review this self evaluation through consideration of documentation and discussions with staff and students.

(iv) Provide a means by which the teaching team was able to reflect on the success, development and possible improvement of the programme.

(v) Ask fundamental questions about the rationale, structure and resourcing of the programme.

(vi) Consider the educational aims of the programme.

(vii) Review teaching, learning and methods of assessment in their contexts.

(viii) Consider whether the BA in Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies should continue to run for a further period of up to six years.

3. The Periodic Review was conducted by a Panel chaired by the Director of Teaching and Learning of the Department of Applied Linguistics, School of Languages and European Studies, and also comprised two other internal members of academic staff (neither from the Institute of Education) and an external member who acts as a consultant in the area of Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies.

The Panel received a range of documentation in advance of the Review, including a Self-Evaluation Document prepared by the teaching team and also relevant programme specifications. During the Review Visit, the Panel considered other documentation and met with the academic staff. Members of the Panel also met with current students studying at Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the programme.
4. In addition to the meetings held with academic staff and current staff, the Panel considered a wide range of evidence, including samples of student work, copies of programme handbooks, minutes of relevant committees and statistical data. The Panel was also able to see the External Examiner reports for the three previous years, as well as comprehensive responses to these reports written by the Director of the programme. It also saw the report of a Panel chaired by the Director of Teaching and Learning of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences (of which the Institute of Education is a part) that had undertaken a Developmental Engagement with the academic staff in 2004.

5. **External peer contribution to the review process**

The external member of the Review Panel was present for the duration of the Periodic Review. They were appointed by the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences Board for Teaching and Learning, after considering nominations from the Director of the programme. The role of the External member was to provide subject expertise and judgement on the validity and appropriateness of the programme.

6. **Overview of the main characteristics of the programme**

The Panel agreed that the BA in Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies had developed well over the years, and that it offers a distinctive undergraduate experience.

7. **Conclusions on good practice and innovation**

Examples of good practice identified included:

(i) the breadth of learning opportunities available to students, including opportunities for students to work on substantial projects both independently and in groups.

(ii) the successful integration of academic and practice-based learning.

(iii) the role played by the Support Manager in supporting students in their teaching and learning.

(iv) exemplary integration of careers management into the core curriculum.

8. **Conclusions on quality and standards**

The Panel concluded that the BA in Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies provides a unique learning experience for its students. It brings together a very varied range of disciplines that cohere well within the programme. It also develops the potential of students with a wide range of learning needs.
9. **Conclusions on currency and validity of the BA in Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies**

The Panel agreed that the BA in Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies remained current and valid and recommended that it be re-approved to run for a further six years.

The University Board for Teaching and Learning approved these recommendations in the Summer Term 2006.

### 9. Summary of Key Recommendations

#### Aims and outcomes

(i) *Aims and outcomes:* The teaching team to review the modules on the programme, paying particular attention to their inter-relationships and how the learning outcomes are expressed.

(ii) *Curricula:* The teaching team to consider whether study skills should become a compulsory component of the curriculum for all students at either Part 1 or Part 2, to help assist students reflect upon such matters as academic writing, critical thinking, and the linking practice and theory.

(iii) *Assessment:* The teaching team to review of all module descriptions to ensure they include all of the information required by the University on the assessment of modules and to ensure that the information is provided in the manner required by the University as set out in its template for module descriptions.

(iv) *Assessment:* The teaching team to re-consider the assessment strategy, and whether the Deaf Studies strand is not as overtly assessed as the two other strands of the programme.

(v) *Assessment:* The teaching team to better cross-reference feedback given to students on coursework feedback sheets with the criteria of assessment included on those sheets.

(vi) *Assessment:* The teaching team to consider whether ‘Blackboard’, the University’s virtual learning environment, might be better used to advise students on recurring and/or generic problems that come to light during assessment.

(vii) *Enhancement:* The teaching team to consider whether a programme review at the end of each year would prove useful as a mechanism for ensuring that student and staff feedback can more systematically inform programme development.

(viii) *Teaching and Learning:* The teaching team to consider whether increased peer observation would help improve the quality of teaching and learning and for embedding good practice.
(ix) **Student progression:** The teaching team to consider the appropriateness of a pre-sessional British Sign Language course for students without this skill on entry to the programme.

(x) **Learning resources:** The teaching team to consider whether it might make better use of the University’s central services with help towards the promotion of the programme, including marketing and publicity, especially with a view to recruiting more deaf students.

(xi) **Learning resources:** The teaching team to consider collecting data on its past students (additional to that collected centrally) in order to be able to demonstrate to prospective students the types of career (and other) directions that graduates of the programme take, and the successes that graduates of the programme enjoy.

10. **Summary of actions taken in response to the Review**

   (i) **Aims and Outcomes:** The teaching team has committed to reviewing all modules over a 2-3 year period, with a view to alterations to modules and module specifications for the 2007-08 academic year. The process of review will assess the conceptual underpinning of the course, identify core texts and make the conceptual mapping transparent to all involved with the programme.

   (ii) **Curricula:** During the course of the 2006-07 academic year the teaching team will assess the requirements for each module that they deliver, including study skills. More immediately, the study skills elements of Part 1 has been enhanced for the 2006/07 session.

   (iii) **Assessment:** The teaching team has recognised that the assessment of modules needs to be formalised better within module descriptions and is addressing this issue. In addition, a number of changes in relation to student feedback have been made.

   (iv) **Assessment:** The teaching team has noted the recommendation made by the Panel with regards to the Deaf Studies strand. Its view is that Deaf Studies is woven throughout all modules on the programme, and that the issue alighted upon by the Panel, that the Deaf Studies strand is not as overtly assessed as the two other strands of the programme, can be adequately addressed by a better iteration of the centrality of Deaf Studies to all modules on the programme.

   (vi) **Enhancement:** The teaching team has agreed to establish a programme review at the end of each year.

   (vii) **Teaching and Learning:** The teaching team will develop further its use of peer observation.
(viii) **Student progression:** Regarding British Sign Language, various options for a pre-sessional British Sign Language course for students without this skill on entry to the programme are under consideration. These include the possibility of a session in Freshers’ Week or a longer ‘crash’ course prior to Freshers’ Week.

(ix) **Learning Resources:** Regarding the better promotion of the programme, work is ongoing on filming of elements of the programme towards the production of a promotional DVD. In addition discussions are on-going about a website.