SUMMARY OF THE PERIODIC REVIEW OF PROGRAMME IN THE
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

1. Programme covered by the Periodic Review

MA in Organisation, Planning and Management in Education

2. Date of the Periodic Review

The Periodic Review took place on 16 and 17 March 2006

3. Objectives of the Periodic Review

The objectives of the Periodic Review were to:

- Monitor the quality and standards of the degree programme under Review;
- Enable the Institute of Education to evaluate their taught programme provision and in particular to evaluate student achievement of the appropriate academic standards, and the learning opportunities offered to students to support their achievements;
- To enable an independent Panel to review this self-evaluation through consideration of documentation and discussions with staff and students;
- Provide a means by which the Institute of Education was able to reflect on the success, development and possible improvement of the taught programme that they offered;
- Ask fundamental questions about the rationale, structure and resourcing of the programme under Review;
- Consider the educational aims and objectives of the programme, and success in meeting these;
- Review teaching, learning and methods of assessment in their contexts;
- Consider whether the programme under Review should continue to run for a further period of up to six years;

4. Conduct of the Periodic Review

The Periodic Review was conducted by a Panel chaired by the Director of Teaching and Learning of the University’s School of Arts and Communication Design and also comprising two other internal members of academic staff (neither from the Institute of Education) and two external academic members.

The Panel received a range of documentation in advance of the Review, including a Self-Evaluation Document prepared by the Institute of Education, relevant programme specification and handbooks and copies of External Examiners’ reports. During the Review visit the Panel considered other documentation and met with relevant staff from the School and from University service departments. Members of the Panel also met with current
and past students from the MA in Organisation, Planning and Management in Education.

5. **Evidence Base**

In addition to the meetings held with academic staff and current students, the Panel considered a wide range of evidence, including Minutes of relevant committees, copies of programme handbooks, statistical data and samples of student work. The Panel was able to see External Examiners reports for the three previous years, as well as responses to these. The evidence seen demonstrated that current aims and learning outcomes were being successfully achieved in practice.

6. **External peer contributors to process**

The external members of the Review Panel were present for the duration of the Periodic Review leading discussions on areas relating to the educational aims and learning outcomes of the provision, curricula and assessment, and teaching and learning, which made use of their subject expertise.

They were appointed by the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences Board for Teaching and Learning after considering nominations from the Institute of Education. The role of these External members was to provide subject expertise and to provide an expert judgement of the validity and appropriateness of the programmes under Review.

7. **Overview of the main characteristics of the programmes covered by the review**

The Panel agreed that comparative and international perspectives were integrated into the teaching and were supported by the mix of students on the programme, from many different countries. Students present their own perspectives and experiences and appreciate the variety of material across modules. They were given the opportunity to pursue their own specialisms but also do something in a different discipline.

The programme was enhanced by an over-riding community spirit and identity, supported by students sitting on the Board of Studies and the use of a Student Liaison Officer.

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

The Panel agreed that the programme provided an excellent bridge between comparative theory and research and critical engagement with international policy and practice.

Students were encouraged and supported from their initial application (in particular by the Course Secretary) right through to graduation. Staff created and maintained a community amongst students and staff, ensuring good rates of progression.
9. **Conclusions on quality and standards**

The Review Panel concluded that:

- intended learning outcomes of the programmes were being obtained by students but these could be expressed more clearly in the course documentation in order to reflect the more challenging achievements of the teaching and learning;
- quality and standards were being achieved; and
- the programme specifications were being delivered.

10. **Conclusions on currency and validity of the programmes under Review**

The Panel agreed that the programme was intellectually rich and connected in a timely way with contemporary re-invigoration of comparative and international studies across the social sciences. The curriculum addressed complex global issues and covered a range of different areas. There was evidence that students received good support from staff and there was a feeling of community within the programme. The quality of the programme was apparent from discussions with staff and students, and looking at students’ work.

The Review Panel, therefore, concluded that the programme under review remained current and valid and recommended to the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences Board for Teaching and Learning that, subject to the programme team addressing the issues shown below, the following degree programme be **re-approved** to run for a further six years, or until such time as the next Periodic Review of programmes in the Institute of Education:

MA in Organisation, Planning and Management in Education

The University Board for Teaching and Learning approved these recommendations on

11. **Recommendations**

(a) Develop programme documentation, in particular the programme handbook, to better represent the rich and timely content of the programme by (i) renewing and expanding on the narrative and (ii) updating and broadening references.

(b) The Review Panel supports the planned introduction of Blackboard and encourages its introduction for the session 2006/7. This should provide an effective means of bringing together resources and the discussion forum may be used to support and enhance the sense of community that is already evident amongst students on the programme.

(c) Clarify the way in which (i) points raised by students at staff student meetings and (ii) external examiner recommendations are acted upon. The feedback loops could be made more explicit in minutes of
meetings and other documentation with details of specific actions, responses and dates.

(d) Reconsider the marketing materials, approaches and strategies in order to position the programme more effectively in the international market and to ensure that the marketing material reflects the renewed narrative.

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(i) In response to (a): The Board of Studies has begun a process of expanding the narrative in the programme documentation to represent the rich and timely content of the programme including key aspects of globalisation and comparative perspectives.

(ii) In response to (b): The Board of Studies is consulting students to decide how Blackboard can be best adopted by the programme.

(iii) In response to (c): Points decided at student-staff meetings and feedback form External Examiners are being followed-up as agenda items in Boards of Studies meetings, through the Student Liaison Officer, and in follow-up student-staff meetings.