

Introduction and Scope

1. This chapter includes the detailed procedures for the periodic review of all SGUL programmes. It encompasses the:
 - ♦ definition of programme review;
 - ♦ aims of programme review;
 - ♦ principles of review;
 - ♦ Review Process.
2. Procedures for the review of collaborative programmes are not covered in this section of the Quality Manual. Please refer to section E for procedural arrangements for collaborative programmes.

Definition of programme review

3. Review is the process of periodic evaluation of a programme based on the accumulated evidence about the quality of the learning experience available to students taking the programme and the standards achieved by those students. Review, which is based on the evidence drawn from monitoring and other sources, is conducted by the team of staff responsible for the delivery of the programme. The results of the review are considered by a panel of academic and professional peers.

Aims of review

4. Review aims to ensure that:
 - ♦ a culture in which staff reflect on the quality of the programmes that they deliver is fostered;
 - ♦ the aims and learning outcomes of the programme continue to be at the appropriate level;
 - ♦ the curriculum is current and meets the needs of its intended market;
 - ♦ the strategies for teaching, learning and assessment continue to be effective;
 - ♦ the programme is delivered in accordance with St George's policy and procedures;
 - ♦ the standards set are appropriate to the award (in the light of the national qualifications frameworks and, for undergraduate programmes, benchmark statements);
 - ♦ the programme is supported by adequate physical and human resources;
 - ♦ that annual monitoring arrangements are operating effectively;
 - ♦ up to date programme and module handbooks (or equivalent) are available;
 - ♦ a Programme Specification is issued or reissued;
 - ♦ good practice and innovation are identified and disseminated and opportunities for enhancement are captured;
 - ♦ information is provided to support strategic and resource planning.

Principles of review

5. Review procedures are based on the following principles:
 - ♦ review is document based and, wherever possible, makes use of existing documents. A self-evaluation is the only document prepared solely for the purpose of the review;
 - ♦ review takes the form of constructive dialogue between teaching teams and panels of independent peers including external experts;
 - ♦ review depends on the analysis of the evidence available to determine whether programmes continue to meet their aims, and that those aims continue to be valid;
 - ♦ students play an important role in the review of the programmes taken by those students. Students must be included by programme team in the review process. Panels will meet with current and former students in the course of the review. Panels also include students as full members of the review panel;
 - ♦ Review panels offer advice to Senate on whether the approval period of a programme should be extended.

The Review Procedure

6. The factors that determine when a review will be held
 - ♦ the need for a review anticipated by the programme designers at point of validation;
 - ♦ a requirement from the validation panel for a review to be held at a specified point;
 - ♦ a change in the requirements, curricular or otherwise, of a professional or statutory body;
 - ♦ the timing of a professional, statutory body or QAA visit;
 - ♦ an intention on the part of a course team to introduce major changes to a programme in the future through the modifications process (see section D of this Manual);
 - ♦ the requirements of external educational contracts;
 - ♦ the period since the previous comparable review.
7. In the absence of any particular factor precipitating a review, a programme will normally be reviewed five years (and no more than six years) after the previous review was held. The variation is connected to the length of a programme so that the period between reviews is longer for longer programmes. This ensures that sufficient cohorts of students have completed a programme to allow the review of that programme to be meaningful.

Timetable for reviews

8. Each monitoring committee (TPCC, UPC) publishes a schedule of reviews for the programmes for which it has responsibility. This schedule is renewed annually so that it is possible for the monitoring committee to make a recommendation to defer, bring forward or cancel a review, for example, to aid preparations for a professional body visit or because a programme is to be withdrawn. Recommendations are made to QAEC; authority to defer, bring forward or cancel a review rests with QAEC.
9. QAEC will maintain a register setting out the validation and review history of all programmes. At its final meeting of the academic year, QAEC will confirm the programmes

to be reviewed in the next academic year. The 2020-21 periodic review schedule is included as an appendix to the Quality Manual (Appendix C1: Periodic Review Schedule).

Business case re-approval

10. As part of the periodic review process, the Education and Student Strategy Committee will receive and approve the updated business case for the programme. The updated business case will include:
 - The costs of delivering the programme for a period determined by the Finance Department. The costs will include teaching costs, the costs of professional support staff and any physical resources.
 - Income from tuition fees and other sources generated by the programme for a period determined by the Finance Department,
 - Income and expenditure projections for a period determined by the Finance Department including investments in staff and infrastructure,
 - The validity of the assumptions underlying the original business case.
11. The business case should be accompanied by a completed Overview Form (Appendix C4).
12. The Education and Student Strategy Committee may decide that a programme is not viable on the basis of its review of the business case. If that is the case, the periodic review will not go ahead and the programme closure procedure outlined in section A of this manual will be invoked.

Relationship between review and revalidation

13. A programme may be revalidated (rather than reviewed) if:
 - ♦ the programme has undergone significant change in the period since the previous validation or review event;
 - ♦ the programme team intends to introduce major changes to the programme and seek approval for those changes from a validation panel;
 - ♦ revalidation is the requirement of a professional body;
 - ♦ the responsible committee considers that the programme would benefit from the more intensive scrutiny afforded by revalidation.
14. Programme teams can seek advice from the Quality and Partnerships Directorate on whether revalidation is the appropriate procedure for considering any planned changes.

Course or programme team responsibilities in the review process

15. Course or programme teams are expected to:
 - ♦ identify a review leader to prepare documents;
 - ♦ nominate external panel members;
 - ♦ submit an updated business case to the Education and Student Strategy Committee for approval;
 - ♦ submit documents on schedule;

- ♦ ensure that the documents submitted for a review comply with institutional requirements in terms of content, coverage and standard;
- ♦ ensure that students are available to meet with the review panel. The date and time of the review shall be selected to maximise opportunities for student engagement. Students should be invited to attend by the programme team as soon as the date is agreed;
- ♦ ensure that, where relevant, practitioners, clinicians and employers are available to meet with the panel.

Panel membership

- 16.** Panels should include sufficient experience and expertise to be able to reach a judgment on all aspects of the programme under review. Panels will normally include:
 - ♦ A chair identified by the Quality and Partnerships Directorate from a QAEC-approved list of panel chairs (see appendix A4 in the section of this Manual on validation);
 - ♦ For professional programmes, an external panel member with professional expertise relating to the programme;
 - ♦ An external panel member with appropriate academic expertise;
 - ♦ The student reviewer(s);
 - ♦ internal panel member(s) with an area of expertise relevant to the programme as appropriate. Internal panels may be nominated by monitoring committee chairs and are drawn from the pool of experienced panel members.

- 17.** It is the responsibility of the Department or Institute taking the lead in curriculum development to nominate external panel members. Nominees may be contacted by the Department / Institute regarding willingness to take part and availability. Nominations should be accompanied by a rationale for the nomination and the CV of the nominee. Nominations will be considered against the following criteria:
 - ♦ Academic and professional experience, including experience of curriculum development, relevant to the proposed programme,
 - ♦ Familiarity with UK Higher Education,
 - ♦ Independence: conflicts of interest may arise if a nominated panel member has a recent (within five years) and close association with SGUL for example as a former member of staff, as a former student or through collaborative research. External examiners will not normally be eligible to serve as members of a periodic review panel until a period of three years has lapsed.

- 18.** Nominations will be scrutinised by the Quality and Partnerships Directorate for suitability in consultation with the panel chair as appropriate. Nominations may be rejected at this stage.

- 19.** The Quality and Partnerships Directorate is responsible for confirming arrangements with approved panel members and for providing guidance material. SGUL pays a fee to external panel members. The Director of Quality & Partnerships will confirm the fee (Appendix A5 in the section of this Manual on Validation).

Review documents

- 20.** Some periodic review documents are made available to the panel in advance of the meeting. The documents that are usually made available in advance are listed in paragraph 23. These documents will usually be sent to panel members four weeks before the date of the periodic review meeting. Additional documents are made available to the panel on the day of the periodic review. These documents are listed in paragraph 24.

Self-evaluation document (SED)

- 21.** The SED is a succinct, evidence-based evaluation of the programme during the period preceding the review. The SED is an opportunity for the programme team to highlight strengths and identify areas for improvement. As such it will usually include:
- a) a statement of the scope and intended purpose of the review. The statement will include an outline of the way in which the review process has been managed and contributions from different stakeholder groups have been sought;
 - b) a summary of the changes to the programme that have been made during the period of the review and the rationale for those changes;
 - c) an overview of the most recent annual monitoring reports;
 - d) The profiles of applicants and enrolled students and the extent to which admissions policies support fair access (see paragraph 22).
 - e) an analysis of student performance by cohort identifying different levels of performance of students with protected characteristics (see paragraph 22);
 - f) a summary of external examiner reports and an account of responses made to issues raised by external examiners;
 - g) a summary of the outcomes of student evaluation and, for undergraduate programmes, NSS results;
 - h) DLHE and Graduate Outcomes data, where relevant identifying different outcomes for students with protected characteristics;
 - i) The extents to which the improvement plans set out in recent annual monitoring reports have been achieved.
 - j) the contribution of research, and the professional activities and scholarship of staff to the renewal of the programme and the staff development plans and priorities;
 - k) an account of further consultations with students, employers, clinicians and professional bodies, where relevant;
 - l) if appropriate, a statement explaining how the interests of students enrolled on the programme will be protected in the light of changes to the programme made as a result of the review;
 - m) the resource requirements for the programme and the extent to which these may have changed since the programme was approved document;
 - n) A statement on how the programme contributes to or meets the Institution's Strategic Plan and core values (and any subsidiary plans that support the Strategic Plan such as the Education Strategy).
 - o) Intentions in the form of an Action Plan for improving teaching quality, the learning environment and students' outcomes and learning gain.

22. For undergraduate programme, the commitments in the SGUL Access and Participation Plan relating to access, continuation and student success are key reference points.
23. The SED will be accompanied by the following documents:
- a) The Programme Specification (see section J of this Manual);
 - b) Annual Programme Monitoring Reports (for the previous three years);
 - c) External Examiner Reports (for the previous three years);
 - d) Programme and Module Guides (or equivalent) if provided in advance;
 - e) Programme Regulations;
 - f) Schemes of Assessment;
 - g) Staff CVs (an optional template is provided as Appendix A16)
 - h) Minutes of the panel that approved the programme;
 - i) Any report from a professional statutory and regulatory body
 - j) Evidence grids for panel members (see paragraph 32).
24. The following documents will be made available to the panel on the day of the periodic review:
- a) The original validation document and any supplementary documents;
 - b) Course Committee minutes (for the previous three years);
 - c) Module Guides if not provided in advance;
 - d) Assessment briefs, assessment criteria and guidance for markers;
 - e) Samples of student work (showing how marking has been moderated and feedback provided to students);
 - f) Student feedback questionnaires and analysis.
25. Some document listed in paragraph 23 may be made available on the day of the review. For example, for large and complex programmes it may be impractical to distribute all external examiner reports and module guides in advance. Also, some documents listed in paragraph 24 may be made available to the panel in advance of the meeting. The balance between advance documents and documents made available on the day of the review will be discussed and agreed with the Quality and Partnerships Directorate.

Scrutiny of the Self-evaluation document

26. The chair of the monitoring committee will have the authority to decide whether the periodic review documentation including the self-evaluation document is reviewed by the monitoring committee before it is submitted to the Quality and Partnerships Directorate. The Course Director (or leader for the review) may in any case seek informal advice from the monitoring committee on the suitability of the SED with the agreement of the monitoring committee chair.

Revalidation documents

27. The documents required for revalidation are set out in the section of this Manual that relates to validation (section A). In addition, a self-evaluation document cross-referenced

to Annual Programme Monitoring Reports and External Examiner reports will also be required.

Preliminary meeting

- 28.** A preliminary meeting between the Quality and Partnerships Directorate and the review leader may be held to prepare for the periodic review meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to set the agenda and agree terms of reference, specify documents, agree themes and likely outcomes for the review. Preliminary meetings will include the periodic review panel chair if a chair has been identified.

The Review Meeting

- 29.** The review meeting will normally include the following elements:

- ♦ An extended private meeting at which the panel members review the evidence submitted in advance and on the day;
- ♦ a private meeting of the panel to formulate an agenda;
- ♦ a private meeting of the panel with students – a briefing note is available for students who will meet with the panel (Appendix C2: Guidance Notes for students meeting periodic review panels);
- ♦ an open meeting of the Department with the teaching team (and if relevant, the Institute Director, Dean, Head of School and other staff with a role in supporting the programme);
- ♦ an open meeting with commissioner s and/or placement providers if appropriate;
- ♦ a private meeting of the panel to determine the outcome of the meeting;
- ♦ feedback to the teaching team from the panel.

Review criteria

- 30.** When a programme is reviewed, it is assessed against the same criteria by which new programmes are validated and these are listed below. The approval criteria are aligned with the OfS general ongoing conditions of registration, in particular the B conditions. The Periodic Review Panel will ensure that:

- a) There is a demand for the programme,
- b) The arrangements for the recruitment, selection and admission of students are fair, clear and explicit,
- c) The aims of the programme are clearly expressed,
- d) The intended learning outcomes for the programme are clearly specified, consistent with its aims and ensure an educational challenge appropriate for the subject and level being taught,
- e) There is an appropriate balance between delivery methods, for example lectures, seminars, group work or practical study, as well as an appropriate balance between directed and independent study or research,

- f) The curriculum is coherent for example in relation to its academic elements, the acquisition of practical skills and personal and professional development,
- g) The curriculum is well-structured for example in terms of progression, the balance between core and optional elements and breadth and depth,
- h) The curriculum is up to date, taking current research into account and, if appropriate, the requirements of professional and regulatory bodies,
- i) The curriculum is inclusive and takes account of the needs of all students including those in protected characteristic groups,
- j) The strategy for assessing the intended learning outcomes is suitable,
- k) Opportunities for students to receive feedback on their assessments and feedforward to help them prepare for future assessments are built into the assessment strategy.
- l) The opportunities available to graduates from the programme have been considered,
- m) The necessary resources are available to support the programme,
- n) The programme is co-ordinated with other activities and programmes within SGUL,
- o) Stakeholders (e.g. patients, service users and carers; employers or employer groups) have been appropriately involved in the development of the programme,
- p) Information about the course is accurate and accessible. It assists students in making informed decisions before applying and ensures that they understand their responsibilities in respect of their learning (see also Section G: Student Information),
- q) Arrangements are in place for evaluating the quality of the programme that allow students to comment on their experience as learners and understand how their feedback will be used to enhance the programme.

31. In addition to the above criteria, Periodic Review Panels will also assess the following:

- r) the contribution of research, staff development and the professional activity and scholarship of staff (as teachers and subject specialists) to the development of the programme;
- s) the use made of reports from professional or statutory bodies;
- t) the analysis of entry, progression (retention) and completion data;
- u) the thoroughness of the responses to issues raised in External Examiner reports;
- v) the collection and use of feedback from students;
- w) the use of feedback from placement providers, employers and others;
- x) DLHE and Graduate Outcomes data, where relevant.
- y) The suitability of the team's future plans to build on the strengths of the programme and remedy any weaknesses.

32. Periodic review panels members will be provided with evidence grids (Appendix C3). These grids, which are mapped against the review criteria set out above, are intended to support panel members in the evaluation of the evidence available to them.

Authority of the Periodic Review panel

33. The panel reviews programmes on behalf of Senate. The judgements of the Committee are subject to Senate ratification. The panel is asked to:

- ♦ Decide whether the approval period of the programme can be extended;
- ♦ Endorse the team's Action Plan to enhance teaching quality, the learning environment and student outcomes and learning gain (if the panel recommends extension of the approval period of the programme)
- ♦ identify areas, if any, in which improvements to the programme might be made and to identify action points in relation to those areas. Action points may be categorised as essential, advisable or desirable
- ♦ set a timeline for responding to action points;
- ♦ commend areas of good practice identified by the panel;
- ♦ identify opportunities for enhancement;
- ♦ propose a date for the next review of the programme.

34. If the panel is not able to confirm, on the basis of the evidence available to it, that a programme is being effectively monitored, it may recommend to Senate that the programme be revalidated in the next academic year.

The review report

35. The review report will normally:

- ♦ record the panel's decision, and action points identified by the panel;
- ♦ record the date for the next review of the programme;
- ♦ provide a commentary on the reason for the panel's decisions particularly the reasons for any action points;
- ♦ list any substantive issues discussed that did not lead to conditions or recommendations;
- ♦ identify any staff development needs;
- ♦ highlight the areas of good practice identified by the panel.
- ♦ Confirm that the Panel's decision was taken with reference to the OfS Conditions of Registration

36. The report will also indicate the timeframe in which the response to the action points should be made and allocate responsibility (usually to the panel chair) for ensuring the adequacy of the response to the action points.

37. Senate will be asked to ratify recommendations of the panel at its next available meeting.

38. To maximise the enhancement potential of periodic review and to meet the requirement for providing public information about quality management processes, confirmed reports will be circulated as follows: Senate, QAEC and the monitoring committee chair. Periodic review reports will also be published on the SGUL website.

Evaluation of review processes

39. The Assistant Registrar (timetabling) will invite all panel members to complete an evaluation questionnaire. Course Leaders will also be invited to complete a questionnaire. Governance Legal and Assurance Services is responsible for analysing the results of the evaluation questionnaires. Findings will be included in the annual report on validation and review activity submitted to QAEC in the autumn term by the Quality and Partnerships Directorate. Evaluation forms are published in the section of this Manual relating to validation (Appendices A9 and A10).

Compliance with QAA's UK Quality Code

40. Compliance with the Expectations and Core practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) will be monitored by QAEC from time to time:

Monitoring and evaluation of higher education is an essential process within providers, forming a fundamental part of the academic cycle. It can, and should, look at all aspects of the higher education experience. All higher education providers are involved in course monitoring and review processes as these enable providers to consider how learning opportunities for students may be improved. (QAA Advice and Guidance for "Monitoring and Evaluation")

41. Compliance will usually be monitored by considering a mapping document prepared by QPD.

Sources of advice

42. Advice about the periodic review process is available from:
- ♦ The Quality and Partnerships Directorate

Forms and guidance notes

43. The following forms and guidance notes are available from the Quality and Partnerships Directorate:
- a) Appendix C1: Periodic Review Schedule
 - b) Appendix C2: Guidance Notes for students meeting periodic review panels
 - c) Appendix C3: Evidence grid
 - d) Appendix C4: Business Case Overview Form