Code of practice for annual programme review: taught programmes

Academic year 2020/21

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Introduction

1.   This *Code of practice for annual programme review: taught programmes* applies to all taught programmes at the University of Surrey and its Associated and Accredited Institutions which lead to the University awards as described in the *Regulations for taught programmes*.

Definitions

2.   ***Programme*** – any stand-alone, approved curriculum followed by a student, which contributes to a qualification from the University of Surrey or otherwise carries academic credit. The provision may be of any length or credit value, and includes pre-defined programmes leading to a specific qualification, multidisciplinary programmes and pathways through a modular scheme.

3.   ***Annual Programme Review*** – is a regular, systematic process, which takes place annually.

Purpose, aims and scope of the annual programme review process

4.   The annual programme review process is aimed at continuous improvement of the quality of the taught programmes offered by the University. The main function of the annual programme review process is to provide a regular check on ongoing learning and teaching provision at an operational level.

5.   The annual programme review process enables the University to reflect on:

- existing learning opportunities for students

- achieved academic standards

- the continuing currency and relevance of learning opportunities and academic standards

6.   The annual programme review process covers all undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes leading to a University award or stand-alone credit and offered by the University of Surrey and its Associated and Accredited Institutions.

7.   The principles of the annual programme review process are based on the Expectations and Core and Common practices of the Quality Assurance Agency *UK Quality Code for Higher Education.*

8.   The effectiveness of the annual programme review process is ensured by following up recommendations for appropriate actions and the provision of clear roles, responsibilities and reporting processes for all members of staff involved. As a result, the effective and prompt follow-up of recommendations will protect the interests of current students and allow any staff and resource development needs that are identified to be addressed.

9.   The University considers the annual programme review process to be a key contributor to its quality enhancement policy, helping to identify and disseminate good practice across all programmes.

10.   A separate annual report must be produced for every programme of study, or cluster of related programmes (pathways).

11.   All permanently or temporarily closed programmes must undertake annual programme review during the process of teaching out, including during the final year of the programme(s). The main reporting template should be used during the teaching out period and all relevant sections should be completed as appropriate. The focus of the programme review process should be on the student learning experience and on how any issues and recommendations identified have been addressed and followed-up.

12.   An overview of the annual programme review process for Surrey undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes is attached in Appendix 1.

Roles and responsibilities

13.   The programme review report can be presented for a single programme or a cluster of cognate programmes of study. The rationale for presenting a cluster of programmes as a single report must be considered very carefully and a special note to outline the rationale presented together with the combined report. It is also important to ensure that measures have been taken to enable effective scrutiny of any specific issues arising from individual programmes included in the report as a part of a group.

14.   In cases of a review process for a joint honours or major/minor programme, the Department/School responsible for the programme should produce the report.

15.   Normally, the annual programme review report is discussed at a designated annual programme review Board of Studies meeting or a dedicated section of the Board of Studies meeting. The annual programme review report template should be used to ensure that all relevant matters are covered.

16.   Where programme(s) to be reviewed are delivered through an education partnership, there should be appropriate representatives of all partners contributing to the annual programme review meeting.

17.   Student input to programme evaluation is a central element of the annual programme review process and it is vital to ensure that the process allows the views of the student body to be represented.

18.   Where student or partner representatives are present at the Board of Studies meetings that consider annual programme review reports, the meeting agenda may include a Reserved Business section for any discussions to be attended by staff members only.

19.   It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Board of Studies to ensure that annual programme review reports have been approved by the Board of Studies, and that an electronic copy of the report with appendices and the Board of Studies' minutes are submitted to the Faculty Associate Dean (Education) for further consideration and approval.

20.   The relevant Board of Studies' minutes must reflect the outcome(s) of the annual review, follow-up action taken, recommendations and examples of good practice, as appropriate.

21.   Once individual annual programme review reports have been approved by the relevant Board of Studies, the Faculty Associate Dean (Education) submits an overview of annual programme review reports and appendices, including all individual annual programme review reports and a list of all taught undergraduate and postgraduate programmes with dates of the submission of annual programme review reports for these programmes, to Quality Enhancement and Standards (QES): qualitysupport@surrey.ac.ukThe templates for the individual programme review reports and Faculty overview reports for undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes are available to download from the QES website.

22.   The University defines roles and responsibilities of various members of staff, organisational bodies and committees involved in initiating and managing the annual programme review process, as described in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Annual programme review process: a summary of roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities	Reporting to
Programme Leader	To obtain and analyse the dataset produced by the Strategic Planning department; To prepare the annual programme review report using the standard template; To send the report to the Chair of Board of Studies in good time for presentation to the Board of Studies meeting.	Board of Studies
Chair of Board of Studies / Board of Studies meeting	To discuss the report; To agree recommendations and SMART action plan; To discuss the follow-up actions from the previous annual programme review report; To record in minutes	Associate Dean (Education)
Associate Dean (Education)	To discuss any issue of Faculty-wide concern; To identify any examples of best practice for the attention of the University; To use annual programme review reports to inform objectives; To use annual programme review reports to inform periodic reviews/enhancements	Faculty Education Committee
Associate Dean (Education)	To summarise Faculty Education Committee's discussions and concerns; To summarise recommendations and follow-up actions; To submit an overview report, individual annual programme review reports and a spreadsheet with dates of submission of these reports to Quality Enhancement and Standards who will submit the overview report to the Quality Enhancement Sub-committee	Quality Enhancement Sub-committee; Quality Enhancement and Standards
Quality Enhancement Sub-committee (QESC)	To review Faculty overview reports and to: • consider any serious issues and concerns; • review the follow-up recommendations; • discuss any actions required; • consider the examples of good practice for dissemination; • prepare a short summary report to University Education Committee (all Faculty overview reports attached); • to highlight in the report examples of best practice for dissemination across the University and recommendations produced by QESC	University Education Committee

University Education Committee	• To receive and discuss the summary report; • To report to Senate and back to Faculties.	Senate; Faculties (via Associate Dean (Education)).

Timescale for annual programme monitoring and review

23.   The University deadline for completion of the full review cycle for all taught programmes is end of March/beginning of April.

24.   The University requires that the annual programme review process takes place in a consistent cycle to ensure the efficiency of the process to review student learning opportunities and academic standards and to allow the current students to benefit from the annual programme review process.

25.   Therefore, Faculties must prepare and consider annual programme review reports for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes within the following period(s):

- undergraduate programmes: September – December

- taught postgraduate programmes: November – February

26.   The overall schedule for dealing with the annual programme review reports is as described in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Schedule for the consideration and approval of annual programme review reports

Programme level	APR SBI data release by	Board of Studies meeting to discuss programme APRs	Faculty Overview of APR reports to be submitted to Quality Enhancement and Standards	Quality Enhancement Sub-committee to consider Faculty overview of APR reports
Undergraduate programmes	October-November	To be held by mid-November	By the end of December	February
Taught postgraduate programmes	Early January	To be held by 30 January	By the end of February	End of March-beginning of April

Approaches to and structure of the annual programme review report

Evidence-based approach

27.   The annual programme review process is action-focused and is based on various sources of evidence. Programme teams must use a range of qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the success of their programme, including the Surrey Business Intelligence (SBI) tool, feedback from external examiners, students and staff.

28.   SITS APR datasets from SBI will be released by Strategic Planning in accordance with the schedule shown in Table 2 above.

29.   Advice to Faculty management/programme administrators:

SBI data access process is intended to be self-service or to be handled within the Faculty. This could be carried out by individual academics, or at a department level if required, with administrative members of staff (Programmes) handling the programmes in their area. Any requests for additional SBI users should come from Associate Deans (Education) or Faculty Academic Hives (formerly Faculty Student Services) and be sent to the Strategic Planning.

30. Advice to academic members of staff on how to use the SBI dashboard:
   - Undergraduate APR reports:
     - Log on to SBI at https://obi.surrey.ac.uk/analytics/.
     - Select the **'Undergraduate APR'** dashboard.
     - In the second page '**Intake and Tariff'** select the relevant route/programme by first selecting your faculty and department and then the route/programme you require.
     - Select '**Apply**'. Relevant data for the last three years are now available for review in the six pages.
     - It is possible to export the entire dashboard to Excel if required. Select the small cog at the top right and '**Export to Excel'** then '**Export Entire Dashboard'**

   - Taught postgraduate APR reports:
     - Student numbers: see SBI (Surrey Business Intelligence) '**Student Population**' dashboard
     - Student progression: a pdf of the 'R80 PGT Cohort Progression by Course FT' MI report in the '**Cohort Progression'** SBI dashboard
     - Student awards: see '**Awards**' SBI dashboard

31. Normally, the following types of documentation should be used for preparing the annual programme review report (the list is not exhaustive):

(i) the relevant Faculty Education Plan;

(ii) external examiners' reports from the previous academic year along with Board of Studies/programme team responses to external examiners. In cases where the external examiners' reports have not been received, reference should be made to any comments made by external examiners either in writing or during the Board of Examiners' meeting (as recorded in minutes);

(iii) student feedback on individual modules and programmes, gathered via internal mechanisms, for example, MEQs, Staff Student Liaison Committee meetings, focus groups, discussions at Board of Studies meetings;

(iv) student feedback gathered via external mechanisms, such as quantitative and qualitative data from National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and any other external surveys, as applicable;

(v) staff feedback, gathered via internal surveys and questionnaires, or via departmental and Faculty meetings, where possible;

(vi) a set of statistical data reports available via the SBI tool for the relevant year to enable monitoring of student admission, progression, retention and achievement;

(vii) relevant programme specifications (approved via the University standard validation procedure);

(viii) relevant module descriptors;

(ix) league table data, in relation to key competitors;

(x)   any other information relevant to the programme(s) for that year, including Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation where applicable.

Using data for identifying potential areas of risk

32.   The APR data accessed via the SBI system allows programme teams to efficiently evaluate and address potential areas of risk in terms of the provision of learning opportunities and academic standards.

Structure and format of the annual programme review report

33.   University annual programme review report templates are available for downloading from the QES website and should be used as appropriate.

34.   Annual programme review reports must be evidence- based, focused on the evaluation of the learning opportunities provision and quality enhancement as well as summarising follow-up/SMART action plans, and be concise and relevant.

35.   The annual programme review report should include a list of programme(s) reviewed, the date of the Board of Studies meeting, and be signed by the Chair of Board of Studies and approved by the Associate Dean (Education). The main sections of the annual programme review report templates include the following areas:

- follow-up actions from the previous year's report

- academic standards

- quality enhancement

- student experience

- summary action plan

36.   The following documentation should be attached to the annual programme review report as an appendix:

- action plan from the previous year's annual programme review report

37.   Programmes that had been scheduled to hold an interim review as a result of a validation/periodic enhancement should use the annual programme review process to do so.

Faculty overview reports of annual programme review reports

38.   Associate Deans (Education) submit separate Faculty overview reports of annual programme review reports for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to the Quality Enhancement Sub-committee (via Quality Enhancement and Standards) in accordance with the schedule described in Table 2 above.

39.   Faculty overview reports should be prepared using the standard template, which is available to download from the QES website. The report template includes the following sections:

- Summary of progress on Faculty-level actions from the previous Faculty Overview of APR reports

- Identification of general issues concerning progression, awards and feedback

- Summary of key quality enhancement activities / practice in the Faculty

- Review of any Collaborative Provision issues within the Faculty

- issues to bring to the University's attention

- Faculty-level action plans to support overall education strategy and / or general areas of need

40. A summary of strategic issues for the University's attention may include significant issues regarding the learning facilities and resources such as Library and IT resources, central teaching spaces, laboratory spaces or timetabling.

41. A list of current programmes and associated individual annual programme review reports should be included in the Faculty overview of annual programme review report as attachments.

Outcomes of the annual programme review process

Identifying and disseminating best practice

42. One of the important outcomes of the annual programme review process is identification and dissemination of best practice. Therefore, programme teams should also focus on evaluating and highlighting areas of good practice in all areas related to the provision of student learning opportunities.

Follow-up actions

43. The annual programme review reports should include any actions discussed and approved during the Board of Studies meeting (SMART action plan) and the timeframe within which these actions should be completed. The actions taken as a result of the annual programme review process should be considered during the annual programme review the following academic year.

Feedback on the annual programme review process

44. The outcomes of the annual programme review must be fed back to members of staff, students and all those involved in the process. The overview summary of annual programme review reports is discussed and approved by the Quality Enhancement Sub-committee and, following successful approval, the Associate Deans (Education) should report on the outcomes of the annual programme review process to students and members of staff either through Faculty Education Committee, Board of Studies or Staff/Student Liaison Committee meetings as an annual standing item.

Publishing the annual programme review report

45. Annual programme review reports are published on the QAPD SharePoint site and available to members of staff to be downloaded at any time (University username and password required). Chairs of Boards of Studies and Associate Deans (Education) must ensure that all information provided in the annual programme review reports is correct and relevant and submitted to Quality Enhancement and Standards by the required deadline, as described in paragraphs 24 - 26 above.

Changes to the programme

46. Following the annual programme review process, some changes to programme(s) and/or module(s) could require further actions. The University has a standard procedure to accommodate major/minor amendments to programmes/modules and further information, such as the various types of amendments that can be considered through the modification process, can be found in the *Code of practice for programme lifecycle processes*.

Collaborative provision: annual review report for Associated and Accredited Institutions

47. Associated and Accredited Institutions offering programmes leading to awards of the University of Surrey are expected to submit an annual review report to the University

by the beginning of January each year. The report is designed to confirm that the Institution has in place appropriate procedures for ensuring academic standards and quality and for quality enhancement which are subject to evaluation and review. The report should be self-critical, based on facts arising from the operation of programmes leading to awards of the University of Surrey, and have been subject to an approval process within the institution. The report should be approved and signed by the Principal or their nominee (a member of senior management team).

48. An electronic copy of the report with appendices should be submitted to Quality Enhancement and Standards, University of Surrey via e-mail: qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk by no later than 10th January each year.

49. The Associated and Accredited Institutions' annual review reports should include the following attachments:

- a list of Surrey validated programmes with attached individual annual programme reports;

- Educational Oversight: a process analysis (where applicable).

50. The Associated and Accredited Institutions' annual review reports should be prepared using the standard template, which is available to download from the QES website. The report includes the following sections:

(i) organogram(s) of quality assurance committees and key personnel to provide an overview of the Institution's quality assurance framework with, if appropriate, a commentary on significant changes;

(ii) where applicable, a review of the implementation of the SMART action plan or any recommendations agreed by the University's Institutional Review;

(iii) a review of progress with the action plan, devised to address issues arising from the previous year's annual review report to the University from individual annual programme review reports, reports from external examiners and reports from external accrediting bodies;

(iv) an analysis of data on student recruitment, progression and achievement by each programme, complemented with a commentary on trends over the past three years in recruitment, retention and awards. A detailed set of statistical information for the relevant year should be attached to the report in a table format;

(v) a summary of comments from external examiners' reports (commendations and recommendations);

(vi) student satisfaction and feedback, including NSS score results (where applicable) and any other quantitative and qualitative data related to student satisfaction and student engagement;

(vii) an evaluation of the effectiveness of quality assurance and enhancement systems with examples to demonstrate where external examiners' reports, feedback from students and staff and the findings of external bodies eg QAA, Ofsted, IBMS may have influenced change;

(viii) student placements;

(ix) a brief résumé, if appropriate, of the number and outcome of cases presented through the appeals, complaints and grievance procedure of the Associated Institution;

(x)   a summary of issues arising from quality assurance and enhancement processes, in the form of an action plan, to be addressed by the institution and/or at programme(s) level or for the attention of the University;

(xi)   quality enhancement and good practice;

(xii)   Educational Oversight procedures.

Appendix 1 - Overview of the annual programme review process for undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes

Stage One	Stage Two	Stage Three
Strategic Planning releases the SBI dataset to be used in the APR report. The Programme Leader prepares and analyses data and writes the report	The reports from each programme/cluster of programmes are discussed and approved during the APR Board of Studies meeting and signed by the Chair of the Board of Studies	The reports and action plans are submitted to the Associate Dean (Education) to produce a Faculty overview of APR reports that is discussed and approved at Faculty Education Committee

Stage Six	Stage Five	Stage Four
Associate Dean (Education) to feedback outcomes of APR process to Programme Leaders, Chairs of Boards of Studies and students	A brief summary is prepared by QESC for the University Education Committee for further consideration. A summary is included in the UEC report to Senate	The Faculty overview of APR reports submitted to the Quality Enhancement Sub-committee (via QES) for further discussion, identification of major trends, good practice and recommendations