

Code of practice for continuous enhancement review: taught programmes

Academic year 2021/22

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Introduction

1. This *Code of practice for continuous enhancement 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](#).
2. The principles of the continuous enhancement review process are based on the Expectations and Core and Common practices of the Quality Assurance Agency [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#).

Definitions

3. **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.
4. **Continuous Enhancement Review (CER)** – is the continuous, systematic and risk-based review process that assures and enhances the quality of taught programmes. Continuous enhancement review takes place throughout the academic year, as metrics and feedback become available. CER consists of two elements: a Continuous Enhancement Plan (CEP) and the Annual Programme Enhancement Review (APER).
5. **Continuous Enhancement Plan (CEP)** – is a single rolling action plan for each programme (or cluster of related programmes).
6. **Annual Programme Enhancement Review (APER)** – is a short reflective report for each programme (or cluster of related programmes) highlighting themes, issues and areas of good practice for wider dissemination.

Purpose, aims and scope of the continuous enhancement review process

7. The University considers the continuous enhancement review process to be a key contributor to its quality framework and the management of identified risks, whilst helping to identify and disseminate good practice across all programmes.
8. The continuous enhancement review process aims to support improvement of the quality of the taught programmes offered by the University. Its function is to monitor risks and provide regular checks on ongoing learning, teaching and assessment provision at an operational level, identifying and tracking actions that will further enhance the quality of provision.
9. Continuous enhancement review is part of the University's wider risk based approach to quality assurance. Where risks are identified through other academic governance and monitoring processes, continuous enhancement review provides a mechanism for response.
10. The continuous enhancement review process enables the University to reflect on:
 - The student experience and existing learning opportunities
 - Achieved academic standards and student outcomes
11. The effectiveness of the continuous enhancement review process is ensured by following up identified risks and recommendations for appropriate actions in the Continuous Enhancement Plan (CEP), with 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 the actions in the CEP will protect the interests

of current students and allow any staff and resource development needs that are identified to be addressed.

12. The continuous enhancement 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.
13. A separate annual report, the Annual Programme Enhancement Review (APER), must be produced for every programme of study, or cluster of related programmes (pathways). The rationale for presenting a cluster of programmes as a single report must be considered very carefully. It is also important to ensure that measures have been taken to enable effective scrutiny of any specific issues arising from individual programmes and are included in the report as a part of a cluster.
14. All permanently or temporarily closed programmes must undertake continuous enhancement review during the process of teaching out, including during the final year of the programme(s). The focus of the continuous enhancement review process should be on the maintenance of the student learning experience and on how any issues and recommendations identified have been addressed and followed-up.
15. 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. Particular consideration should be given to the student experience of students undertaking programmes with significant input from more than one School/Department
16. An overview of the continuous enhancement review process for Surrey undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes is attached in Appendix 1.

Procedure overview

17. Each programme (or cluster of related programmes) maintains a Continuous Enhancement Plan (CEP) on an ongoing basis. The CEP is updated regularly in response to the availability of new data or feedback received. As a minimum the CEPs are reviewed twice per year for each meeting of the relevant Board of Studies.
18. Each programme (or cluster of related programmes) also produces an Annual Programme Enhancement Review (APER) report once per year. The APER is discussed and approved at a dedicated section of the Board of Studies meeting. The timing of the discussion is dependent on whether the programme is undergraduate (typically Semester 1) or postgraduate taught (typically Semester 2).
19. Faculty level review of the APERs takes place at Faculty Education Committees. The Faculty Associate Dean (Education) produces an overview report for submission to institutional academic governance structures. The Associate Dean also provides confirmation of the approved individual Annual Programme Enhancement Review reports.
20. Reference points for consideration as part of the ongoing development of the CEP and APERs include:
 - Discussions at Boards of Examiners prompted by module marks and degree outcomes data
 - The continuous enhancement review dashboards provided by Strategic Planning and Performance which includes statistics on student surveys, progression, continuation, degree outcomes and employment outcomes
 - Outcomes from student feedback mechanisms (e.g. MySurrey Voice and Student/Staff Liaison Committees)
 - Annual external examiner's reports and module comments

- Outcomes from academic governance structures where risks have been identified.
21. The templates for the individual CEPs, APERs, Faculty overview reports and AI's Annual Review Report for undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes are available to download from the University Quality Framework website. Staff members can access additional resources, including ongoing CEPs and individual APER reports for previous years from a central SharePoint site. Submission and storage of documentation is to be managed through this SharePoint site to facilitate appropriate oversight of the process.

Roles and responsibilities

22. Where programme(s) to be reviewed are delivered through an education partnership, there should be appropriate representatives of all partners contributing to the continuous enhancement review.
23. Where student or partner representatives are present at the Board of Studies meetings that consider Continuous Enhancement Plans or/and Annual Programme Enhancement Review, the meeting agenda may include a Reserved Business section for any discussions to be attended by staff members only.
24. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Board of Studies to ensure that Annual Programme Enhancement Reviews have been approved by the Board of Studies, and that an electronic copy of the reports with appendices and the Board of Studies' minutes are submitted to the Faculty Associate Dean (Education) for further consideration and approval.
25. 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.
26. The University defines roles and responsibilities of various members of staff, organisational bodies and committees involved in initiating and managing the continuous enhancement review process, as described in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Continuous enhancement review process: a summary of roles and responsibilities¹

Role	Responsibilities	Reporting to
Academic Quality Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To coordinate the continuous enhancement review at each stage of the process, providing ongoing support and guidance to all relevant academic members of staff involved in the review, including staff in Associated and Accredited Institutions (AIs); • To facilitate uploads of individual CEPs, APER and Faculty overview reports to a central SharePoint site and to be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of this site; 	Quality Enhancement Sub-committee

¹ Responsibilities for the continuous enhancement review process in Associated and Accredited Institutions are described in paragraphs 44-47 below.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To evaluate the outputs of continuous enhancement review; To analyse the University-wide overarching themes, issues and risks emerging from the continuous enhancement review process, including Faculty overviews and Annual Review Reports from AIs and to prepare a summary analysis for consideration by the Quality Enhancement Sub-committee. 	
Strategic Planning and Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a core dataset to inform continuous enhancement review for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes 	Quality Enhancement Sub-committee
Programme Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review data made available throughout the academic year, such as that produced by the Strategic Planning and Performance department, module marks and degree outcomes data; To consider feedback from students, External Examiners and key meetings such as Boards of Examiners; To produce actions to deal with risks identified and update the Continuous Enhancement Plan accordingly; To present the Continuous Enhancement Plan at each Board of Studies Meeting; To prepare the Annual Programme Enhancement Review using the standard template and to submit in good time for presentation to the Board of Studies meeting. 	Board of Studies
Chair of Board of Examiners/ Board of Examiners meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To analyse module data, comparative trends and degree outcomes and initiate discussions regarding potential actions for improvement, as part of the programme's Continuous Enhancement Plan (CEPs) To ensure discussions are recorded appropriately in the minutes to inform the Continuous Enhancement Review process. 	Board of Studies
Chair of Board of Studies / Board of Studies meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To monitor and discuss the Continuous Enhancement Plans and assure itself that risks have been appropriately monitored and actioned; To scrutinise the Annual Programme Enhancement Review report produced for each programme; To agree recommendations and SMART action plan; To monitor progress of actions identified within the Continuous Enhancement Plans (CEPs); 	Associate Dean (Education)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure discussions are recorded appropriately in the minutes. 	
Directors of Learning and Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify themes and issues of School/Departmental wide concern To contribute to development of actions at Faculty level To support implementation of actions identified within the Continuous Enhancement Plans (CEPs). 	Associate Dean (Education)
Associate Dean (Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review Continuous Enhancement Plans (CEPs) and Annual Programme Enhancement Review (APER) reports to identify themes and issues of Faculty-wide concern; To facilitate discussions at the Faculty Education Committee; To upload copies of all relevant individual Annual Programme Enhancement Review (APER) reports to a central SharePoint site, maintained by the Academic Quality Services; To summarise Faculty Education Committee's discussions and concerns and produce an overview report for the Faculty that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recommendations, identified risks, follow-up actions and examples of best practice for the attention of the University; an appendix with a list of all relevant individual Annual Programme Enhancement Review reports, covered by the Faculty overview report. 	Faculty Education Committee Academic Quality Services Quality Enhancement Sub-committee (via Academic Quality Services)
Quality Enhancement Sub-committee (QESC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify risks and recommend where further action needs to be taken To consider proposals for changes to the Code of practice for continuous enhancement review, including APER reporting templates; To discuss the draft summary analysis of the continuous enhancement review report prepared by the Academic Quality Services and to review appendices (Faculty overview reports, Annual Review Reports from Associated and Accredited Institutions (AIs)), with particular focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> serious issues, risks and concerns; follow-up recommendations; any further actions required, where applicable; 	University Education Committee

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ examples of good practice for dissemination across the University. ● To recommend improvements to the continuous enhancement review process for consideration by the University Education Committee, as applicable; ● To evaluate progress made on the implementation of actions identified for resolution at institutional level. 	
University Education Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To identify risks and recommend where further action needs to be taken ● To consider and approve recommendations and proposals for changes to the Code of practice for continuous enhancement review, including CEP, APER, Faculty overview and AI's Annual Review Report templates; ● To consider the outcomes of the continuous enhancement review process report, including its appendices (Faculty overview reports, Annual Review Reports from Associated and Accredited Institutions (AIs)); ● To note progress made on the implementation of actions identified for resolution at institutional level; to discuss and consider recommendations from the Quality Enhancement Sub-committee (QESC). 	Senate; Faculties (via Associate Deans (Education)); Associated and Accredited Institutions (AIs).
Surrey Institute of Education (SloE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To identify and support the implementation of best practice; ● To support the development of CEPs within Schools and Faculties. 	Quality Enhancement Sub-committee; Faculties (via Associate Dean (Education)); Associated and Accredited Institutions (AIs).

Timescale for the Annual Programme Enhancement Review report

27. As noted above, Continuous Enhancement Plans (CEPs) are updated on a regular basis and discussed at each Board of Examiners and Board of Studies meeting (in line with the annual schedule for the relevant Boards).
28. An Annual Programme Enhancement Review (APER) report is produced once a year for each programme (or cluster of programmes) and agreed by the relevant Board of Studies.
29. Faculties must prepare and consider APER reports for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes within the following period(s):
 - Undergraduate programmes: September – December
 - Taught postgraduate programmes: November – March

30. The overall schedule for dealing with the APERs is as described in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Schedule for the consideration and approval of Annual Programme Enhancement Review (APER) report

Programme level	Development Period (including data reviews)	Board of Studies meeting to discuss programme APERs	Faculty Overview of APER reports to be produced	QESC to consider Faculty overview of APER reports
Undergraduate programmes	By October-November	To be held by mid-November	By the end of December	February
Taught postgraduate programmes	By early January	To be held by 30 January	By the end of March	April-beginning of May

Further guidance

Evidence-based approach

31. The continuous enhancement 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 [Power Business Intelligence \(Power BI\) tool](#), feedback from external examiners, students and staff.
32. The continuous enhancement review data provided by Strategic Planning and Performance will be updated throughout the year as new data become available to the University. This facilitates timely consideration within Continuous Enhancement Plans (CEPs). The data includes methods of flagging areas where potential risks have been identified. These should be the primary focus for discussion and planning appropriate actions.
33. In addition the following evidence should be used for informing the CEP and the Annual Programme Enhancement Review (the list is not exhaustive):
- (i) module outcomes data and outcomes from discussions held during Boards of Examiners;
 - (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) relevant programme specifications (approved via the University standard validation procedure);
- (vii) employability outcomes data;
- (viii) league table data, in relation to key competitors;
- (ix) any other information relevant to the programme(s) for that year, including Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation where applicable.

Structure and format of the Annual Programme Enhancement Review report

- 34. The APER reporting templates are available for downloading from the University website and should be used as appropriate.
- 35. The APER report should include a list of programme(s) reviewed and confirm the date of the Board of Studies meeting where the report was approved, noted as appropriate in the minutes. The main sections of the APER report include the following areas:
 - Overview of actions taken during the previous year (as recorded in the Continuous Enhancement Plan)
 - Brief commentary on evidence and data trends including risks identified
 - Summary of actions to be taken forward over the next year
 - Identification of good practice
 - Areas for consideration at Dept/School, Faculty or Institutional levels related to learning and teaching

Faculty overview of Annual Programme Enhancement Review (APER) reports

- 36. Associate Deans (Education) submit separate Faculty overview reports for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to the Quality Enhancement Subcommittee (via Academic Quality Services) in accordance with the schedule described in Table 2 above.
- 37. Faculty overview reports should be prepared using the standard template, which is available to download from the University website. The report template includes the following sections:
 - Summary of progress on Faculty-level actions from the previous Faculty overview of APER reports
 - Summary of themes from the APERs within the Faculty
 - Identification of ongoing risks e.g. concerning progression, awards and feedback
 - Summary of key quality enhancement activities / practice in the Faculty
 - Review of any Collaborative Provision issues within the Faculty
 - Areas for consideration at University level in relation to learning and teaching
 - Faculty-level action plan to support overall education strategy and / or general areas of need
- 38. A summary of strategic learning and teaching issues and risks for the University's attention may include significant issues regarding the learning facilities such as Library and IT resources, central teaching spaces, laboratory spaces or timetabling.
- 39. A list of current programmes and associated individual continuous enhancement review reports should be included in the Faculty overview (as an appendix).

Outcomes of the continuous enhancement review process

Identifying and disseminating best practice

40. One of the important outcomes of the continuous enhancement 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

41. The Continuous Enhancement Plans (CEP) 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 continuous enhancement review process should be considered throughout the year, with the CEP updated regarding progress ahead of each Board of Studies meeting.

Feedback on the continuous enhancement review process

42. The outcomes of the continuous enhancement review must be fed back to members of staff, students and all those involved in the process. The Faculty overviews are considered by the Quality Enhancement Sub-committee and noted by the University Education Committee and, following this consideration at institutional level, the Associate Deans (Education) should report on the outcomes 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 Enhancement Review (APER) reports and Continuous Enhancement Plans (CEPs)

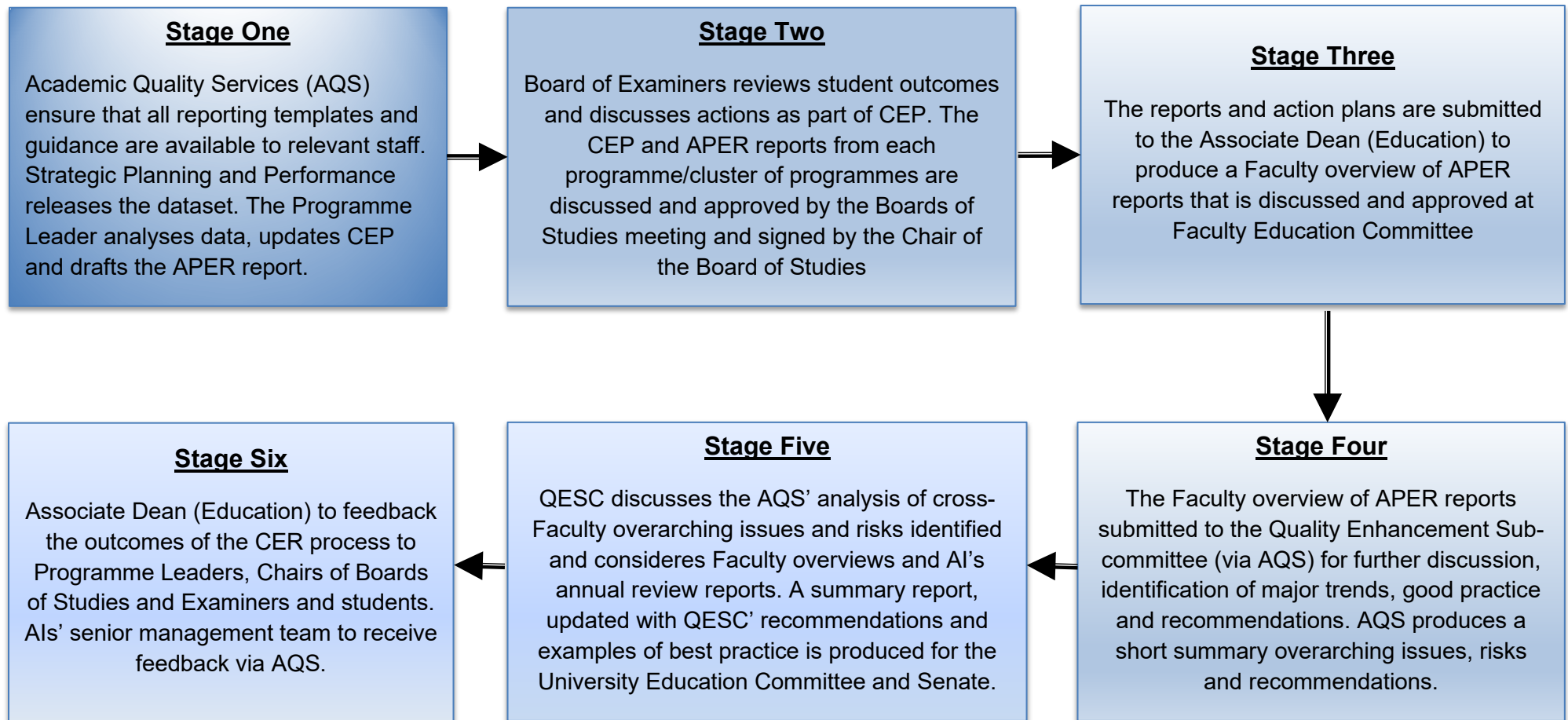
43. Continuous enhancement review documentation, including CEPs and APER reports are published on the central [SharePoint](#) site and available to members of staff to be downloaded at any time (University username and password required). Chairs of Boards of Studies and Associate Deans (Education) must ensure that all information provided in the reports is correct and relevant and submitted to Academic Quality Services in accordance with the schedule outlined in Table 2 above.

Collaborative provision: Annual Review Report (ARR) for Associated and Accredited Institutions

44. 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 the high quality of academic standards and enhancement processes, which are subject to continuous 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).
45. An electronic copy of the report with appendices should be submitted to Academic Quality Services, University of Surrey via e-mail: qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk by no later than 10th January each year.
46. 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).
47. The Associated and Accredited Institutions' Annual Review Reports should be prepared using the standard template, which is available to download from the [University 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 regarding the action plan, devised to address issues arising from the previous year's annual review report to the University from individual continuous enhancement 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 continuous enhancement review process



CER - continuous enhancement review
 CEP – continuous enhancement plan
 APER – annual programme enhancement review
 QESC – Quality Enhancement Sub-committee
 AQS – Academic Quality Services
 AIs – Associated and Accredited Institutions