

**School Periodic Review Handbook**

**Covering the AY2013/14 – AY2019/20 review cycle**

This handbook is published by the Academic Development and Quality Enhancement (ADQE) Office.

If you have any queries or comments please contact:

Damien Jarvis

Academic Development and Quality Enhancement Manager (Curriculum)

Tel : 01273 872775

Email: d.a.jarvis@sussex.ac.uk

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# Introduction

The purpose of this Handbook is to inform University staff in Schools and Professional Services of the procedures for the conduct of School Periodic Review. This Handbook will also provide information on the reasons for undertaking the Review process, the principles that underpin the process, and the outputs that are produced as a result.

### Purpose of School Periodic Review

* + 1. The University’s Strategic Plan, Making the Future 2013-2018, articulates the following ambitions in relation to ‘Teaching, learning and the student experience’:
		- “…provide all students with **high-quality inspirational teaching that is research-led** and delivered in an excellent learning environment.” (1.1)
		- “…enhance the **quality of the Sussex student experience**…” (1.3)
		- “…grow the number of taught postgraduate students, as befits a research-intensive university. The **postgraduate taught portfolio** will be developed to secure a vibrant postgraduate student community…” (1.7)
		- “…continue to renew course structures and modes of delivery, and ensure that we have effective mechanisms to establish **new courses in areas of academic demand**…” (1.8)
		- “…enhance the academic experience for all students and, in particular, will **enhance the first year to support student transition to higher education** because this year is vital for intellectual engagement and immersion in our Sussex values, building the foundations for future Sussex graduates.” (1.9)
		1. School Periodic Review supports the University’s drive to achieve these ambitions by:
* providing an opportunity for the institution to review the quality and standards of a School’s educational provision over time, in collaboration with external contributors and members of the wider University community;
* enabling the University to audit the implementation of its policies and strategies for enhancing the student experience;
* facilitating holistic consideration of a School’s portfolio, to ensure that the curriculum is aligned to both strategy and policy.
	+ 1. School Periodic Review is a cornerstone of the University’s quality assurance mechanism which, together with Annual Course Review, the external examining system, and the University’s Curriculum Development processes, allows the University to have confidence in the quality of its teaching and learning provision. Furthermore, the Review process helps ensure that the University can confidently demonstrate to external stakeholders that the University’s academic offer is of an appropriate quality.

### Aims of School Periodic Review

* + 1. School Periodic Review is an institutional process, involving external participants of high calibre who possess academic or professional credibility. School Periodic Review assesses the continuing validity and relevance of courses, with particular scrutiny given to:
* the effect of changes, to the design and operation of the course, including those which are cumulative and those made over time;
* the continuing availability of staff and physical resources;
* current research and practice in the application of knowledge in the relevant discipline(s), technological advances, and developments in teaching and learning;
* changes to external points of reference, such as subject benchmark statements, relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements;
* changes in student demand, employer expectations and employment opportunities.
	+ 1. Crucially, the Review process also presents an opportunity to identify areas for enhancement. These can pertain to a course, the operation of the School, or the operation of the institution.
		2. Together with Annual Course Review, School Periodic Review facilitates continuous evaluation and enhancement of the School’s academic provision. The aims of the process are:
* to ensure that courses remain current and valid in light of developing knowledge in the discipline, and practice in its application;
* to evaluate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes are being attained by students;
* to evaluate the continuing effectiveness of the curriculum and of assessment in relation to the intended learning outcomes;
* to ensure that recommendations for appropriate actions are followed up to remedy any identified shortcomings.
	+ 1. The Review process also enables the re-validation of existing courses through a Curriculum Review event, focusing in detail on the courses currently offered by the School. The Review process will also facilitate the approval of new courses, providing the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) considers this to be appropriate. Schools should notify the Secretary to the Review Panel of any potential new course validations no later than three weeks before the Curriculum Review event.

### Authority for School Periodic Review

* + 1. The authority for this process derives from University Teaching and Learning Committee (UTLC). During the 2011/12 Academic Year, all Schools underwent a process of Portfolio Review. Following the commendation of this process by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) following its Institutional Review of the University in 2013, future School Periodic Reviews will follow the same format.
		2. A review of each School will take place every six years, following a schedule agreed by UTLC. Once the cycle of reviews has been concluded, UTLC will agree a new schedule. The current schedule is available in Appendix A of this Handbook.
		3. Reviews will be administrated by the Academic Development and Quality Enhancement (ADQE) Office, which will:
* publish timetables agreed in consultation with Heads of Schools and approved by UTLC;
* provide professional support for reviews in the form of review secretaries who will support the event;
* provide a central information point to support those engaged in the review process

# Terms of Reference of the School Periodic Review Panel

* 1. The Terms of Reference for the Periodic Review Panel are aligned to the four main themes of the QAA’s Higher Education Review[[1]](#footnote-1) process, to ensure that the Review process is conducted in a way that enables external stakeholders to have confidence that key issues are directly addressed. These are indicated below in bold with the relevant terms of reference listed beneath each theme.

***HER Theme 1: The setting and/or maintenance of academic standards***

* + To consider the appropriateness of intended course aims and learning outcomes with reference to relevant external reference points (e.g. the QAA *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications* and national subject-level benchmarks).
	+ To assess actual levels of student progress and attainment in relation to the intended course aims and outcomes, and consider the effectiveness of assessment strategies.
	+ To ascertain whether the courses remain current and valid in the light of:
* Developing knowledge in the discipline and developments in teaching, learning and research (including technological advances);
* Changes in student demand, employer expectations and employer opportunities (as appropriate).
	+ To examine the effectiveness of school-level quality assurance.
	+ To recommend actions to remedy any shortcomings.

***HER Theme 2: The quality of students' learning opportunities***

* + To assess the quality of the student experience on the course(s) under review (with reference in particular to: curriculum, teaching, learning, assessment, staff development, resources to support learning, student guidance and supervision; equality of opportunity and widening participation).
	+ To recommend whether the courses of study under review should continue, subject to certain conditions or be discontinued from a specified date.
	+ To evaluate whether there are effective links between student learning and discipline‑based research in the School.

***HER Theme 3: The quality of the information provided to students***

* + To assess the quality of the information provided to students through the following media:
		- Prospectuses
		- Course handbooks
		- Study Direct
		- Other School publications

***HER Theme 4: The enhancement of students' learning opportunities***

* + To advise on how the quality of the educational provision and student learning experience might be further enhanced.
	+ To identify any aspect of the provision that is innovative or represents good practice for wider dissemination.

***Outcomes of the Review***

* + To report its findings to the University.

# Principles of School Periodic Review

### Context

* + 1. The School Periodic Review process has been designed to meet the QAA’s expectations that HE institutions will undertake a periodic review of their academic provision, as expressed in the Agency’s UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Chapter B8 of the Code includes the following specific expectation:

“*Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes*.”

Participants in the Review process will be able to ensure that they assist the University in meeting this expectation by adhering to the set of principles detailed in Section 3.2. These principles have been aligned where appropriate to relevant indicators of sound practice as expressed in the Quality Code.

### Principles

***Principle 1: Articulation with University strategy, policy and process***

School Periodic Review takes place under the aegis of the University’s Strategic Plan, Teaching and Learning Strategy, Academic Framework, and Examination and Assessment Regulations. Compliance with these is an essential part of securing the standards of the academic provision of Schools. This is considered sound practice by the QAA, which is conveyed by Chapter B8 Indicator 1 of the Quality Code.

“*Higher education providers maintain strategic oversight of the processes for, and outcomes of, programme design, development and approval, to ensure processes are applied systematically and operated consistently.*”

***Principle 2: Peer review and externality***

School Periodic Review will benefit from the expertise of high calibre academic peers both internal and external to the University through their inclusion on the Review Panel. This academic expertise is supported with guidance from appropriate staff in the University’ Professional Services and, where appropriate, from external stakeholders. This meets the QAA’s expectation as stated in Expectation A3.4 of the Quality Code:

*“In order to be transparent and publicly accountable, degree-awarding bodies use external and independent expertise at key stages of setting and maintaining academic standards to advise on whether:*

*• UK threshold academic standards are set, delivered and achieved*

*• the academic standards of the degree-awarding body are appropriately set and maintained.”*

The University’s use of reference points and expertise from outside those individuals directly involved with the course is considered sound practice in both the development of new courses (Chapter B1, Indicator 5) and the review of the existing curriculum (Chapter B8, Indicator 6). The former is achieved by the validation process. The latter is achieved when curriculum change and development proposals are the product of reflection that is cognisant of external examiner reports and periodic review activities.

***Principle 3: Student Engagement***

The involvement of students in the Review process provides obvious benefits both to the University and to the student body. The experience of students who have taken the courses offered by the School will be in a unique position to comment on their effectiveness and also on opportunities to enhance the provision.

Furthermore, the principle of student engagement is encapsulated in Chapter B5 of the Quality Code which conveys the following expectation:

*“Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.”*

This expectation is also identified as sound practice in Chapter B8, Indicator 7 of the Quality Code:

*“Higher education providers involve students in programme monitoring and review processes.”*

***Principle 4: Enhancement***

Whilst a central function of School Periodic Review is to assure the quality of the School’s academic provision, it is equally important for there to be a focus on identifying opportunities for enhancing this provision. The Review process explicitly facilitates this by allowing the Panel to scrutinise documentary evidence and question School representatives. This activity is considered sound practice by the QAA and aligns with Chapter B8, Indicator 2 of the Quality Code:

*“Higher education providers take deliberate steps to use the outcomes of programme monitoring and review processes for enhancement purposes”*

***Principle 5: Efficiency and sustainability***

The University must be able to satisfy itself that the academic provision of a School is being delivered as efficiently as possible and is sustainable in the long term. School Periodic Review provides an opportunity for the institution to receive assurance that all courses offered by the School are appropriately resourced and deliver value for money.

***Principle 6: Inclusivity***

During the Review process, the Panel will work to ensure that the educational provision of the School is as inclusive as possible, ensuring accessibility for all students. The School will be asked during the final meeting of the Review to make explicit the practices in place to ensure this happens. This activity is considered sound practice by the QAA and aligns with Chapter B6, Indicator 10 of the Quality Code.

“Through inclusive design wherever possible, and through individual reasonable adjustments wherever required, assessment tasks provide every student with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement.”

# Scope and Format of School Periodic Review

### Scope of the Review

* + 1. School Periodic Review will consider the appropriateness of all courses of study within the School, including courses delivered by an external partner for which the school has cognate responsibility. Courses validated by the University for delivery at partner institutions undergo revalidation every 3-5 years (co-ordinated by the Partnership Team in the ADQE Office) and are therefore not within the scope of the School Periodic Review process. Collaborative Provision Committee signs off all validations and re-validations and reports into UTLC.
		2. The Review will consider undergraduate taught and postgraduate taught and research courses together. The appropriateness and success of major/minor and joint combinations will be evaluated, in addition to single honours provision. Schools which provide Minor or Joint components of courses owned by other Schools should include review of the minor or joint provision for which they are responsible.
		3. Schools should also include review any 60-credit pathways for which they have ownership.
		4. Where there is accreditation by a relevant professional or statutory body, the review will examine the criteria for, and requirements arising from accreditation. This will include not only assuring the appropriateness of the curriculum in relation to any accreditation requirements, but may also consider those areas where the curriculum is constrained in its development by the existence of those requirements.

### Format of the Review

* + 1. The Review process is broken down into three distinct events. The first of these is a **Strategic Engagement** meeting which provides the School with the opportunity to outline their vision for the School’s future academic offer. This can include plans to amend existing courses, add new courses or pathways, or withdraw existing courses or pathways. The School will be expected to address how the proposals will enhance the student experience.
		2. This meeting also serves as an introduction to the Review process, allowing an opportunity for the School to ask the Panel members present for clarification and guidance.
		3. This initial meeting is followed by a **Curriculum Review** event which focuses upon the detail of the School’s academic provision. The School will present their Teaching and Learning Strategy and their Assessment Strategy for discussion with the Panel. This will then be followed by a review of the School’s undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision, with a particular focus on the learning outcomes and assessment modes attached to each course. The meeting will also provide an initial opportunity to identify courses where enhancements can be made to the student experience. Schools will be invited to identify such opportunities themselves. The following themes are suggested to guide Schools:
* Tailoring the assessment and feedback schedule to the cohort;
* Potential innovation in the teaching methods employed;
* Improving the acquisition of employability skills;
* Refocusing the learning outcomes at the course and/or module level.
	+ 1. Finally, a two-day **Periodic Review** event is held to facilitate in-depth scrutiny of the School’s academic offer, with particular attention paid to the following themes:
* Teaching and learning provision
* Arrangements for student support and engagement
* Enhancement activities
* Provision for postgraduate research students
	+ 1. The event will begin with an initial presentation from the School. This presentation should not rehearse the information already provided within the Self-Evaluation Document. The presentation should instead allow the School to explain their current Strategy, giving an overview of what they have achieved this since the previous review. Following on from this, the School should address its aspirations for the next five years, highlighting any challenges that the School is still seeking to address. This will lead naturally into detailed consideration of the School’s teaching and learning provision.
		2. The event will then continue with a series of sessions focusing upon the aforementioned key themes (in Section 4.2.4). Under each theme, a series of issues will be addressed by the Panel, with the School expected to provide further information.

**Teaching and Learning Provision**

* The underpinning philosophy of the School’s academic course provision
* The distinctiveness of the School’s academic offer
* How the School practises research-led teaching
* How the provision contributes to the employability of Sussex graduates
* Whether the current library provision provides the required level of support to students
* Whether the provision is inclusive, ensuring equality of access
* The rationale for elements of the curriculum which derogate from the Academic Framework, with the School having previously been granted permission to do so by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

[**Note:** Exceptionally, modules may be explicitly approved by the University Teaching and Learning Committee for cross-school delivery in single honours undergraduate courses where there is a compelling pedagogical rationale. Periodic Review provides the opportunity to request such approval. Schools should make their intention to request approval known during Stage 2 of the process.

Cross-school delivery of modules in taught postgraduate courses is permitted.]

**Student Engagement and Support**

* The effectiveness of the School’s academic advising arrangements
* The quality of the physical resources available to students
* The quality of the staff resources available to students
* The effectiveness of the School’s engagement with students and how feedback is considered and acted upon
* How the School ensures that its graduates achieve the best possible level of employability, including consideration of whether the current careers and employability provision is at the right level

**Enhancement**

* How well the School has engaged with the University’s enhancement framework (including Annual Course Review, Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs), Academic Development
* Confirm that the School has effective processes for capturing, communicating and implementing best practice.
* The identification of examples of best practice that can be shared across the University community, recognising and commending achievement
* The identification of areas where significant enhancements could still be made

**Postgraduate Research Provision**

* The underpinning philosophy of the School’s postgraduate research provision
* The quality of the supervision arrangements in place for postgraduate research students
* The quality of the School’s mechanism to assess progress of its postgraduate research students
* How the School ensures that postgraduate research students have an opportunity to develop transferable skills alongside key research skills
	+ 1. Prior to the session on Student Engagement and Support, a lunch time meeting will be held to enable the Panel to meet a number of student representatives. The Panel will take this opportunity to discover which elements of the School’s academic provision the students are most positive about, as well as identifying any areas where there is the potential for improvement.
		2. Any new course validations will usually take place on the morning of the second day of this event. Validation of new courses may only take place following agreement by Portfolio Approval Committee.

### Programme of events

* + 1. The programme of events will normally be as follows:

|  |
| --- |
| Event 1: Strategic Engagement |
| A two hour meeting involving the following participants:Panel attendees: PVC T&L (Chair), two internal academic assessors, Students’ Union Education Officer, Head of ADQE, ADQE Science Cluster Lead, Secretary School attendees: Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Student Experience, Heads of Department, School Administrator |
| The agenda for the meeting is as follows:1. Introduction from Chair
2. School presentation of vision for the School’s curriculum, including plans for the development of the portfolio to enhance the student experience.
3. Discussion of admissions and market research data
 |

|  |
| --- |
| Event 2: Curriculum Review |
| A one-day meeting involving the following participants:Panel attendees: PVC T&L (Chair), two internal academic assessors, Students’ Union Education Officer, Head of ADQE, ADQE Science Cluster Lead, Secretary School attendees: Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Student Experience, Heads of Department, School Administrator |
| The agenda for the meeting is as follows:1. Private meeting of Panel
2. Presentation from School regarding its Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy followed by discussion
3. Private meeting
4. Review of School Portfolio (UG and PGT) to consider the appropriateness of current provision and alignment with University strategy and policy. Particular emphasis upon appropriateness of learning outcomes and assessment modes.
5. Consideration of School’s current and future engagement with Sussex Choice
 |

|  |
| --- |
| Event 3: Periodic Review |
| A two-day meeting involving the full Review Panel and all relevant School participants. |
| Day One1. Private meeting of Panel
2. Presentation from School regarding its current status and future direction
3. Meeting A: Teaching and Learning Provision
4. Private meeting
5. Meeting and refreshments with Student Representatives
6. Meeting B: Student Engagement and Support
7. Private meeting of the Panel
8. Dinner for Panel members
 | **Day Two**1. Private meeting of the Panel
2. Validation of new courses (if required)
3. Private meeting of the Panel
4. Meeting C: Enhancement
5. Private meeting of the Panel
6. Meeting D: Postgraduate Research Provision
7. Private meeting of the Panel
8. Feedback to School
 |

* + 1. These meetings should occur within approximately a single four-month period. This will ensure that the momentum of the process is not lost through excessive gaps in between events. A further advantage is that Schools will be able to embark on enhancement activities as quickly as possible, thus ensuring that the earliest cohort possible is able to benefit from these improvements.

# Participants

### Composition and Role of the Periodic Review Panel

* + 1. The Review Panel will consist of internal and external assessors who are sufficiently independent from the educational provision under review. The student body will be represented by the Students’ Union Education Officer and a selection of student representatives. Professional Services staff will provide additional scrutiny where appropriate.
		2. The School should also consider suggesting external stakeholders from industry or other relevant organisations, who will be able to add value to the Review in terms of evaluating how well the courses offered by the School prepare students for employment, research or further study.
		3. The full Panel will be invited to the final Periodic Review event. For the first two events, a subset of the Panel will attend, comprising:
* Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (Chair)
* Two internal academic assessors
* Students’ Union Education Officer
* Head of ADQE
* ADQE Cluster Lead
* Secretary

This will ensure that the process does not become onerous for external and student participants, allowing them to focus their energies on the final review meeting, which is a substantial undertaking in itself.

* + 1. Members of the review panel will consider the documentation and provide the Chair of the panel with brief feedback including a list of key points they believe need to be focused on during the review visit. The proposed programme for the visit, including staff attendance, will be included in the documentation sent to the Panel at least 2 weeks prior to the review visit. The Chair may propose changes to the programme, including changes to the length of certain meetings or adding new meetings, and request for additional staff to attend specific meetings in the light of feedback and consultation with the panel once the documentation has been circulated.
		2. The full membership of the Review Panel will be as follows:

(Please refer to following page)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Role | Eligibility | Description of role[[2]](#footnote-2) |
| Panel Chair  | Pro-Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) | Will oversee the Periodic Review and ensure that all elements of the process have been adhered to. |
| Independent Academics (one per discipline) | Appropriately qualified senior academics from peer institutions.[[3]](#footnote-3) | Will provide both high-level professional scrutiny and externality, ensuring that the Panel has objectivity.  |
| University of Sussex Academic(s) | Two senior academics from other Schools, preferably from a cognate area. Ideally, at least one of these should be a Director of Teaching and Learning. | Will provide professional scrutiny and fulfil the peer review function, bringing the perspective of someone familiar with the University |
| Independent Stakeholder(s) | Where appropriate, external stakeholders may be included on the panel to represent the needs of employer organisations or targeted recruitment groups. | Will provide commentary on the likely employability of students on the proposed course and will be invited to comment on other areas. |
| Student Panel Members  | Current elected student representative for undergraduate, taught postgraduate, and postgraduate research.  | Will provide feedback and comments from a student perspective on all areas under discussion. |
| Student Sabbatical Officer | The Education Officer of the Students’ Union. | Will comment on all aspects of the Review, particularly those pertaining to student experience and engagement. |
| A representative from the Professional Services  | A senior member of Professional Services, selected from the following, to attend sessions as required:ADQE Office, Doctoral School/Postgraduate Research Administration, Library, Careers and Employability Centre | Will provide specialist commentary depending upon the session attended. |
| Head of ADQE Office | The Head of the ADQE Office, who has responsibility for a wide portfolio of quality assurance and enhancement activities at the University. | Will provide commentary across all sessions. |
| Secretary  | A manager from the ADQE Office  | Will be responsible for the operation and organisation of the event. |

### Composition and Role of the School Team for each event

* + 1. For the first two events, the following members of the School will be invited to attend:
* Head of School
* Director of Teaching and Learning
* Director of Student Experience
* Heads of Department
* School Administrator
	+ 1. For the final event, the School should identify who will attend on behalf of the School for each of the sessions. It is usual for the Director of Teaching and Learning to be present for each session. The Head of School, Heads of Department, School Directors and key members of faculty and professional services will also be likely to attend the sessions as appropriate.
		2. The School also has responsibility for organising the attendance of student representatives for the lunchtime meeting on the first day. Aside from this particular session, the number of School representatives should not exceed six.
		3. The School should advise the ADQE Office of the names of all members of staff and student representatives who will be attending each meeting at the time of submitting the documentation required for the final event.
		4. For all events, the School representatives should come prepared to speak to the topic under discussion, in response to questions from the Review Panel.

# Periodic Review Supporting Documentation

School Periodic Review can only be carried out effectively if sufficient relevant documentation is able to the Review Panel for scrutiny. The ADQE Office will coordinate the provision of institutional-level and external documentation. The School will be asked to provide certain documents, in electronic format, to the ADQE Office no later than three weeks prior to each event.

### Documentation to be provided by School for the Strategic Engagement Event

* A presentation on the School’s strategic vision, with a particular emphasis on the curriculum. The presentation should last no longer than thirty minutes.

### Documentation to be coordinated by ADQE Office for the Strategic Engagement Event

* Admissions data for the previous three academic years
* UCAS market data relevant to the discipline for the previous three academic years
* The School’s most recent Annual Course Review report

### Documentation to be provided by School for the Curriculum Review Event

* Presentation on School Teaching and Learning Strategy (15-20 minutes)
* Presentation on School Assessment Strategy (15-20 minutes)
* Specifications for each course
* Module specifications
* Mapping of course and module learning outcomes for each course
* Assessment schedule for each course
* Teaching methods schedule for each course

### Documentation to be coordinated by ADQE Office for the Curriculum Review Event

* Admissions data for the previous three academic years
* UCAS market data relevant to the discipline for the previous three academic years
* The School’s most recent Annual Course Review report

### Documentation to be provided by School for the Periodic Review Event

* Self-evaluation Document (SED)
* A full list of staff members and their School roles;
* The most recent approved School 5-year Strategic Plan;
* Web links to all promotional materials including information on careers and employability;
* Course handbooks
* Annual Course Review reports for the previous three academic years;
* Reports of external examiners for taught courses for the previous three academic years together with the School’s responses to these;
* The most recent reports (where appropriate to the courses of study) from a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory body (PSRB), together with the School’s response;
* Relevant student feedback collected by the School, other than through the National Student Survey (NSS) and Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs)
* Minutes of the following School committees for the previous three academic years:
* School Teaching & Learning Committee
* School Student Experience Group
* School Research Degree Committee
* Curriculum documentation provided for the Curriculum Review event will again be required for the Periodic Review event.

### Documentation to be coordinated by ADQE Office for the Periodic Review Event

* Prospectus entries for both taught and research courses
* A list of relevant QAA subject benchmark statements
* Statistical data for UG & PGT provision for the previous three academic years;
* Student numbers, entry qualifications, progression and completion rates;
* Degree classification and first employment destinations;
* NSS and MEQ data for the previous three academic years.
* Statistical data for PGR provision for the previous three academic years:
* Student numbers and entry qualifications;
* Submission and completion rates;
* Viva outcomes and progression rates;
* Employment destinations.

### Documentation in support of validation of new courses

* + 1. If the School has been given permission by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) to proceed to the validation of a new course during the Review process, the School should follow the validation procedures as detailed in the Academic Development Handbook. This Handbook is available on the ADQE Office’s website at: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/curriculum/newcourseapproval>

# School Self-evaluation Document

### Scope of Document

* + 1. For the final event of the Review process, the School will need to produce a critical self-evaluation of its educational offer. This document should be written as a high-level overview not normally exceeding 10 pages of A4 (excluding appendices). The School may include any material already presented at the Curriculum Review event which the School considers to be pertinent.
		2. The Self-evaluation Document (SED) should focus on explaining to the Review Panel how the School ensures that its educational offer is of high quality together with an explanation of how it seeks to further enhance the quality of its provision. The SED should refer to past performance but be clearly focused on appraising the changes made to its education provision in the period since the previous Review. The SED should not reproduce the evidence but cross reference existing documents (see section 6 for details). It is good practice to have the SED approved by the School Teaching & Learning Committee (STLC), subject to availability, which may be best dealt with by correspondence.

### Structure of the Document

* + 1. The SED should contain four sections, dealing the main themes to be addressed at the final Periodic Review event. Each section should address the specific issues listed under each of the themes detailed in Section 4.2.6.

# Outcomes

### Outcomes at the conclusion of each event

* + 1. Following the **Strategic Engagement** event, a brief report of the meeting will be produced. There are no formal outcomes.
		2. Following the **Curriculum Review** event, a report on the discussions held and any observations made will be produced. The draft report will be shared with the School for comment upon the factual accuracy of the report. There are no formal outcomes of the event but the School will be expected to reflect upon the observations made during the event and be able to address these if raised at the final event.
		3. Following the **Periodic Review** event, a summary report recording any commendations, conditions or recommendations will be produced. This is followed by a full and detailed final report of the proceedings of the two days.

The final report will address the following issues:

* Whether existing courses under review by the Panel should be allowed to continue, be allowed to continue subject to certain conditions or recommendations, or be withdrawn.
* Whether new courses that have been proposed should be approved subject to conditions or recommendations or whether the School should be asked to withdraw the proposal. The latter option would be very rare as the course will have undergone internal scrutiny to reach the approval stage.
* Where the Panel has perceived that there are opportunities for the School to enhance its educational provision;
* Whether the Panel has identified areas of innovation and good practice that are to be commended, in order that this can be shared across the University and /or subject discipline.
* Whether there are any recommendations in relation to institutional policies and practice that should be brought to the attention of the University. Where a University-level recommendation refers exclusively to the taught provision offered by a School, it should be addressed to the University Teaching and Learning Committee (UTLC) for consideration and action. Where a University-level recommendation refers exclusively to the postgraduate research provision offered by a School, it should be addressed to the Doctoral School Board (DSB) for consideration and action.

### 8.2. Actions to be taken following the conclusion of Periodic Review

* + 1. If it considers it necessary to do so, the Panel may also ask for further documentation or for further Review meetings to be arranged.
		2. The Secretary to the Panel will prepare a draft summary report and send this to the Chair for approval within one week of the completion of the final meeting. Once approved, the summary report will then be sent to all members of the Panel and to the Head of School.
		3. The Secretary to the Panel will prepare a draft final report and send this to the Head of School and ask that it be checked for factual accuracy. The draft report, with tracked changes indicating any amendments from the School, will then be sent to the Chair for approval. Once approved, the Secretary will distribute the report to all members of the Review Panel for comments and/or approval. Following confirmation of approval or notification of any proposed revisions, the report will be sent to the Chair for final approval. Once approved, the final version of the report will be distributed to the following parties no later than four weeks following completion of the final meeting:
* The Head of School, Heads of Department, Directors (Teaching and Learning, Student Experience, Doctoral Studies).
* Members of the Review Panel
* The Secretary of UTLC
* The Secretary of DSB
	+ 1. The Head of School will arrange for the Panel’s final report to be considered by their School Executive and also by all appropriate School committees, within three months of receipt.
		2. In cases where courses of study are approved to continue subject to conditions, the School will be required to submit a one-year follow-up report to UTLC commenting on the implementation and progress of actions taken to satisfy any conditions set to allow for the continuation of courses.
		3. The School’s action plan, addressing any recommendations and conditions set by the Panel, should be produced within three months of receipt of the final version of the report.
		4. UTLC and/or the DSB will determine whether the actions taken by the School have proven satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If the report is unsatisfactory, the UTLC or DSB may, in cases involving failure to meet set conditions, recommend that the courses concerned be discontinued.

# Contacts

The Academic Development and Quality Enhancement Office (ADQE) Office has responsibility for maintaining this handbook. ADQE staff can also be contacted for further information regarding the processes described above.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Post | Email | Tel. No. |
| Damien Jarvis | ADQE Manager (Curriculum) | d.a.jarvis@sussex.ac.uk | 01273 872775 |
| Chris Wellings  | Head of ADQE Office | c.r.wellings@sussex.ac.uk  | 01273 877468 |
| Clare Wolstenholme | ADQE Manager (Enhancement) | c.l.wolstenholme@sussex.ac.uk | 01273 678894 |

An electronic version of this handbook can be found on the ADQE Office website at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/curriculum/periodicreview>

**Schedule of School Periodic Reviews**

The schedule of School Periodic Reviews for this cycle is as follows:

**Academic Year 2013/14**

Term 2: School of Business, Management and Economics

**Academic Year 2014/15**

Term 2: School of Engineering and Informatics

**Academic Year 2015/16**

Term 1: School of Life Sciences

Term 2: School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences

**Academic Year 2016/17**

Term 1: Sussex Centre for Language Studies

Term 2: School of Education and Social Work

**Academic Year 2017/18**

Term 1: School of Global Studies/Institute of Development Studies

Term 2: School of English

**Academic Year 2018/19**

Term 1: School of Psychology

Term 2: School of History, Art History and Philosophy

**Academic Year 2019/20**

Term 1: School of Media, Film and Music

Term 2: School of Law, Politics and Sociology

A new cycle of reviews will commence in the 2020/21 academic year.

1. It is noted that the future of this assessment mechanism is currently under discussion. This handbook will be revised to ensure that the requirements of School Periodic Review are aligned to any new system. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. All panel members are entitled to comment on any aspect under consideration during the Review. The role descriptors are provided to provide guidance and focus for those joining the Panel. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Proposing Schools will normally be invited to recommend a minimum of four possible academics. Independent academics will not normally be the same person as the external examiner for the course and will not have held a position in connection with the University of Sussex for the previous three academic years. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)