Periodic Review Policy and Procedure

Periodic Review is designed to provide an opportunity for reflection on the quality, standards and enhancement of the Departments’/programmes academic provision over a period of time. This is undertaken through the measurement of student performance, the impact of change, merits of curriculum design and local strategies for learning, teaching and assessment beyond the annual programme reporting cycle. Periodic Review will enable a Department/programme to reflect on its strengths and areas for improvement in order to improve the experience of the students.

Periodic Review takes place on a six-yearly cycle. It enables Goldsmiths to verify over a particular timeframe, academic standards, the quality of the student learning experience, the continuing relevance of programmes to both internal/external needs, alignment with national and European reference points, as well as the identification of good practice and innovation.

This policy has been written in accordance with the expectation and indicators outlined in Chapter B8 ‘Programme monitoring and review’, B3 ‘Learning and teaching’, B6 ‘Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning’ and Part A ‘Setting and maintaining academic standards’ of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

Principles

The principles of Periodic Review are that it will:

- Critically review the academic portfolio of a Department/subject area and the suite of awards within that area;
- Be a review of programme(s) to ensure there is an enhanced student experience;
- Be a peer review process; drawing on the expertise of internal colleagues and external experts;
- Promote constructive and challenging discussion of matters related to academic provision;
- Have significant staff and student input;
- Assess the effectiveness of the Departments’/programmes implementation of quality management processes in reflecting on and evaluating the performance of the Department/subject area (e.g. Annual Programme Review and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies Reviews);
- Be an evidence-based process and will draw on a wide range of available management information;
- Help to facilitate the development of:
  - new, amended or enhanced provision (agreed as part of the review);
  - innovative approaches to delivering programme content;
  - student support and increased levels of satisfaction;
  - links to and/or joint provision with other departments or partners;
- Result in an achievable Action Plan that is supportive of the aims of the Department/discipline area and the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.
Aims

The aims of the periodic review process are:

- To establish whether there are effective and appropriate mechanisms to ensure that intended learning outcomes are being attained by students, standards are being achieved and the programme specification is being delivered;
- To establish whether the programme(s) remain current and valid in the light of developments in the discipline and in teaching and learning;
- To verify that Goldsmiths’ agreed procedures are working effectively to assure the standards of the Department’s awards and the quality of the learning opportunities;
- To review the quality and consistency of the information provided to students and applicants;
- To consider how the Department is implementing its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy;
- To identify good practice within particular programmes or areas that can be disseminated both within and outside the Department.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All taught undergraduate and postgraduate programmes leading to a University of London or Goldsmiths award;
- Research degrees with a taught component (e.g. MRes).

The Periodic Review of programmes at Partner Institutions is undertaken in line with the procedures detailed in the Collaborative Provision Handbook. Periodic Review at Partner Institutions will take place on a five-year cycle.

Procedure

Departments, through their Departmental Boards or their delegated Departmental Learning and Teaching Committees, are required on a periodic basis (usually every six years) to prepare for a detailed review of the department's programmes, a group of programmes or an individual programme by a panel co-ordinated by the Quality Office on behalf of, and reporting to, the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee. Centres which deliver taught programmes are also required to take part in periodic review. The review will be based on a Self-Evaluation Document (SED) and supporting evidence produced by the Department.

- The Head of Quality will consult with the Department and agree the scope of the review, the review procedure, the preparation required for the Self Evaluation Document (SED) and evidence base, and membership of the review Panel;
- Departmental/programme teams will prepare the SED using the guidance given below. The SED, with supporting evidence, should be discussed and
agreed by the Departmental Board/Learning and Teaching Committee before submission to the Quality Office. The SED and associated documentation (usually on the VLE) should be received by the Quality Office 4 weeks before the review;

- The review Panel will consider the SED and supporting evidence in advance of the review event. Panel members will be encouraged to submit initial comments in advance of the event to enable initial lines of questioning to be drawn up;
- The review Panel will convene for one or more days to consider the SED and meet with the Departmental staff and students as appropriate. The schedule of meetings during the review will be agreed in advance with the Department and initial feedback given at the end of the day;
- The Quality Office will then produce a draft report for comment by the Department. This will identify areas of good practice and make recommendations to the department and/or Goldsmiths as discussed by the Panel;
- An action plan will then be agreed with the department and the report and action plan will be considered and approved by Quality and Standards Sub-Committee and reported to Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee;
- Progress on meeting the targets in the action plan will be monitored by the Quality Office and Quality and Standards Sub-Committee.

**Student Involvement**

The periodic review procedure is expected to be inclusive of students and is student-focused. Students are expected to have the opportunity to play a key role in the preparation for a periodic review of their subject area. They should be engaged in the development of the SED and invited to participate in the periodic review meetings. Normally a separate meeting with students will be held as part of the periodic review event. Students should also be involved in drawing up the action plan in response to the outcome of their periodic review.

**The Self-Evaluation Document (SED)**

The Self-Evaluation Document should cover the areas listed below, although the headings are for guidance and are not prescriptive. Examples of how the Department/programme has made enhancements in response to feedback from students and External Examiners, or employers and graduates should be included in the evaluation, as well as evidence demonstrating the Department’s strategic approach to learning and teaching. Advice and guidance on drafting the SED and on drafts themselves will be provided by the Quality Office, as required.

The SED should be self-critical and evaluative. Rather than being a ‘snapshot’ of the department at the time of the review, the SED should discuss how the provision under review and the department have developed since the previous review, identifying any challenges overcome and current challenges. The SED should make extensive use of cross referencing to relevant supporting documentation and make use of concrete examples.
Introduction

- Setting the context of the Department, its key characteristics (staffing, students, research), current/recent developments, plans for teaching and research, the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy;
- The programmes to be reviewed should be listed together with the date when the programme was introduced and the number of students on the programme. The introduction should also list any programmes in the Department not included in the review and indicate why they are not included.

Educational aims

A statement of the overall aims of the programme or programmes included in the review and how these relate to the aims of the Department.

Learning outcomes and programme structure

An evaluation of the intended learning outcomes and structure of the programme or programmes (reference may be made to their relationship with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, Subject Benchmark Statements or requirements of relevant PSRBs); how recently they have been reviewed/amended.

Teaching and assessment

An evaluation of the teaching and assessment strategies and how they support students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Quality of learning opportunities

- Teaching and learning - evaluation of the learning opportunities provided to students to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes; implementation/evolution of the Department’s Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy;
- Diversity of the curriculum – evaluation of how the curriculum considers equality and diversity;
- Departmental review mechanisms - internal arrangements in the Department for reviewing its provision and evaluating the effectiveness of its approach to learning and teaching;
- Student admission, progression and completion - evaluation of the ways in which students' progression through the programme(s) is supported and monitored, from intake to completion;
- Student feedback – evaluation of results from internal and external student satisfaction surveys, Departmental Student Coordinators reports and Student Representatives, Staff/Student Forums and other Departmental committees, module evaluations, and any other feedback;
- Learning resources - evaluation of the effectiveness of the deployment of resources, human and material, that support student learning, and of the effectiveness of their linkage to the programme learning outcomes;
• Improvements/enhancements - to the learning and teaching on the Department's programmes/provision over this period, e.g. new teaching and assessment methods and staff development activities.

Academic standards

Commentary on the achievements of students, any trends in examination results, the comments of External Examiners on comparability of standards, and any actions taken as a result.

Graduate satisfaction/employability

• Commentary on feedback from former students and on their career destinations (e.g. Destination of Leavers from Higher Education survey results), whether employment or further study, as appropriate;
• Commentary on how employability and career development are considered in programme design and delivery.

Evidence Base

The SED should include evidence from and make reference to the following:

• Programme Specifications;
• Annual Programme Reviews;
• External Examiners’ reports;
• Student recruitment, progression and completion data;
• Reports (if any) from accrediting or other bodies;
• Feedback from former students and their employers; First Destination data;
• A commentary on the statistical analysis of National Student Survey data;
• Comparability with other HEIs/external benchmarks i.e. FHEQ and Subject Benchmark Statements.

Where possible, evidence for key points should be included within the main text of the SED or as notes. The following documents should normally be appended:

• Programme Specifications for programmes under review;
• Module specifications;
• Annual Programme Reviews for the last 3 years for the programme under review;
• Annual Programme Review data;
• NSS results for the last 3 years;
• Minutes of staff-student meetings for the last 3 years;
• External Examiners reports and responses for the last 3 years;
• Departmental handbooks and individual module information (e.g. module guides);
• Departmental Strategic Plan;
• Record of staff development;
• Departmental Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and Action Plan;
• Staff CVs;
• An overview of staff publications/research outputs/research informed teaching;
• Information on staff:student ratios;
• Mapping to Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Body requirements, where relevant.

The SED is circulated to the Panel in paper form. All supporting documentation should be placed in a password protected page of the Department's VLE so that Panel members can access this.

**Membership of the Review Panel**

Independent external input is a key feature of the periodic review process. The Panel will include Panel members from Goldsmiths who are external to the cognate area(s) under review as well as members external to the College.

The Panel normally consists of the following (See Appendix One for role descriptors):

- Pro-Warden (Chair) or nominee;
- Two external subject specialists;
- A member of academic staff from another Department;
- A student Panel member from another Department;
- Head of Quality or nominee;
- Head of the Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre (TaLIC) or nominee;
- Quality Officer (Secretary).

Composition of the Panel might vary depending upon the size or nature of the provision and the area to be covered.

**Review Event**

The Periodic Review event will normally take place over a day, dependent on the scale of the provision under review. The agenda for the review event would be discussed between the Quality Office and the Department during the planning process. All review events will include an initial meeting with the Head of Department and/or Department senior management team. The agenda will also include the opportunity for the Panel to meet with programme teams and with students. The agenda will also include private panel meetings for the Panel to discuss lines of questioning and formulate conclusions. Suggested lines of questioning can be found in Appendix Two.

**Report**

The review will be serviced by the Quality Office who will produce the report from the review.

The report will be directed to the Chair of the Panel in the first instance for comments on factual accuracy. The report will then be submitted to the full Panel for comment.
Once the report has been approved it will be submitted to the Department for comments on factual accuracy.

**Follow up to the report**

Once the report has been approved, the Department will formulate its response and action plan. These will be approved by the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee and Departmental Board.

The report and departmental response will be submitted to the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee for discussion. A further report on progress against action points will normally be considered by QSSC after one year (where required) and monitored thereafter as necessary.

**University of London programmes**

University of London programmes for which Goldsmiths is the Lead College are subject to the Periodic Review procedures outlined above as well as these additional requirements:

- The format, scope and procedure of the review will be discussed with representatives from the University of London Worldwide and the Department;
- The Evidence Base will include an additional submission from the University of London Worldwide;
- A representative from the University of London Worldwide not directly linked to the provision under review will be a member of the panel;
- The draft report will be shared with the University of London Worldwide for a factual accuracy check;
- The final report and Departmental response will also be considered within the governance structure of the University of London Worldwide.

**Policy Review**

The programme approval process and associated templates are kept under constant review. Policies are reviewed in light of other internal or external factors, such as, changes to the internal committee structure or an amendment to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

Quality Office
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Appendix One - Role of Panel Members

Chair

The role of the Chair is to manage and direct the review process. The Chair will chair all meetings held during the course of the review, will provide oral feedback to the review team at the conclusion of the review and will approve the draft report.

Internal Panel Members

The role is designed to provide information about the values, strategies and policies of Goldsmiths. The purpose of the role is to evaluate the evidence provided within the particular context of Goldsmiths, bring experience to the panel of the operation, management and delivery of programmes elsewhere within the Goldsmiths, provide a point of focus on the delivery of learning, teaching and assessment at Goldsmiths, and contribute to the development of the agenda for the review.

Head of Quality

To provide support for the Chair in preparing the review, liaise with the department on the preparation of documents for the review, and provide advice and guidance to the panel on quality and standards and the formulation of recommendations.

Secretary to the Panel

To provide support to the Chair during the review, confirm arrangements with all panel members, distribute documentation to panel members, book rooms and organise catering, attend and minute all meetings, and prepare the draft report, recommendations and areas of good practice for immediate circulation to the Chair and panel. The Secretary will also circulate the report to the department and provide advice on the preparation of an action plan.

External Panel Members

The role should allow for appropriate subject expertise to be provided to the review team, within the wider context of Higher Education, and business or industry. External members should evaluate the subject specific evidence in the context of external reference points with particular reference to academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and employability. This role should provide a broad focus on quality assurance and enhancement.

Student Panel Member

It is expected that student members will normally be drawn from Departmental Student Coordinators. They will be full members of the team and be expected to comment on the SED, inform the agenda setting and pursue lines of questioning during the meetings with the review team.
Appendix Two - Possible Questions for Review Panels

It is not intended that review panels at Goldsmiths should feel constrained to use these questions systematically. The questions do, however, provide a useful framework to guide members of review panels when formulating their questions.

How do the intended learning outcomes relate to external reference points and to the broad aims of the provision?

1. What are the intended learning outcomes for the programme(s)?

2. How do they relate to external reference points including relevant Subject Benchmark Statements, the qualifications framework, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area and any professional body requirements?

3. How do they relate to the overall aims of the provision as stated by the Department?

4. Are they appropriate to the aims?

How are the curricula design principles used to permit achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

5. How does the Department ensure that curriculum content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?

6. How does the Department ensure that the design and organisation of the curriculum is effective in promoting student learning and achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

7. How has the Department considered and developed diversity within the curriculum?

How are the intended learning outcomes communicated to students, staff and external examiners?

8. How are the intended outcomes of a programme and its constituent parts communicated to staff, students and external examiners?

9. Do the students know what is expected of them?

How does the Department create the conditions for achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

10. Do the design and content of the curricula encourage achievement of the intended learning outcomes in terms of knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, subject-specific skills (including practical/professional skills), transferable skills, progression to employment and/or further study, and personal development?
11. Is there evidence that curricular content and design is informed by recent developments in techniques of teaching and learning, by current research and scholarship, and by any changes in relevant occupational or professional requirements?

**How does the assessment process work?**

12. Does the assessment process enable learners to demonstrate achievement of all the intended learning outcomes?

13. Are there criteria that enable internal and external examiners to distinguish between different categories of achievement?

14. Can there be full confidence in the security and integrity of assessment procedures?

15. Does the assessment strategy have an adequate formative function in developing student abilities?

16. What evidence is there that the standards achieved by learners meet the minimum expectations for the award, as measured against relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and the qualifications framework?

**How does the Department review and improve the quality of the student learning experience?**

17. How does the Department review and seek to enhance the quality of the student learning experience? Does it have strategies for building upon its quality assurance processes to enhance the quality of its provision?

18. How effective is teaching in relation to curriculum content and programme aims?

19. How effectively do staff draw upon their research, scholarship or professional activity to inform their teaching?

20. How good are the materials provided to support learning?

21. Is there effective engagement with and participation by students?

22. Is the quality of teaching maintained and enhanced through effective staff development, peer review of teaching, integration of part-time and visiting staff, effective team teaching and induction and mentoring of new staff?

23. How effectively is learning facilitated in terms of student workloads?

**How is students' learning supported?**

24. Is there an appropriate overall strategy for academic support, including written guidance, which is consistent with the student profile and the overall aims of the provision?
25. Are there effective arrangements for admission and induction which are generally understood by staff and applicants?

26. How effectively is learning facilitated by academic guidance, feedback and supervisory arrangements?

27. Are the arrangements for support clear and generally understood by staff and students?

28. Are students offered careers guidance?

**How satisfactory are learning resources and how are they deployed?**

29. Is the collective expertise of the staff suitable and available for effective delivery of the curricula, for the overall teaching, learning and assessment strategy and for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

30. Are appropriate staff development opportunities available?

31. Is appropriate technical and administrative support available?

32. Is there an overall strategy for the deployment of learning resources?

33. How effectively is learning facilitated in terms of the provision of resources?

34. Is suitable teaching and learning accommodation available?

35. Are the subject book and periodical stocks appropriate and accessible?

36. Are suitable equipment and appropriate information technology facilities available to learners?