



Teaching Quality Handbook

Part 9

Quality Enhancement (June 2017)

Part 9 sets out the policies and processes for quality enhancement.

Version Control

| Version | Created by | Date approved by Academic Board | Summary of changes |
|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| June 2017 | Asst Registrar QAE | 17/07/2017 | Changes to reflect organisational restructuring |
| | | | |

Part 9: Quality Enhancement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Quality Enhancement is defined as “the mechanisms for enhancing the quality of student learning opportunities through an institutional level process of implementing planned, deliberate measures to bring about continuous improvement, advancement and innovation, based on self-evaluation and building upon that which already exists”.
- 1.2 The Education Committee plays a key role in quality enhancement. This is reflected in the Committee's terms of reference (see Part 2 of this Handbook). The Director of Educational Enhancement will provide regular reports to Academic Board, with whom ultimate responsibility rests.
- 1.3 The Education Strategy provides the framework within which quality enhancement is set. A copy of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy is available from the RAU website.
- 1.4 The Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the implementation and impact of the Education Strategy and, on an annual basis, revising and updating accordingly. The Education Committee is also responsible for the development of future learning, teaching and assessment strategies.
- 1.5 The Academic Board devolves operational responsibility to Education Committee and AQSC for monitoring and reviewing quality enhancement policies and procedures in line with University and national requirements and good practice guidance.
- 1.6 A Quality Assurance report and accompanying Student Experience Action Plan will be written by the QSU and be presented for consideration to Academic Board.

2. Approval, Monitoring and Review of Programmes

- 2.1 Each programme is managed by a Programme Committee, comprising the Programme Manager, Year Managers (where appropriate), the Centre Head (ex officio), relevant teaching staff and elected student representatives from each year group. The Programme Committee is responsible for continually seeking to improve the programme in light of current developments within the sector.
- 2.2 All Programme Managers are required to produce an annual report for submission to the AQSC. The report seeks identification of key strengths of programmes, including areas of innovation and good practice for further dissemination, and requires the production of an action plan for future improvements. It is expected that all Annual Programme Manager's Reports should be discussed and considered at a Centre meeting prior to submission to AQSC to enable cross-Centre matters to be identified and addressed and good practice shared.
- 2.3 The Validation Panel is required to produce a Good Practice Report on the development, approval, monitoring and review of programmes for consideration by the AQSC. The report must identify areas of good practice and enhancement for dissemination, and any matters of concern, including possible solutions.
- 2.4 The Validation Panel is also required to identify areas of good practice in programme validation and review/revalidation minutes and reports, including the identification of University-wide matters, for consideration by the AQSC.
- 2.5 The AQSC is responsible for monitoring policies and procedures for programme validation and review, in line with national requirements, overseeing implementation, annually reviewing their effectiveness and, where appropriate, ensuring corrective action is taken.
- 2.6 In light of current teaching and learning practices, the Education Committee is responsible for evaluating the University assessment policy, particularly in terms of workload and assessment mechanisms and for advising Academic Board on necessary and recommended changes.
- 2.7 An Annual Quality Assurance Report which examines student performance across all University provision, drawing comparisons with previous years and benchmarking performance against competitor institutions, is produced for Academic Board annually for enhancement purposes.

3. Academic Infrastructure and other External Reference Points

- 3.1 The Education Committee is responsible for monitoring and evaluating current teaching, learning and assessment practices and developments in the wider academic community and for making recommendations to Academic Board on how best to incorporate alternative, innovative and relevant activities into the University's own strategies and practices.
- 3.2 There are several ways by which the University sustains links between itself, external HE agencies and other institutions to maintain awareness of developments in quality enhancement initiatives:
- i. Appointment of staff from other HEIs as External Examiners, members of programme validation and review panels, visiting lecturers and/or guest speakers.
 - ii. Appointment of University staff as External Examiners, members of programme validation and review panels, visiting lecturers and/or guest speakers at other HEIs.
 - iii. Supporting staff acting as specialist subject reviewers for the QAA.
 - iv. Collaboration with external sub-regional, regional and national bodies, including:
 - HEFCE.
 - HE Academy.
 - Western Vocational Progression Consortium.
 - SW Higher Level Skills Pathfinder Project.
 - Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.
 - National Association of Disability Practitioners.
 - Gloucestershire Learning Partnership.
 - Guild HE.
 - QAA.
 - Academic Registrars' Council.
 - Sector Skills Councils.
 - Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), e.g. the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).
- 3.3 Each Subject has an Advisory Board which meets biannually and comprises the Centre's academic staff, at least one member of the Governors of the University and at least three independent members representing related businesses and associated industries. The Boards advise on relevant trends in the professional and commercial sectors and how University provision might better embrace such trends. The Boards also provide sounding boards for new developments and have a role in initiating ideas for new programmes.
- 3.4 All Programme Development Teams (PDTs) and Programme Management Groups (PMGs) are expected, where possible, to include an appropriate external advisor, e.g. external member of the Subject Advisory Board, employer, external academic, Sector Skills

Council or PSRB representative. PDTs/PMGs are also required to consult widely outside the University throughout the development process.

External Examiners

- 3.5 The AQSC is responsible for considering External Examiner reports, for identifying collegiate matters arising and for referring any recommendations relating to learning, teaching and assessment practices within the institution to Education Committee and Academic Board.
- 3.6 The Education Committee is responsible for investigating these recommendations and for reporting findings to Academic Board.

4. Role of Students in Quality Enhancement

- 4.1 Students are encouraged to complete internal Module Evaluation questionnaire and annual online, in-house Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) (all student not surveyed as part of the NSS) and an interview on exit. Students are also encouraged to complete the annual National Student Survey (NSS) (final year foundation degree and honours degree students).
- 4.2 The Education Committee is responsible for considering internal SSS results, and those from the NSS, and for reporting its findings, along with appropriate recommendations, to the Academic Board.
- 4.3 Students also play an important role in quality enhancement through their participation in Periodic Review, External Examiner visits and Academic Board, Education Committee, AQSC, and Programme Committee meetings.
- 4.4 In addition, there are several ways by which the University fosters quality enhancement in terms of student support, particularly with regard to supporting flexibility and encouraging progression through learning, teaching and assessment activity:
 - i. Education Committee is responsible for examining ways of improving the appropriateness and accessibility of learning and information services and for developing resources to support more flexible programme delivery, including e-learning.
 - ii. The Education Committee is also responsible for the ongoing review of the personal tutor system, in conjunction with PDP, to improve the support being provided to students.

Management Information

- 4.5 The University's Management Information System (MIS) Quercus is to be used, wherever possible, as a tool to improve the quality of the student learning opportunity and experience, particularly with regard to students at risk of failing and withdrawing from programmes.

5. Research and Scholarly Activity

- 5.1 In line with the [UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in HE \(2011\)](#):
- i. All new, less experienced, teaching staff must hold or enrol on a PGCHE, funded by the University. Enrolments must take place within the first two years of appointment.
 - ii. Existing staff are encouraged to become members of the HE Academy.
- 5.2 The University is committed to providing part or whole funding for staff to complete higher degrees at Master's and PhD level.
- 5.3 Staff are expected to participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) through individual membership of relevant professional academic bodies and learned societies, attendance at, and participation in, research conferences, and through research activity in an appropriate subject area, including regular publication of research material.
- 5.4 The Assistant Registrar, Quality Assurance and Enhancement, in conjunction with the People Team, is responsible for ensuring and coordinating the provision (externally or internally) of developmental opportunities for staff relevant to learning, teaching and generic research activities, e.g. PGCHE and National Teaching Fellowship Scheme.
- 5.5 The Research Committee aims to encourage the ethos of research amongst staff and to stimulate and facilitate research activities.

6. Staff Development and Reward

- 6.1 The Education Committee is responsible for monitoring and coordinating the implementation and impact of the Teaching Enhancement Student Success (TESS) Fund (or equivalent).
- 6.2 The Assistant Registrar QAE acts as a point of contact for any queries or suggestions regarding staff CPD in pedagogy and is responsible for organising regular internal staff development workshops and a biennial staff development conference to strengthen learning and teaching activity. The Disability Officer provides equivalent support with regard to accessibility issues.
- 6.3 The Assistant Registrar QAE in conjunction with the People Team, is also responsible for encouraging and arranging funding to support staff access to external conferences and events, based on subject areas or more general QA and QE issues.
- 6.4 Staff are also encouraged to attend conferences organised by the University, such as Alumni specialist subject area conferences and Field Walks, and the Annual Bledisloe Memorial Lectures.
- 6.5 The Academic Board devolves operational responsibility to Education Committee and AQSC for monitoring and reviewing academic staff development activities.
- 6.6 Working with Education Committee, the Assistant Registrar QAE is responsible for reviewing and updating the University-wide Peer Observation of Teaching scheme. The Assistant Registrar QAE utilises the information gained from Peer Observations to inform future staff development activities.
- 6.7 Staff are encouraged to engage in self-reflective practices in learning and teaching through a University-wide staff CPD system.
- 6.8 A mentoring and support system is in place for all new teaching staff.
- 6.9 The People Team are responsible for harmonisation issues, including contribution related pay, honoraria, bonuses and consultancy payments.

7 Dissemination of Good Practice

- 7.1 Staff are encouraged to inform the Assistant Registrar QAE of examples of good practice for publication on the University intranet and to engage in related peer discussion activities.
- 7.2 Each Centre is required to hold regular Centre Committee meetings to enable inter and intra-Centre issues to be identified and addressed and to facilitate the sharing of good practice.
- 7.3 The Education Committee, reporting to Academic Board, is responsible for regularly auditing and documenting existing good practice.
- 7.4 The Assistant Registrar QAE acts to facilitate the communication of any new initiatives or examples of good practice already in existence or emerging within the University, e.g. arising from Peer Observation of Teaching. The Disability Officer provides equivalent support with regard to accessibility issues.
- 7.5 Programme Managers, External Examiners and the Validation Panel are required to identify areas of good practice in their Annual Reports for consideration by the AQSC and incorporation into guidance notes on relevant matters for wider dissemination. Programme Managers are also required to highlight areas of good practice in their Periodic Review Reports.
- 7.6 All academic committee minutes are published on the University intranet in a timely manner to help ensure that staff are kept abreast of the latest developments and strategies for continuous improvement.
- 7.7 Academic Board, AQSC, Education Committee, Validation Panels and the Research Committee each include members of academic staff from each School to facilitate the dissemination of good practice.
- 7.8 Full staff meetings, led by the Vice Chancellor, are held regularly for the dissemination of information relating both to the wider HE sector and to the University at a more local level.