Nottingham Trent University

Quality Handbook

Part C: Assuring and enhancing quality

Section 6: Monitoring, review and reporting

Section 6

Contents

Section 6

1. Principles of monitoring, review and reporting

Ensuring the quality of student learning opportunities and the standards of awards are achieved through the complementary processes of monitoring, review and reporting. These activities are based on the following principles:

(a) An emphasis on planning for the future and development.

(b) Being informed by evidence (qualitative and quantitative data about our students and our courses; and by the academic literature).

(c) Contributing to a genuinely useful reflection on what we do and how we might do it better.

(d) Involving all stakeholders, including those external to the course.

(e) Accommodating different requirements of disciplines and PSRBs.

(f) Involving face-to-face discussion where possible, which is appropriately recorded.

Requirements

1.1   Monitoring the ongoing health and currency of a course is primarily the responsibility of the course committee.

1.2   Every three years, the School undertakes a periodic review of each course (see below). 'Interim' course checks of compliance and progress on aspects of development take place annually.

1.3   School quality management is also reviewed on a periodic (five-yearly) basis (see Quality Handbook (QH) Section 7). A School academic plan is considered on an annual basis.

Explanatory note

- Monitoring, review and reporting requirements for Research Degrees are articulated in Quality Handbook Section 11. Requirements for Validation Service provision are articulated in Section 10C.

2. Course monitoring

Course monitoring is a continuous process by which a course team, primarily through the course committee, keeps under review the effective operation and currency of its course. An interim 'health check' of the course takes place annually. Every three years, Periodic Course Review provides the opportunity for course teams and Schools to take stock by considering the full range of evidence available.

Requirements

2.1   Course monitoring involves reflecting on and evaluating a range of evidence about the course in order to ensure that standards and quality are maintained and outcomes met, and to manage the enhancement of the course and the learning opportunities within it. Through this process, course committees evaluate the curriculum, approaches to teaching, learning and assessment and the effective use of learning spaces.

2.2   Course monitoring involves the full course team (including academic and administrative staff), students, external examiners, and, as appropriate, School Learning and Teaching Managers, School Standards and Quality Managers and Professional Services staff.

2.3   Students are key contributors to the process through their ongoing feedback, representative participation in course committees and through attendance at staff / student liaison groups.

2.4   Feedback from external examiners during the examination board and in their annual reports are critical inputs into course monitoring.

2.5   The inputs and views of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) may also have an important role, depending on the course.

2.6   Other external reference points may be appropriate, for example Subject Benchmark Statements, changes to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Quality Code, European or international initiatives, etc.

2.7   Data relating to student progression and achievement, and student surveys also inform course monitoring. Following progression and final examination boards course teams should consider any key issues arising from module or course level data which requires action in preparation for the forthcoming year. Course teams will consider the full picture of student achievement after the referral boards in the autumn. At this point, the Course Development Plan may need to be updated.

2.8   Course monitoring informs changes made to courses that will enhance outcomes, delivery or operation.

2.9   Course teams undertake monitoring throughout the year. This is primarily carried out through the course committee.

Explanatory note

- Quality Handbook Supplement (QHS) 1B provides a framework for course committees which ensures that appropriate monitoring activity takes place throughout the year.

3. Periodic Course Review (PCR)

Periodic Course Review is the mechanism by which course teams reflect on the validity, currency, and the academic quality of the provision once every three years. This is a face-to-face discussion with external stakeholders and students centring on key data sets provided in advance of the meeting to enable appropriate consideration of the current and future quality and standards of the course. The outcome of the review is a three-year Course Development Plan.

Requirements

3.1   SASQCs agree a schedule for Periodic Course Reviews such that each course is reviewed every three years. This schedule should take into account PSRB requirements (to avoid duplication of effort). It is the School's responsibility to arrange and support course reviews.

3.2   The Periodic Course Review agenda is agreed by the School and should be informed by specific areas of focus. The organisation of the agenda is flexible, and as such should be able to accommodate PSRB requirements (see QHS 6B).

3.3   The Review is a face-to-face meeting with key internal and external stakeholders.

3.4   Periodic Course Review meetings can take place at any time, but Schools should be mindful of the availability of data at various points in the academic year.

3.5   The Review informs the three-year Course Development Plan which is updated on an annual basis.

3.6   Accuracy of public information / NTU Quality Management compliance should also be checked at this point.

3.7   If, as a result of the review, changes to the course are required, then the normal development and approval processes apply.

Explanatory notes

- Schools may decide to review more than one course at one meeting if there is significant overlap of curriculum. Schools must be mindful, however, of the fact that for review to be

- effective, course teams must be fully invested in the process. This is most likely to be achieved when the review is dedicated to an individual course.
- If the Review meeting takes place mid-year, compliance checking may be more appropriately carried out at the end of the year in time for the next academic cycle.
- Detailed requirements of PCR are provided in QHS 6B.

4. Interim Course Reporting

The Interim Course Report provides an annual 'health check' of the course. Primarily this activity serves to check everything is appropriately in place to assure the quality and standards of the provision for the next cohort of students. It also provides an opportunity to assess progress made on the Course Development Plan (an output of the most recent Periodic Course Review) and to update this where necessary.

Requirements

4.1 Course leaders are responsible for preparing the Interim Course Report at the end of the academic year (according to the template provided in QHS 6A). This report covers the out-going academic year (1 August – 31 July each year).

4.2 The role of the Report is to:

a. Confirm compliance with University requirements.

b. Summarise any changes required immediately before the next cohort of students, or longer term.

c. Review and update the Course Development Plan.

4.3 Interim Course Reports are considered by School Academic Standards and Quality Committees (SASQCs) on an annual basis and inform the School academic plan (see below). SASQCs agree the most appropriate submission dates with reference to University requirements.

Explanatory notes

- Where a course runs to a different cycle from the traditional academic year, the Interim Course Report is prepared at the end of the equivalent period of study, in advance of the next cohort of

- students. This might mean that Schools agree different submission dates for courses with different structures.
- A separate Interim Course Report is required for each course of study except that courses clustered together in one course management/ operational framework may be reported on in a single Report (this will cover, for example, combined degrees, schemes with pathways or bracketed awards etc.). An Interim Course Report cannot cover courses that are not linked in this way.
- Templates for the Interim Course Report and Course Development Plan are provided in QHS 6A and QHS 6B.

5. School oversight and planning

Schools are responsible for providing the University with assurance that courses are working effectively and that plans are in place to address identified areas of development.

Requirements

5.1   On an annual basis, SASQCs reflect on the standards and quality of courses. This reflection is based on a review of Interim Course Reports and Course Development Plans and consideration of appropriate School-level data related to standards and quality. Minutes of this review are recorded. The evidence base used to inform this reflection include:

   a. Interim Course Reports;

   b. Course Development Plans;

   c. Progress on the Periodic Review action plan (where appropriate);

   d. External examiner feedback that relates to School processes;

   e. Themes arising from student feedback on courses and student feedback about School-level issues;

   f. Wider stakeholder feedback (where appropriate);

   g. Student outcomes (progression, failure, achievement and employment);

   h. Any other metrics that might inform School-level planning.

5.2   The SASQC review meeting results in an update of the School academic plan.

5.3   School academic plans should be cognisant of University strategic priorities and any other current University requirements.

Section 6

6. Evaluation of student data

Timely access to high quality data relating to student outcome (progression, attainment, withdrawals etc.) serves three key purposes:

(a) To permit the analysis of trends and patterns in student outcome over time and across courses.

(b) To provide up-to-date information about how well students in a particular cohort are doing in order that action planning can happen in a timely fashion.

(c) To inform Interim Course Reporting and Periodic Course Review.

Requirements

6.1   Summary data for modules and levels of study for student progression and achievement on individual courses are evaluated as part of Periodic Course Review and continuous course monitoring.

6.2   Summary progression and achievement data across clusters of courses are also available for School-level evaluation. Schools are required to reflect on the outcomes of the evaluation of equality and diversity and widening participation data and this evaluation may inform the School academic plan. Where Schools identify something that needs more detailed investigation, course teams may be asked to specifically reflect on this aspect at an appropriate course committee (which might then result in an action on the Course Development Plan).

Explanatory notes

- In order to enable the accurate and consistent reporting of student achievement across Schools and the University, for quality assurance purposes, there are standard 'windows' in which the analysis of data takes place. This ensures that comparisons made between courses and Schools are appropriate, accurate and consistent. In the autumn term each year, data sets on student progression and achievement across clusters of courses at School level are made available on the Annual Monitoring and Reporting SharePoint site.

- The University's Head of Research and Insights (Access and Participation) prepares School-level evaluations of equality and diversity and widening participation (ED&WP) data during the first term

of the academic year. At the same time, a University-level ED&WP report is prepared.
- For collaborative courses, evaluation of the patterns of progression and achievement must pay attention to analysis of student data across centres.
- Live data relating to student progression and achievement across courses over the last three years are available via Cognos on a 'self-serve' basis.

7. Timeframes

7.1 The required timeframe for course monitoring and interim reporting and review for standard start undergraduate courses is summarised in the table below:

Course monitoring and Course and School interim reporting and review	
July-October (depending on School's agreed timeframe)	SASQCs convene a review meeting which considers a range of evidence including Interim Course Reports and Course Development Plans. The School academic plan is reviewed and updated.
September	'Snapshot' of aggregated undergraduate course and School progression and achievement data is available via the Annual Monitoring and Reporting SharePoint site.
September/October	1st term course committee
January/February	2nd term course committee
April/May	3rd term course committee
June	Boards of Examiners' meetings
July/August	Interim Course Reports and Course Development Plans prepared and submitted to SASQC (according to School agreed submission date).
September/October	Course and School Plans updated to account for evidence provided by external examiners in their reports and student achievement data post the referral examination boards.

7.2 The required timeframe for course monitoring and interim reporting and review for September start postgraduate courses is summarised in the table below:

Course monitoring and Course and School interim reporting and review	
September-November (depending on	SASQCs convene a review meeting which considers a range of evidence including Interim Course Reports and Course

School's agreed timeframe)	Development Plans. The School academic plan is reviewed and updated.
September/October	1st term course committee
November	'Snapshot' of aggregated postgraduate course and School progression and achievement data is available via the Annual Monitoring and Reporting SharePoint site.
January/February	2nd term course committee
April/May	3rd term course committee
September	Interim Course Reports and Course Development Plans prepared and submitted to SASQC (according to School agreed submission date).
September/October	Boards of Examiners' meetings
November	Course and School Plans updated to account for evidence provided by external examiners in their reports and student achievement data post the examination boards.

8. Extraordinary review and reporting

ASQC has the right to require a course to be reviewed and/or for the course team to produce an extraordinary report according to a template devised for that purpose.

Requirements

8.1   An extraordinary review or report can be required when there is a need for particular enhancement in a course or courses.

8.2   Where a PSRB requires a course team to produce an annual report that meets the minimum requirements set out in this Section of the QH, there will be no need to draft a separate Interim Course Report.

Explanatory notes

- When a course is due for PSRB accreditation or review, the course team may wish to produce an extended or variant Interim Course Report to meet the accreditation or review criteria. In such cases, an 'extraordinary' report can be produced, and the course team should consult with SASQC to agree on a suitable format.

Section 6

9. Policy review

The procedures set out in this Section will remain under scrutiny to ensure their continuing fitness for purpose.

Requirements

9.1 ASQC charges the Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) with responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of these procedures on a three-year cycle. These three-yearly reviews will focus on:

    a. the effectiveness of the monitoring and reporting procedures in maintaining the standards and quality of the educational provision at NTU;

    b. the capacity of the procedures and processes to effect enhancements in standards and quality;

    c. the impact of the procedures on the enhancement of student learning opportunities;

    d. the fitness for purpose of the procedures in relation to the requirements of scrutiny by agencies such as QAA, PSRBs and other external agencies.

    e. CADQ will report back to ASQC on the findings of these regular reviews and will be responsible (a) for making any consequent changes to the procedures and processes and (b) for liaising with Schools and course staff on developments and providing any necessary further briefing and seminars.

9.2 The next review will be in 2023/24.

Policy owner
CADQ

Change history			
Version:	*Approval date:*	*Implementation date:*	*Nature of significant revisions:*
Sept 2016	30.09.16	01.10.16	ASQC annual monitoring meeting moved to December
Sept 2017	12.09.17	01.10.17	UG 'snapshot' date moved to September and ASQC annual monitoring meeting moved to November Inclusion of timeframes for PG reporting, including PG 'snapshot' date and ASQC meeting identified for consideration of PG provision
March 2018	17.04.18	17.04.18	Removed specific requirement to consider student achievement data as part of Interim Course Reporting (as per agreed changes to QHS 6A). Consideration of course and module level data now included as part of course monitoring, in addition to Periodic Course Review.
Sept 2018	12.09.18	01.10.18	None
Sept 2019	11.09.19	01.10.19	None
Sept 2020	16.09.20	01.10.20	Removal of references to SQEPs, replaced with references to School academic plans Removal of references to ASQC annual monitoring meeting in autumn term and policy review section updated to reflect planned review in 2020/21
Sept 2021	07.09.21	01.10.21	None
Sept 2022	22.09.22	01.10.22	None
Sept 2023	14.09.23	01.10.23	None

Equality Analysis		
Version:	*EA date:*	*Completed by:*
Sept 2016	15.12.14	CADQ