

Section 7

Nottingham Trent University

Quality Handbook

Part C: Assuring and Enhancing Quality

Section 7: Periodic Review

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1. Aims

The University's quality framework rests on the principle of delegated responsibility to Schools for the quality and standards of the courses that they provide. In this way, Schools are accountable to Academic Board for demonstrating that the measures that they have in place to assure quality and standards are effective.

Periodic Review is the mechanism that is used by the University to test the efficacy of these measures and their management, particularly in priority areas, and their alignment with the spirit and culture of the University's policy. It is also the tool by which Schools demonstrate that they are able to identify potential problems in advance of any negative impact on the student experience or on student outcomes, both for students taught at NTU and with collaborative partners. This is especially important given the growth in the University's portfolio of provision that is considered to be higher risk. Confidence in the efficacy and rigour of our quality management processes enables NTU to enter into these areas knowing that quality and standards will be tested and upheld.

Requirements

- 1.1 Periodic Review enables Academic Board to maintain oversight, via ASQC, of the efficacy of the University's approach to the management of quality and standards. The exercise is formed of two strands of activity:
 - a. A **five**-yearly **Periodic Review**; and
 - b. Intermittent **themed reports** prepared by Academic Quality colleagues in CADQ and informed by current University priorities.
- 1.2 Periodic Review covers all taught courses, including those delivered as part of School-based partnership arrangements.
- 1.3 Periodic Reviews take place on a **five** year cycle as follows:

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Periodic Review Cycle 2021/2026		
2022/23	Term 1	Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies
	Term 2	Nottingham Business School
	Term 3	Architecture, Design and the Built Environment
2023/24	Term 1	Nottingham School of Art & Design
	Term 2/3	Science and Technology
2024/25	Term 1	Nottingham Law School
	Term 2/3	Social Sciences
2025/26	Term 1	Animal, Rural and Environmental Sciences
	Term 2/3	Arts and Humanities

2. Governance

Periodic Review is led by Academic Quality colleagues in the Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) on behalf of Academic Board and the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC).

Requirements

- 2.1 ASQC considers all outputs from Periodic Review. This includes reports from Periodic Reviews and themed reports. Summary reports are provided to Academic Board as part of the University's Academic Assurance framework.
- 2.2 Any changes to the Periodic Review process are approved by ASQC and ratified by Academic Board.

3. The Periodic Review

Periodic Review is a collaborative endeavour between the School and the review panel. It is the School's responsibility to share what is working well and less well. It is the panel's responsibility to ensure that discussions are constructive and collaborative. Outcomes of panel discussions are shared with the School at each stage of the process.

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- 3.1 The purpose of Periodic Review is to provide University oversight of the efficacy of a School's approach in: (a) managing the standards and quality of its courses and (b) implementing measures agreed at UET in relation to priorities for student experience and student outcomes.

Requirements

- 3.2 There are three elements of Periodic Review:
1. A desk-based review carried out by Academic Quality colleagues in CADQ prior to the review event
 2. A presentation by the School to a review panel
 3. Meetings with staff and stakeholder groups

Desk-based review

- 3.3 The purpose of the desk-based review is to provide a review panel with information about the efficacy of the School's approach of its implementation of the University's quality management framework and associated policies. This is achieved by a set of reports:
- a. A report on the efficacy of School-level quality management processes as indicated by review of minutes and papers of SASQC and its associated sub-committees, including student fora and collaborative review reports.
 - b. Desk-based reviewers will also have access to select Schools Insights data which captures basic profiling information on the Schools (number of departments for example) and recent trends in student numbers.
 - c. Reports for each of the courses selected for a deep dive review prior to the review event. These course reports reflect on course-level quality management processes and additional evidence that illustrates how University agreed priorities are 'running to ground' at course level.

Explanatory notes

- The criteria for selection of the deep dive courses are set out in QHS 7A.
 - The documentation which is considered at the desk-based review is standard documentation that currently exists. There is no requirement to produce anything solely for the purpose of the review event.
- 3.4 The reports are shared with the School for sense checking prior to the panel and the review event.

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School presentation

- 3.5 The purpose of the School presentation is to provide an overview of the School's approach, and the challenges associated with ensuring good outcomes for all students. This is an opportunity for the School to reflect on their Success for All action plan and their priorities with respect to improving student continuation, completion and progression.
- 3.6 Reference should be made to the outcomes of the most recent UET Autumn Review.

Explanatory notes

- Continuation, completion and progression align to the OfS definitions.

Meetings with staff and students

- 3.7 The purpose of these meetings is to test the efficacy of the School's oversight through discussion with staff and students.
- 3.8 The morning of the event includes a meeting with senior staff in the School where the broad approach (as reflected in the School's presentation) is discussed. Parallel meetings with students and a meeting with staff from the deep dive courses will take place in the afternoon.

4. Periodic Review criteria

The criteria used to consider the School's approach to the management of standards and quality are informed by the current OfS Conditions of Registration. The three elements of Periodic Review (desk-based review, School presentation, discussion with staff, students and stakeholders) contribute to the assurance of OfS conditions of registration.

Requirements

- 4.1 The table below sets out the Review criteria.
- 4.2 QHS 7A provides an indication of the evidence that is used to support the Review panel's consideration of these criteria.

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Review criteria

Academic Experience

The School should ensure all students receive a high quality academic experience. A high quality experience includes but is not limited to a course that:

- is up to date
- provides educational challenge
- is coherent
- is effectively delivered; and
- requires students to develop relevant skills

The School should ensure that courses are aligned to NTU priorities and address any specific challenges identified by the University.

Resources and student support

The School should ensure that students receive resources and support, and be effectively engaged, to ensure

- a high quality academic experience
- success in and beyond their course

The School should ensure that resources and support are aligned to NTU priorities and address any specific challenges identified by the University.

Student engagement

The School should ensure that students are effectively engaged, to ensure

- a high quality academic experience
- success in and beyond their course

The School should ensure that student engagement is aligned to NTU priorities and addresses any specific challenges identified by the University.

Assessment

The School should ensure that:

- students are assessed effectively
- each assessment is valid and reliable
- relevant awards granted to students are credible at the point of being granted and when compared to those granted previously

The School should ensure that approaches to assessment are aligned to NTU priorities and address any specific challenges identified by the University.

Standards

The School should ensure that

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- standards are set appropriately and reflect applicable sector-recognised standards
 - awards are only granted to students whose knowledge and skills appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards
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5. The Periodic Review panel

The Periodic Review panel ensures that externality, seniority, quality management expertise and subject specialist knowledge informs the discussion and review outcomes.

Requirements

- 5.1 The Periodic Review panel comprises **six** members:
- a. Review Chair: an academic Pro Vice-Chancellor / Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University;
 - b. Review Manager: a Senior Quality and Standards Advisor from CADQ;
 - c. External Panel Member: a senior academic member of an institution external to the University, whose knowledge is based in a similar area, who has experience in Higher Education (HE) quality management, and who has had no connection with the University in the past three years;
 - d. **Two** internal panel members: experienced academic colleagues from outside the School;
 - e. Student Panel Member: NTSU officer or their nominee.

Explanatory notes

- The School identifies a Periodic Review Lead, who takes primary responsibility for the oversight of the process within the School.

6. School responsibilities

The Periodic Review should not put undue burden on the School.

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Requirements

- 6.1 The School is required to make their quality management documentation and records available for the CADQ desk-based review.
- 6.2 There is no specific *additional* documentation requirements other than required for normal quality management purposes.
- 6.3 The School (namely School Employability Managers) should ensure that *at least* five external stakeholders have responded to the external stakeholder questions, 2 placement providers (if applicable) and 3 graduate employers.
- 6.4 The School is required to prepare a presentation for the review panel on the morning of the event day and to identify any areas that they wish to explore with the panel at the review event.
- 6.5 The School is responsible for ensuring that appropriate students and staff are invited to the afternoon meetings of the review event day.

Explanatory note

- The selection of students and staff will be made jointly by the School Lead and the Academic Quality (CADQ) Review Manager.

7. Review outcomes

The purpose of the outcome of the Periodic Review is to provide the School with a carefully considered reflection on the efficacy of (a) its management of the standards and quality of its courses and (b) its implementation of measures agreed by UET in relation to student experience and student outcomes in line with this Periodic Review framework.

Requirements

- 7.1 A draft report is provided to the School within 15 working days (subject to the Review Manager's working pattern and University closure days) of the Periodic Review event taking place.
- 7.2 The report summarises the main observations made by the panel and sets out any required actions, along with a timeframe for these actions.

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- 7.3 The School will complete the report with a) their reflections on having been through the process and what may have changed as a result and, b) how they plan to meet any required actions.
- 7.4 The School is expected to report on any required actions to the Review Chair and Review Manager at a mutually agreed date.
- 7.5 The review report, and outcome of any follow-up meeting is received by ASQC. The Chair determines whether any further monitoring of actions is required.

8. Themed reports

The purpose of the themed reports is to provide the University with an overarching picture of activity across all Schools in relation to particular pre-defined priority areas.

Requirements

- 8.1 CADQ are responsible for preparing themed reports addressing areas of activity which are pre-determined in discussion with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education.
- 8.2 Reports draw on outcomes from Periodic Reviews as part of the Periodic Review Framework, and are supported by additional information where it is available (for example the course database, or the data dashboard and SASQC minutes).

Explanatory note

- Examples of possible themes: effective personal tutoring; work-like experience; sustainability in the curriculum; decolonisation.

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Policy owner
CADQ

Change history			
<i>Version:</i>	<i>Approval date:</i>	<i>Implementation date:</i>	<i>Nature of significant revisions:</i>
March 2022	15.03.2022	15.03.2022	New Policy
May 2022	10.05.2022	10.05.2022	New operational guidance for the periodic review
Sept 2022	22.09.22	1.10.22	None
Sept 2023	14.09.23	01.10.23	Amended operational guidance for the Periodic review. Change to reviewing cycle Additional emphasis of collaborative nature of review.

Equality Analysis		
<i>Version:</i>	<i>EA date:</i>	<i>Completed by:</i>