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1. Aims

Periodic School Review assures the University that Schools are: effectively and efficiently managing quality management and enhancement procedures and processes, in line with the University quality framework; and providing high quality, valid, relevant and inclusive learning opportunities that enable students to achieve the University’s awards and qualifications. The framework also aims to support Schools in the continuing evaluation and enhancement of their provision.

Requirements

1.1 Periodic School Review (PSR) covers all taught courses within a School’s portfolio, including a School’s collaborations and partnerships.

1.2 Schools are reviewed on a five-year cycle as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periodic School Review Cycle 2019-2023</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2019/20</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>2020/21</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2021/22</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2023/24</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Explanatory note

- The framework for the University Research Degrees Review is set out in Quality Handbook (QH) Section 7B.
2. Governance

**Periodic School Review** is organised by 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 approves all Periodic School Review Reports on behalf of Academic Board.

2.2 Any changes to the Periodic School Review process are approved by ASQC and ratified by Academic Board.

3. Periodic School Review framework

**Periodic School Review** assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of the School’s processes for the management of quality and standards and of the quality and enhancement of student learning opportunities. The process enables the University to undertake a broad periodic review of quality management processes, and the opportunities afforded to students, beyond the routine monitoring of the effectiveness of courses, which takes place via the process of interim reporting (including external examiner reporting) and Periodic Course Review.

### Requirements

3.1 Periodic School Review focuses on two aspects:

a. Aspect 1: Standards and quality management;

b. Aspect 2: The quality and enhancement of student learning opportunities.

3.2 These aspects are assessed through:

a. Consideration of the School Scene Setting Document and Evidence Map, produced by the School in preparation for the review;

b. A compliance check, prepared by CADQ prior to the event, using evidence provided by the School, and stored centrally, (see QHS 7A), which determines the School’s compliance with required quality management processes, as set out in the Quality Handbook;
c. Review of key quality metrics related to all courses provisioned by the School, benchmarked against University or sector expectations, where available (see QHS 7A);

d. Discussion with the School’s senior management team, current students, academics and other external stakeholders during the two day review event (see QHS 7B).

Explanatory notes

- Schools are expected to meet the requirements set out in the University’s Quality Handbook.
- Academic quality represents the effectiveness of the learning opportunities provided to the students in order for them to achieve their award.
- We are concerned here with the quality of the learning opportunities offered (in terms of, for example; teaching, learning resources, assessment, academic and personal support).
- Enhancement of these learning opportunities reflects strategic and deliberate steps at School level to improve the quality of learning opportunities.
- Enhancement may be illustrated via a range of different examples of ‘good practice’ but PSR is interested in the School’s approach to planning, harnessing, evaluating and sharing such practice.
- Initial contact between CADQ and the School is made 12 months in advance of the planned review and Schools are advised to start formal preparations six months before the review takes place (see QHS 7C).
- Specific guidance for Schools on each stage of the process is provided in QHS 7A-C.

4. Review expectations

Periodic School Review aims to establish whether broad expectations associated with both aspects under review have been met.

Requirements

4.1 The review panel is required to make a judgement about both aspects under review using the following expectations and indicative factors in order to reach this judgement.
## Aspect 1: Standards and quality management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. The governance and quality management strategy and processes ensure that academic standards are secure, and provide a sound framework for course development and enhancement</strong></td>
<td>The approach of the School’s Senior Management team to the development, implementation and evaluation of quality management procedures&lt;br&gt;School level implementation and monitoring of the University’s quality management framework&lt;br&gt;School level approaches to meet the ambitions of the University’s strategic plan&lt;br&gt;The operation of the School’s strategies, policies and processes at course level&lt;br&gt;The extent of shared awareness and understanding of the School’s approach to, and processes for, quality management&lt;br&gt;The use of student representation in School quality management and decision-making, and the support provided for students for this purpose&lt;br&gt;The management of assessment and of examination boards&lt;br&gt;The strategic management of staff development, research and scholarship&lt;br&gt;Committee structures, and lines of communication and decision-making within the School&lt;br&gt;School level oversight of the identification and sharing of good practice&lt;br&gt;The extent to which the School is able to reflect on and develop quality management processes which are efficient and fit for purpose&lt;br&gt;The extent to which information about courses for prospective and current students is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Course design, development and approval: enables standards to be set; allows students to demonstrate learning outcomes; and meets University goals and strategies</strong></td>
<td>The way(s) in which the School ensures courses are fit for purpose and current&lt;br&gt;The use of benchmarks and PSRB requirements to inform the course curriculum and level&lt;br&gt;The use of externality to inform course design and curriculum&lt;br&gt;The extent to which course structures and curriculum meet the University’s strategic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Aims and School’s goals and initiatives
- Student input to inform course design and development

### 3. Design, approval, monitoring and review of assessment is effective in ensuring that students have the opportunity to demonstrate learning outcomes
- How assessment tasks and schedules are designed and agreed
- The processes for marking and moderation
- How feedback on assessment is provided to students
- How assessment tasks, schedules and feedback are monitored and reviewed

### 4. The use of external examiners is strong and appropriate
- The alignment of the School’s external examiner processes and procedures to the Quality Handbook
- The external examiners’ contribution to the maintenance and enhancement of standards
- The use of external examiner comments in the development of courses
- The process for feedback to external examiners

### 5. Monitoring and review processes are effective and inform enhancement activity
- The alignment of interim and periodic monitoring, review and reporting (course and School level) to the University framework
- The clarity and transparency of monitoring and reporting processes to all parties
- The use of quantitative and qualitative data to inform strategic planning, review and understanding of student outcomes including external examiner comments, student feedback, survey data (including the NSS), and data relating to the student journey
- The School’s processes to assure continuing validity and currency of courses

### 6. Students are genuinely involved in a range of activity related to quality management and enhancement, and understand relevant processes and practice
- The collection, reflection on, and impact, of student feedback on modules and courses; and the communication to students of resulting changes or decisions
- The engagement of students with course and School-level committees, including ‘hard to reach’ students (e.g. those studying off campus)
- The extent to which the students’ voice informs decision-making and change
- The extent to which students understand processes and practices by which they are
7. The management of School-based collaborations and partnerships is effective in ensuring that academic standards are maintained

- The School’s processes for establishing and maintaining oversight of its collaborations and partnerships
- The alignment to the University strategic plan and University Internationalisation Strategy of the School’s approach to developing collaborations and partnerships
- The alignment of the School’s quality management processes for collaborations and partnerships to University policy
- The management of specific requirements for monitoring, reporting and review of collaborative provision across the School
- The extent to which roles and responsibilities between all parties involved in a collaboration or partnership are clearly articulated and working effectively

Aspect 2: The quality and enhancement of the student learning opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Deliberate steps are taken to improve the quality of students’ learning opportunities</td>
<td>The strategic planning of, and evidence base for, enhancement initiatives, including use of the Curriculum Refresh framework</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The use of quality management processes to identify opportunities for enhancement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The extent to which the School expects and encourages enhancement of student learning opportunities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The efficacy of the School’s approach to measuring the impact of enhancements</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The opportunities for the identification, support and dissemination of good practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Professional standards for teaching and learning are supported</td>
<td>The extent to which research, scholarship and/or professional practice informs teaching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Staff induction, support, and development strategy and practice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The extent to which there is a shared understanding of the School’s learning and teaching strategy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The extent to which curriculum design, content and structure are informed by recent pedagogic developments, external</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sources and University goals</td>
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| 3. The quality of learning resources is appropriate | The collective expertise of staff for effective delivery of the curriculum and assessment of learning outcomes and staff development opportunities thereto. The facilitation of learning through the provision of appropriate resources, including academic support and a range of appropriate teaching methods.  
| 4. The quality of learning opportunities meets the needs of all student groups | The arrangements for monitoring the effectiveness of the provision for all student groups including disabled students, international students, ‘hard-to-reach’ students, part-time students, and students studying from a distance. The systems used to evaluate these students’ progress and to identify opportunities for enhancement.  
| 5. The quality of learning opportunities delivered with others is managed effectively to enable students to achieve their awards | The quality and effectiveness of communication with students and partners. The opportunities for sharing practice across collaborations and partnerships. Staff induction, development and support for school and partner staff.  
| 6. The quality of learning opportunities delivered through work-based learning, apprenticeships and placements is managed effectively | The extent of opportunities provided for work-based learning, apprenticeships, placements and professional learning. The management of work-based learning and placements, including monitoring, review and enhancement.  
| 7. Effective arrangements are in place to support students in their learning | Career education, information, advice and guidance. Pastoral support for all students. Student induction. |
5. The review panel

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

Requirements

5.1 The review panel comprises seven members:

a. Review Chair: an academic Pro Vice-Chancellor/Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University;
b. Review Manager: a Senior Standards and Quality Officer 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. Three internal panel members: including two experienced academic colleagues from outside the School;
e. Student Panel Member: NTSU officer or their nominee.

Explanatory notes

- Each review panel member undertakes a specific role. Two members focus on Aspect 1: Standards and Quality Management; and two panel members (usually an internal and the external member) focus on Aspect 2: The Quality and Enhancement of Student Learning Opportunities. It is the role of the Chair to maintain oversight of both aspects. The Student Panel Member will usually focus on the effectiveness of student engagement and the student voice across both aspects.
- The School identifies a Periodic School Review Lead, who takes primary responsibility for the oversight of the PSR process within the School.
- The detail of the responsibilities associated with the different roles are provided in QHS 7D.
6. School responsibilities

The operation of the review is designed to ensure that the information provided to the panel enables rigorous scrutiny without placing undue burden on School staff or panel members.

Requirements

6.1 The School is required to submit to the panel two documents: the Scene Setting document and the Evidence Map. These are supported by a set of supporting documents which are made available to the panel (see QHS 7A for details).

6.2 The Scene Setting document is the starting point for members of the review panel. It should provide a brief overview of the School by providing information, in two parts, on the following:

Part A

a. School management and committee structure (preferably diagrammatic)

b. An outline of the current strategic aims of the School;

c. A summary of current challenges which have specific relevance for student learning opportunities, the student experience and quality management;

d. A summary of what the School considers to be particularly good, or innovative practice;

e. An evaluation of the key changes made in its quality management mechanisms since the last PSR.

Part B

a. The full list of all taught courses provisioned by the School, with student numbers and mode of study: undergraduate and postgraduate, including courses delivered in partnership with others (see QH Section 10) and in categories 1-5 (See Quality Handbook Supplement 5I).

b. Presentation and analysis of data related to undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses in their various modes of delivery. This includes student intake data, progression and achievement (including module failure) data, and data on withdrawals and graduate outcomes for the last three years. It also includes data and analysis related to the National Student Survey and that used for Success for All reporting.

6.3 The Scene Setting document must not discuss aspects of the School’s processes and practice. Information provided in the supporting documentation, and discussions with staff at the PSR event allows the panel to scrutinise process and practice.
Explanatory notes

- The Scene Setting document is the only item of documentation prepared by the School specifically for the Review.
- Part A of the Scene Setting document should be no more than 6 sides of A4.

6.4 The Evidence Map provides the panel with information about where in the supporting documentation the panel will find evidence to support each of the PSR expectations.

Explanatory notes

- The Evidence Map is not exhaustive: not all documentary evidence will be referred to. The key here is to provide the panel with an indication of what the School considers best demonstrates their meeting of each expectation.
- Accurate cross-referencing, or hyperlinking is important.
- The Evidence Map should be no more than 4 sides of A4.

7. Review outcomes

The review panel arrives at a judgement about each of the aspects that has been considered, based on evidence from the documentation provided in advance, and the discussions that take place during the review event itself.

Requirements

7.1 For each aspect, the following four judgements are possible:
   a. Commended;
   b. Meets NTU and UK expectations;
   c. Requires improvement to meet NTU and UK expectations;
   d. Does not meet NTU and UK expectations.

7.2 The panel will use the framework provided at the end of this section in order to come to the review judgement for each of the two aspects under review.

7.3 The panel also agrees any recommendations, commendations and affirmations.

7.4 The judgements are shared with the School within two working days of the review event.
7.5 The rationale and evidence base for these judgements, recommendations and commendations are articulated in the Periodic School Review Report which is approved by ASQC on behalf of Academic Board.

7.6 A follow-up meeting between the review panel Chair, CADQ and School officers takes place after the School’s receipt of the report, in order to agree any action plan related to the recommendations made by the panel. Following this meeting, the action plan is received by ASQC.

7.7 Progress on these actions is reported through the normal annual monitoring process. All actions should be completed as reported a year after the Review event.

Explanatory notes

- The recommendations indicate the timeframe within which the review panel considers that the recommendations should be acted upon.
- Commendations describe the practice that the panel observes which is considered exemplary, innovative and/or transferable.
- Affirmations made by the panel acknowledge developments already in place, or planned, to address previously identified issues.

8. Appeal against review outcomes

8.1 Disagreement with the judgement of the review panel’s overall outcome decision for each aspect of review does not in itself constitute a reason to appeal. Appeals can only be made in relation to fairness of procedures or to factual inaccuracies which have the potential to affect the review outcomes. Any matters of factual accuracy which do not in themselves affect the judgements or recommendations will be addressed outside the appeals process.

8.2 In order to appeal the outcome of the Periodic School Review, the Executive Dean must present an appeal to the Chair of ASQC within 14 days of the receipt of the confirmed report. The basis for the appeal must be clearly set out and documentary evidence to support the case must be provided.

8.3 The Chair of ASQC may ask for further evidence if they believe this would resolve the issue. In coming to their decision, the Chair will be supported by the Review Manager.

8.4 Outcomes of this stage may be:

a. Confirmation of the decision of the Periodic School Review panel;

b. Confirmation of the decision of the Periodic School Review panel with some amendments made to the final report;

c. Reference of the case back to the Periodic School Review Panel with instructions to consider the outcomes de novo.

8.5 The Chair of ASQC will formally relay the outcome of the appeal to the Executive Dean within 14 days of the appeal being made. Where there is a requirement for
the Periodic School Review panel to reconsider the outcomes, an appropriate timeframe will be agreed between the Chair of ASQC and the Chair of the review panel.

8.6 Where the Executive Dean considers that the School’s concerns have still not been resolved after this process, they may make a direct submission to Academic Board.

8.7 Academic Board will convene a working party which will reconsider the evidence put forward by the School and will interview representatives of the School and the chair of the Panel. If the working party require further evidence, this will be provided.

8.8 Outcomes may be:

a. Confirm the decision of the Periodic School Review;
b. Refer the case back to the Periodic School Review Panel with instructions to consider the proposal *de novo*;
c. Rescind the decision and make recommendations for action toward further progress; or
d. Make such other arrangements for the determination of the issue as it deems appropriate.

8.9 The decision of Academic Board, based on the working party’s findings, will be final.

8.10 In the event of the Periodic School Review panel reconsidering the outcomes, a half day meeting will be organised whereby the full review panel reconvene. All original evidence will be made re-available by the School, alongside the evidence put forward as part of the appeal. The review panel will come to decision and report this to Academic Board. This decision may be to uphold its original judgement.
## Policy owner

CADQ

### Change history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version:</th>
<th>Approval date:</th>
<th>Implementation date:</th>
<th>Nature of significant revisions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2016</td>
<td>30.09.16</td>
<td>01.10.16</td>
<td>Update of review cycle</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Requirement that School Action Plan be considered by ASQC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Addition of factor: Aspect 1: management of collaborations and partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2017</td>
<td>30.09.17</td>
<td>01.10.17</td>
<td>Compliance and evidence check renamed to compliance and evidence overview. Change of date of Doctoral School review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2018</td>
<td>12.09.18</td>
<td>01.10.18</td>
<td>Additional factor in Aspect 1 Expectation 1 regarding management of assessment and Boards of Examiners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2019</td>
<td>11.09.19</td>
<td>01.10.19</td>
<td>Additional factor in Aspect 2 Expectation 1 regarding efficacy of the School’s approach to measuring the impact of enhancements, and reference to the Curriculum Refresh Framework in one of the other factors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Updates to the articulation of Aspect 2 Expectation 4 and associated factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 2019</td>
<td>23.10.19</td>
<td>23.10.19</td>
<td>Additional reference to efficiency of quality management in overarching principles of PSR and associated reference in Aspect 1 Expectation 1</td>
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<td>Change of requirement from SRAD to Scene Setting document and Evidence Map.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 2020</td>
<td>16.09.20</td>
<td>01.10.20</td>
<td>Process for appeal against review outcomes updated</td>
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### Equality Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version:</th>
<th>EA date:</th>
<th>Completed by:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2013</td>
<td>04.11.15</td>
<td>CADQ</td>
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</table>
### Framework for Periodic School Review Judgements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commended</th>
<th>Meets NTU and UK expectations</th>
<th>Requires improvement to reach NTU and UK expectations</th>
<th>Does not meet NTU and UK expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The majority of expectations have been fully met. Any expectations that are not fully met are mostly met. There may be some minor omissions or oversights in some of the evidence provided to the panel, but these do not compromise the overall quality of the approach and provision. Likely to be characterised by at least some of the following:  
• compelling evidence of the School’s commitment to achieving excellence in standards and quality management and in the quality and enhancement of student learning opportunities.  
• numerous and widespread examples of good practice.  
• a strategic approach for building on good practice.  
• where appropriate, examples of developments, planned or in train, which seek to address issues previously identified. | All, or nearly all, expectations have been fully or mostly met. Any expectations not fully or mostly met are not considered to present significant risk. Likely to be characterised by at least some of the following:  
• evidence that the School is able to maintain and promote the quality and standards appropriate for its provision.  
• several examples of good practice.  
• the need to give further thought to a particular factor(s) which contributes to an expectation not being fully met.  
• the need to address details in documentation which do not materially affect practice.  
• the need to update or amend minor omissions or oversights.  
• the need to further develop activity already planned, to more fully meet expectations. | Most expectations have been fully, mostly or partly met. Those expectations that are not met, may not present significant risk at present, but if unaddressed have the potential to compromise quality. Likely to be characterised by at least some of the following:  
• significant weakness(es) in some School processes, or which have some shortcomings.  
• a lack of awareness by the School about the potential consequences of those problem(s) identified by the panel.  
• failure to take prompt and appropriate action to address a problem previously identified. | Several expectations are not met, or are only partly met, and/or there are serious gaps in one or more expectations. Those expectations that are not met, or partly met, do pose serious risks. There is concern about the adequacy of the control mechanisms in place to mitigate these risks. Likely to be characterised by at least some of the following:  
• ineffective operation of School quality management processes.  
• significant gaps in process, structures or procedures relating to quality management.  
• a lack of compliance with NTU quality management policy.  
• a lack of awareness by the School about the problem(s) identified by the panel. |