



# Periodic Review & Revalidation

## PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE NOTES

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## 1. Policy Summary

- 1.1 This policy sets out the process for the University's Periodic five-yearly reviews and revalidation of all programmes which are offered across the university. In implementing the reviews, the University is also revalidating the programmes for the following delivery period. In the year in which a provision is undergoing periodic review, it will be exempt from the University Annual Monitoring Procedure.
- 1.2 This procedure can also be implemented for the purpose of conducting a bulk revalidation of multiple programmes in one area when required. This is to enable the review of programmes in instances of institutional wide change, or strategic alignment.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This Procedure is designed to work in conjunction with the University Annual Monitoring Policy. Changes which are implemented in conjunction with the university annual monitoring or periodic review procedures will be delivered without needing to go through the Major Changes procedure. This has also been written in alignment with the university new programme approval and validation procedure.
- 2.2 This procedure and the guidance notes have been prepared to ensure consistency with the Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration, UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies' (PSRB) Requirements, Consumer Protection Law, and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation.
- 2.3 The University of Buckingham is committed to ensuring that the programmes which are delivered meet the National Qualification frameworks, are of a high standard, and that the programmes effectively prepare students for the workforce on completion of their studies.
- 2.4 This policy should also be applied to academic partners where the university is the awarding body. In this instance, a Collaborations Representative (CR) will fulfil the role of Faculty Quality Manager (FQM), and other named roles, such as Programme Director or Dean, should be taken to mean the counter-part or equivalent role within the partner institution. In all cases though, the Chair must be appointed by the University of Buckingham.

## 3. Procedural Review

- 3.1 The Periodic Review procedure will be fully reviewed on a Biennial basis by the Deputy Head of Academic Services (Quality). Any amendments will then be presented to the University Assessment Learning and Teaching Committee (UALTC) for approval. Once these changes are approved, they will be reported to Senate.

- 3.2 Any changes to the Periodic Review Procedure will consider the availability of data, as well as being reviewed in alignment with sector recognised quality assurance practices. They will also review whether the outcomes of periodic review are still as desired and that they are fit for purpose. Minor amendments can also be made to the Procedure outside the standard review cycle to better align with sector good practice.

#### 4. Introduction

- 4.1 This procedure covers all taught undergraduate and postgraduate modules and programmes that lead to the award of academic credit and/or contribute to a higher education award at Level 3 or above in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). This includes all programmes which are delivered in conjunction with collaborative partners.
- 4.2 All taught programmes are reviewed at least every five years, with individual programmes often being considered as part of a small group of subject-related programmes. The review periods for programmes which are PSRB regulated will be aligned where possible to fit with the years in which regulator review is expected. The intended schedule for Periodic Review will be approved by the UALTC.
- 4.3 The Periodic Review provides a means for the university to review the quality and standards of its academic provision and enables a broader review of the continuing validity and relevance of the programmes offered. The process also provides an opportunity for collaborative partners to think strategically about the programmes offered and to consider longer-term plans and objectives.
- 4.4 The University's Assessment, Learning and Teaching Committee (UALTC) will approve the policy for Periodic Review and overview reports.
- 4.5 Where possible the Periodic Review will be done to align with the expected accreditation PSRB Visits. Where required requests can be submitted to the Deputy Head of Academic Services (Quality) to amend the Periodic Review Date to better accommodate accreditation visits.
- 4.6 Periodic Review and Revalidation aims to promote continuous improvement in the student experience and to ensure that programmes are maintaining the expected academic standards. This policy was developed taking into consideration the Guidelines set out in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
- 4.7 Reflecting the Expectations of the UK Quality Code, the purposes of Programme periodic review are to ensure that:
- the academic standards of programmes meet the requirements of the national qualification's framework.
  - the qualifications which students are awarded continue to maintain their value in line with the sector.

- Students can obtain and achieve a variety of awards with comparable levels and attainment.
- when working in partnership with other organizations, the University has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are maintained regardless of where or how programs are delivered or who delivers them.
- Academic provision is inclusive with equitable entry criteria and progression routes.

The University also uses periodic review to:

- confirm that current portfolio of programmes offered by the university aligns with the wider strategic plan.
- consider the validity of existing programmes, and their market demand.
- Ensure that the learning outcomes of a programme are relevant and achievable by students.
- identify any problems that need to be resolved within the current provision.
- Learning teaching and assessment strategies are also
- highlight where improvements can be made and use the opportunity to recognise existing good practice across the institution.

4.8 As part of the review, all subject areas are asked to reflect on previous annual monitoring performance. For programmes entailing accreditation they will also be asked to reflect on previous accreditation performance. Where possible, accredited programmes will be able to submit the documentation used for accreditation where appropriate to avoid the duplication of work for Periodic Review.

4.9 The process of annual monitoring is intended to be a combination of reflective as well as providing a developmental action plan for the area of review going forwards. This includes looking at the implementation of actions from previous annual monitoring/ periodic review, along with setting objectives for long term planning.

## 5. Framework Alignment

5.1 In the review of programmes, the expectation is that all programme reviews will be conducted in alignment with the University of Buckingham Academic and Assessment Frameworks as approved by UALTC. The only instances in which alignment with these can be exempt is when there is a specific PSRB requirement which means that programmes cannot comply with the University frameworks.

5.2 Programmes should align with the appropriate [QAA Framework for Higher Education](#) (FHEQ) and refer to [QAA benchmark statements](#) where relevant.

## 6. Data for Review

- 6.1 The data to be considered at Periodic Review includes the annual monitoring data from the previous four years, which must be considered as part of the periodic review procedure. Alongside this there will be a variety of reports and data made available throughout the academic year. Where possible the panels will be scheduled to ensure that five sets of annual monitoring data are available for review by the panel.
- 6.2 The submission of the data for Periodic Review is the responsibility of the Programme Director(s), but it is expected that the material will be provided following consultation with students, the wider Programme delivery team, other subject area staff, professional services staff who are responsible for supporting the programme and the appropriate Deans and Senior Leadership team members.
- 6.3 All documents should be submitted electronically to the Faculty Quality Manager (or a Collaborations representative for collaborative partners) for distribution to Panel Members.
- 6.4 The Programme Directors should liaise with their Faculty Quality Manager (or Collaborations Representative) in the first instance to discuss the progress of the report, and raise any queries or concerns, which can then be escalated as appropriate.
- 6.5 All paperwork should be made available to the panel a minimum of 3 weeks prior to the meeting. In instances where this deadline is not met without previous approval from the Panel Chair and Registrar the meeting will be postponed. In this instance it will then fall to the discretion of UALTC whether the programme area will be allowed to recruit for the following academic year.

## 7. Panel Membership

- 7.1 Below is a list of the intended panel members for a typical periodic review panel. In order to accommodate collaborative partners within this structure, the intention is that for the review of collaborative partnerships the equivalent role for partner institutions should be included within the panel invitation. For collaborative partnerships all the paperwork should be done between the collaborations team, the collaborative institution and the link tutor.
  - **An independent External Reviewer** at a minimum the panel should contain an external academic member. Where appropriate there should also be a second representative from either a professional body or an employer of graduates in this area. External representatives should not be representatives of a client for whom a bespoke Programme is being delivered. If appropriate, one of the external reviewers may be the existing external examiner for the Programme area. This is vital to allow the panel to re-validate the programmes for the incoming academic period.

- A minimum of **2 representatives from the UALTC**, or in the absence of the availability of these, 2 nominees of the UALTC chair. These members should be representatives of a different subject area than that being reviewed. If necessary, the chair of the panel can take on this role, however ideally the chair will be able to conduct their role independently of another role on the panel.
- A minimum of **one student representative**. Selection of these should be done in conjunction with the Students Union. The student representative needs to be capable of representing the interests of the students within their programme area, with every effort being made to ensure that there is no conflict of interest. The student representative should not be employed in any capacity by the University of Buckingham.
- The **Faculty Quality Manager (or Collaborations Representative for Collaborative Partners)**, they will act as the quality representative on the panel and nominate the appropriate servicing officer. The FQM/CC will also act as the panel secretary ensuring that all documentation is made available in a timely manner, and is complete.
- The **Faculty Registrar (or Collaborations nominee for collaborative partners)** will act as a representative of the Professional Services Team
- The **Faculty Administration Manager** (or similar role) who will act as a representative of the administrative team for the Programme / subject area. *Note: for Collaborative Provision this role will be filled with a nominee from the collaborative partner).*
- The **Dean of the School** Under which the Subject Area for review falls
- The **Programme Director(s)** of the subject area which is being reviewed as part of the periodic review process.
- In attendance of the panel there will also be a **servicing officer** who will be expected to prepare the minutes and final write up of the meeting to be distributed to the panel following the meeting and reported to the following terms University Assessment Learning and Teaching Committee/ Senate meeting.

**The Chair of the Periodic Review Panel should be either a Faculty Dean (of a faculty other than the one being reviewed), or the Pro Vice Chancellor Academic & Provost.**

- 7.2 The Chair may co-opt additional members to the Panel as considered appropriate. Internal Stakeholders from Departments across the University e.g. Admissions, Apprenticeships, Marketing etc. can also be invited to the panel where it is deemed their input would be particularly beneficial.
- 7.3 Subject areas are invited to nominate external panel members to the Faculty Quality Manager, but where nominations are not received or are considered unsuitable for the role, the Faculty Quality Manager/Collaborations Representative will access wider quality networks to identify and appoint the Panel members. The external reviewer will be appointed in alignment with the external examiner code of practice, taking into account the guidance from the QAA regarding External Reviewer roles, alongside the University of Buckingham internal recruitment criteria.

## 8. Guidance for each Panel position:

8.1 Below is guidance for what is expected from each member of the Periodic Review and Programme Revalidation Panel. For colleagues coming from collaborative partners, they should be assumed as being internal panel members for the purposes of the roles which are outlined below.

### Chair

- Overall responsibility for the delegation of work to ensure full coverage of the Expectations of the panel.
- To ensure meetings are conducted in a timely manner and the agenda is followed.
- To orally present the review findings to the subject area at the end of the review day
- To work with the review panel Secretary to complete and agree the final report and to be signatory to the report as presented to UALTC.
- To act as a scrutineer of the subject area's progress against the action plan

### Internal Panel Members

- To undertake initial reading of material in advance of the panel
- to support the Chair in devising lines of enquiry
- to take the lead in asking questions relating to their areas of responsibility/ expertise
- to contribute to the final summary report and action plan.
- To support the implementation of the action plan following its final approval.

### Student Reviewer

- to be a full panel member with the same responsibilities as other Internal Panel Members
- To collate feedback from other students
- To focus on the student experience and the effectiveness of student engagement in all aspects of the review.

### External Reviewer

- To be a full panel member with the same responsibilities as Internal Panel Members, providing initial feedback to the Chair in advance of the meeting
- To provide subject-specific expertise to the review in areas such as the curriculum; professional body requirements; employability and academic standards.
- To review any proposed module or programme changes.

#### Panel Secretary

- To distribute documents to the panel attendees in line with the timeline for Periodic Review
- To nominate the servicing officer to support the panel recording and minuting.

#### Panel Servicing officer

- To draft and finalise the written report for UALTC/ Senate in consultation with the wider panel

### 9. Procedure

- 9.1 As much time as possible will be given to notify the faculty that is to be reviewed, this is between 6 and 8 months where feasible. Exact timings will then be agreed between the panel and those in the school being reviewed.
- 9.2 In instances in which a collaborative partner is being reviewed, the timeline for this will be reviewed between the collaborative partner, the collaborations department, and the faculty dean as appropriate.
- 9.3 In instances in which a collaborative partner institution is involved, the expectation is that the documentation which is provided by the University of Buckingham alone will not be sufficient, and additional data will need to be provided by the partner.
- 9.4 The External Panel Member will normally be appointed by the FQM/CR in consultation with the Dean.

*The procedure for Periodic Review is outlined below:*

	Action	Responsible
1	Dean to be informed of Periodic Review procedure and requirements in accordance with the timeline above.	FQM/CR
2	A Periodic Review panel is formed. A date is set for the panel meeting (on Teams).	FQM/CR
3	If programme or module changes are being submitted as part of the Periodic review, these need to be recorded via the Change Procedure with updated documents on e-vision.	Programme Director or FQM/CR
3	Material relating to the Periodic Review is collated and sent to the panel at least 3 weeks prior to the panel meeting.	FQM/CR

4	All material is reviewed.	Chair, Student representative, Internal and External Panel members.
5	Using the agenda template, the Chair opens the panel meeting on Teams, inviting discussion and feedback.	Chair
6	Minutes are recorded	Servicing Officer
7	Periodic Review Summary is written.	FQM/CR
8	Any recommendations or revisions are addressed.	FQM/CR and Programme Director(s)
9	Amended documents are sent to the External Panel member for their consideration and approval.	FQM/CR
10	The Periodic Review Summary is sent to UALTC for noting.	FQM/CR
11	Final versions of the programme and module specifications to be sent to the Deputy Head of Academic Services (Quality).	FQM/CR

## 10. Core Documentation

10.1 Below is a list of the documentation which is expected to be in place for the panel to enable the complete review of programmes in alignment with the periodic review procedure. This documentation is also required for the purposes of the panel acting as a validation body.

- External Examiner reports and responses
- Student feedback reports and responses, including module feedback and action plans
- Programme and Module specifications / Handbooks
- Module Maps and Assessment Matrices
- Annual Monitoring Reports
- Information on the number of adapted programmes which have been implemented
- Periodic Review Reports
- Statistical data on student Recruitment, Retention, Progression and Performance
- Academic Integrity Reports
- Programme/Departmental Handbooks
- Special Programme Regulations
- Subject Benchmark Statements
- Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements and accreditation reports plus action plans/responses
- Staff publication lists/CV's
- NSS Results for the time-period being reviewed
- Graduate Outcomes Results for the time being reviewed

10.2 In addition to the above, the core documentation for collaborative partners should also include:

- Reflective summary (to be completed by the partner) (appendix 2)
- Marketing material for the programmes under review/validation
- Information on any secondary award (dual award)
- Data regarding graduate outcomes
- Summary of changes, plus rationale/business case if amendments are being presented for validation during the periodic review.

For the purposes of also using the periodic review as a programme revalidation exercise, all the proposed programme changes need to be submitted in track change format on E-vision versions (or equivalent for Collaborations) of the specifications. If they are not, the programme can be revalidated, but the changes cannot be approved and will therefore need to be conducted through the standard change procedure.

## 11. Questions to be addressed within the review:

11.1 In the implementation of the Periodic Review process, the review teams may want to consider the following during the review process:

- Are the learning outcomes still relevant for the topic? Have there been any changes in the discipline, or in the applicable subject benchmark statements/or industry practice that require these to be amended? In what ways should these changes be addressed.
- Is the programme still aligned to the learning, teaching and assessment strategies of the university/ collaborative partner? Are the desired learning outcomes still applicable? How successful are students in achieving those desired outcomes?
- How is the academic performance of the programme? Is the retention level on the programme as expected, and are the graduate outcomes in alignment with equivalent programmes within the sector?
- Are the assessment mechanisms used in the programme still appropriate, considering sector trends/ Issues including student outcomes, Spelling and Grammar, Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence.
- Is there still market demand for the subject area / the programme and does it still align with the University of Buckingham Strategy?
- What are notable successes within the programme area which can be maintained for the next periodic review period and shared cross departmentally as best practice including assessment mechanisms, pastoral support, teaching methods, or alternative forms of student engagement?
- What are the USPs of the programme offering which make it stand out within the sector?
- In what ways are new academic practices and technologies being implemented within the programme? Or how can they be implemented in the coming years?

## 12. Panel Outcomes

- 12.1 Following a review of the supporting documentation and discussion, the panel must agree on one of the following outcomes:
- a. The programme(s) presented meet UK quality expectations on teaching and learning and are **approved** for use in their current form.
  - b. The programme(s) presented meet *most* of the UK quality expectations on teaching and learning, but recommendations from the panel should be implemented immediately. The programme(s) are therefore **approved pending further revision** (To the satisfaction of the external panel member).
  - c. The programme(s) presented do not meet UK quality expectations and the requirements of relevant QAA Benchmark statements and are **not approved**. In this case the programmes should be reviewed and amended and a new validation is required.

## 13. Completion of Periodic Review

- 13.1 The panel discussion will be held via Teams and when concluded, any feedback and recommendations should be addressed by the faculty. FQM/CR's can support Programme Directors in this exercise.
- 13.2 The External Panel Member should review any revised literature. They should inform the faculty if further amendments are required, or else confirm that the changes have been made to their satisfaction and are therefore approved.
- 13.3 Final versions of the Programme and Module literature should be recorded on e-  
vision. FQM/CR's are responsible for ensuring that any information provided on the university website relating to the reviewed programmes is up to date.
- 13.4 The outcome of the Periodic Review should be reported to UALTC. The FQM/CR should ensure that the Summary report is sent to the UALTC secretary.

## **Appendix 1 – Periodic Review Agenda**

*The agenda below is provided as guidance and can be adapted to suit the requirements of any given Periodic Review.*

### **Agenda**

#### **Start of Session:**

- Welcome
- Introductions

#### **Review of all Programmes**

*Each programme subject to periodic review and revalidation should be considered in turn against each of the points below:*

- *(Insert name of Programme)*
- Overview provided by the Programme Director(s)/programme leader
- Current provision including intended learning outcomes
- Review of any proposed changes to the programme
- Consideration of QAA Subject benchmark Statements
- Consideration of QAA quality standards
- Consideration of programme(s) stated aims

*Break*

#### **Programme monitoring (all programmes)**

- Review of student feedback
- Student Representative is invited to comment
- Annual review feedback and data

#### **Panel Decision (all programmes)**

- Panel discussion
- Panel to make recommendation(s)

*End*

## PARTNER INSTITUTION PERIODIC REVIEW REFLECTIVE SUMMARY

<b>Partner Institution:</b>	
<b>Date of Reflective Document:</b>	
<b>Date of Periodic Review:</b>	
<b>Programme(s) under periodic review:</b>	

<b>1. Please provide a brief summary of the department/faculty:</b>
<b>2. Please describe any distinctive features of the programme(s).</b>
<b>3. Is there a market demand for the programme(s)? Please provide details.</b>
<b>4. Please provide the admissions, enrolment and completion data for the last 5 years:</b>
<b>5. Provide information on how internal and external reference points have been considered within the programme development, including:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation</i></li> <li>• <i>Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK threshold standards</i></li> <li>• <i>Research Council requirements and reports (where applicable)</i></li> </ul>
<b>6. Are there any approved modifications to the programme(s) since the last validation or periodic review event? Please provide details.</b>

**7. Please describe the internal monitoring process, including the name and role of relevant committees, annual review processes, student feedback etc.**

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**8. Please provide details of student consultation:**

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**9. Are there any specific details you would like to highlight to the Periodic Review Panel?**

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**Document review information**

<b>Document owner</b>	
<b>Document last reviewed by</b>	
<b>Date last reviewed</b>	
<b>Review frequency</b>	

## Appendix 3 – Periodic Review Summary



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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### Periodic Review Summary

*Faculty Quality Managers (or Collaborations Department Representative for collaborative partners) should complete this form as part of the preparation for Periodic Review, and to record any recommendations that may follow panel discussions for follow-up action.*

<i>Name of Faculty:</i>	
<i>Name of Collaborative Partner if applicable:</i>	
<i>FQM/CR: Date:</i>	
<i>Periodic Review Panel (Names and role):</i>	
<i>Dates covered by Periodic Review:</i>	
<i>Please provide a list of programmes subject to periodic review:</i>	
<i>Are there any changes to any programmes since the last periodic review?</i>	

Faculty/Collaborative Partner overview:

<i>Please comment on mechanisms in place to support students:</i>	
<i>Please summarize current quality monitoring processes:</i>	
<i>Please comment on student engagement in the period covered by this review:</i>	
<i>How does the programme(s) align with the University's Strategic Plan?</i>	

Programme Overview

<i>Name of Programme</i>	<i>Do learning outcomes align with QAA Subject Benchmark Statements?</i>	<i>Are programme levels set at the appropriate FHEQ level?</i>	<i>Relevant transferable skills for the workplace?</i>

Good Practice

<i>Please use this space to record evidence of good practice identified during the periodic review:</i>	
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Outcomes

*Use this space to record any recommendations (outcomes) of the periodic review:*

Recommendation	To be completed by:	By date:	Approved by:

*Updates to be monitored by the FQM/CR and reported to UALTC.*