



# 澳門科技大學 MACAU UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW

In this document 'Faculty' is taken to include any academic Faculty, Department, School and Centre in the University.

### WHAT IS A POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW?

A Program Review is a rigorous, systematic, objective, impartial, expert-based examination, evaluation and self-evaluation of how effectively a program is working, as part of the ongoing pursuit of higher levels of achievement and quality in the university, and in the service of program improvement. A Program Review includes:

- Preparation and submission of a self-evaluation document;
- Review of the self-evaluation document by the Program Review Panel;
- Collection and submission of additional documentation to the Program Review Panel;
- Scrutiny of the documentation by the Program Review Panel;
- A visit by the Program Review Panel to the program and its officers;
- The production of a report that comments on judgements about the program, the strengths of the program, areas for improvement, and recommendations for further action.
- Following the receipt of the report, a follow-up action plan for the program's development.

Program review addresses questions such as:

- What are we doing, why, how and how well on the program?
- How high is the quality of the program?
- How do we know?
- How can the program be improved and the improvement sustained?

It addresses major questions such as:

1. What does the Faculty *say* it is doing and values about the program?
2. What *procedures* does the Faculty have for planning, monitoring, reviewing, developing what it says it does and values about the program?

3. What *processes* does the Faculty have for planning, monitoring, reviewing, developing what it says it does and values about the program?
4. How does the Faculty know and inform itself and stakeholders if these procedures and processes are *working/being used*?
5. Are the procedures and processes in place, operating and *effective* in meeting the Faculty's stated mission, values, purposes, policies, self-evaluation contents and criteria for the effectiveness of the program?
6. How does the Faculty *inform itself and stakeholders* about the procedures and processes for planning, monitoring, reviewing, developing what it says it does and values about the program?
7. How does the Faculty inform itself/stakeholders about how these procedures and processes for the program are effective in terms of *outcomes and quality* (i.e. impact analysis)?
8. How high is the quality of the program and its elements?
9. What benchmarks and benchmarking does the Program operate?
10. How has the program *improved* its quality over time, and how do we know?
11. What recommendations can be made for needed *interventions and developments*?
12. *How and where* can the quality of the program be improved and enhanced, *by whom* and in what *time frames*?

A Program Review is conducted by internal members of the university and by external reviewers. It comprises a self-evaluation by the program and the program committee(s), together with a review by members of the university who are not from the Faculty, and who include senior officers of the university. The intention is to show that the program has proper procedures and processes for quality assurance, that these are actually operating, that they are making a positive difference, and that they are impacting on the program. Within Program Review, self-evaluation has a primary purpose of bringing about improvement, to ensure that the program is meeting its goals, and has procedures for informing itself of this, and that its statements of quality are evidence-based. It is designed to identify and diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of the program in a way that can bring about improvement, i.e. its intention is constructive and formative. The Australian Universities Quality Agency (2008: 5)<sup>1</sup> indicates other several possible intended outcomes of self-evaluation within Program Review:

- 'Verifying that processes are in place, and whether these are operating effectively
- Determining whether existing policies and procedures are effective in meeting [program] goals, and identifying any gaps
- Providing information that may not normally be evident (such as localised innovative practices in teaching and learning)
- Enhancing understanding (across staff, student and/or other stakeholders) of organisational processes and outcomes

---

<sup>1</sup> Adams, R., Strong, J., Mattick, L.E., McManus, M.E., Matthews, K.E. and Foster, J. (2008) *Self-review for Higher Education Institutions*. Melbourne: Australian Universities Quality Agency.

- ‘Reality testing’ achievements toward strategic goals
- Increasing engagement with change
- Disclosing weaknesses and forcing confrontation
- Promoting honest communication
- Encouraging benchmarking, internally and/or externally
- Providing a base for ongoing comparison and benchmarking
- Identifying activities that are misaligned with organizational [and program] goals/objectives
- Providing evidence of quality processes in place
- Promoting empowerment and engagement of participants
- Promoting an evidence-based culture
- Promoting learning
- Enabling self-identification of improvement gaps and development of associated strategies to address these prior to external audit.’

A ‘program’ is defined here as an entire set of courses leading to an award.

A ‘course’ is defined here as a single element of a program to which an identifying code has been assigned.

‘Examination’ is defined here as any formal assessment, examination, and/or evaluation of performance which contributes to the grading of students in a course or program.

‘Assessment’ here is defined as the process of reaching a decision on the marks/grades to be awarded to students. It also includes the provision of formative feedback to students where appropriate (see also below: releasing marks).

An ‘award’ here is defined as the degree/certificate/diploma awarded, together with its classification (where appropriate).

A program review involves: evaluation and self-evaluation; internal peer review; the involvement of external parties with the appropriate disciplinary expertise; and student, alumni, faculty and administrative input.

## **BENEFITS OF A PROGRAM REVIEW**

A Program Review enables a program and its staff to identify strengths and weaknesses of a program, and to know where to intervene to make effective and sustainable, continuous improvements. It brings internal benefits to the program and the staff, and external benefits to the students and the reputation of the institution.

A Program Review enables leaders and staff involved in the program to formulate, clarify and articulate its mission, vision, goals, objectives and its relation to those of the Faculty and the university, including their intended student learning outcomes, their scholarly accomplishments, and the leadership and management of the program. It enables staff to conduct systematic inquiry into the nature and impact of their work as academics and teachers. It enables staff to receive feedback on the program and to take action as a consequence of the feedback, setting collective priorities, and disseminating good practice. Program review enables evidence-based decision-making and leadership to be cultivated and implemented. It identifies needs and resources, and it promotes action planning. It develops the staff's abilities to monitor and evaluate themselves, each other, students and the program.

A Program Review enables program members to develop a systematic, rigorous mentality/mindset towards, and way of looking at, planning, delivering and evaluating a program and their own and others' work, and to do this methodically, collaboratively and collegially. It develops collaborative and collegial practices and improves morale. It is part of the ongoing professional development of the staff and, indeed, enhances the professionalism of the staff through regulation, self-regulation, and self-organized program development.

Program Review leads to continuous improvement of programs, staff and students. Continuous improvement is both the medium and outcome of Program Review.

A Program Review is a collaborative exercise, and one of its benefits is a consensus on program goals, objectives and intended outcomes, such that there is a common benchmark set of criteria for planning and evaluating the program. It also enables staff to identify the unique and/or distinctive features of the program, and this can help it to position itself for student and staff recruitment and orientation (which, indeed, is also useful for Human Resource Managers and Personnel Officers), and for publicity, identify what the program stands for and where it is going. Indeed, in working toward the consensus, staff will be involved in examining best practice in its own and other, similar programs.

Program Review is data-driven, and, amongst the data set, are student outcomes. Program review can help staff to understand the processes that led to the

outcomes, so that these can be improved where necessary, i.e. the Program Review has a clear formative agenda.

Program Review can also be used in the presentation of proposals for research applications and grants, as some grant applications require applicants to provide information on institutional or organizational capability and capacity; program reviews can provide a useful source of information here.

For accountability purposes, Program review enables the Faculty and university to know and to understand the distinctive strengths, accomplishments, needs, and future plans of the program. In turn, this enables the Faculty/university to offer support, identify areas of common interest in the Faculty, to link individual members of staff or entire Faculties with relevant resources on- and off-campus, and to meet identified resource needs.

Program Review is designed to ensure consistency, reliability and excellence in meeting the demands of fitness *of* purpose and fitness *for* purpose, and in a timely fashion ('right first time'). It ensures that the program is aligned not only to its own aims, objectives and intended learning outcomes, but also that, these, in turn, are aligned to the strategic direction of the Faculty and the university. It indicates where the program in practice is, and is not, matched to the program's intentions. It improves the quality of the program, the work of the staff and students, the learning and achievement of the intended outcomes of the program.

A Program Review enhances communication and within a program and its members, it improves morale and a sense of working towards a common aim of the best performance and operation of the program, by enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the program.

Program review also enhances the reputation of the institution as well as the program, and it meets external demands for demonstrating quality, quality assurance and quality enhancement.

Quality enhancement is the act of taking planned steps to bring about continuous improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning experiences of students.

One of the effects of program review is to compile thorough and complete documentation of a program, such that new members of staff can understand, and, indeed fit into, a new program with maximum ease and minimum time; this can be useful if staff turnover is an issue.

## **PURPOSES OF A PROGRAM REVIEW**

A Program Review is designed to contribute to the ongoing processes of assurance and enhancement of quality in the program, its teaching, learning, student assessment, evaluation and student outcomes over and above the other mechanisms and their reporting cycles that the program has for reviewing and improving its work.

Its fundamental purpose is program improvement and development, to ensure that the quality of the program is at the highest level, and to be seen to be constructive and formative (rather than solely judgemental and summative), and that the processes for this exist in the program, are operating effectively, and are impacting on the quality of the program. It is based on the principle that every program, as with all programs, can be improved continuously and that evaluation and self-evaluation, both internal and external, are ongoing practices that serve that improvement.

The aims of a program review are:

- To establish whether there are appropriate and effective procedures and mechanisms, and that these are working, to ensure that the intended features of the program are being achieved, that the teaching and learning opportunities and outcomes are of the highest quality, that intended student learning outcomes are being achieved, that the intended standards of the program and student outcomes are correct and are being achieved, that the awards are fair and appropriate to the program, and that the program specifications are being addressed and delivered;
- To establish whether the program continues to be up-to-date, relevant and valid in the light of
- developments in the environment, the discipline, the curriculum, and in teaching and learning;
- To review the quality of the information provided to students and to potential and actual applicants;
- To review how the Faculty is implementing its policies on all matters related to the program, and with what process and outcome success;
- To identify good practice within the program that can be disseminated both within and outside the Faculty.

A program review is evaluative, and not only descriptive, and is evidence-based and data-driven, with evidence drawn from a wide range of referenced sources.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A PROGRAM REVIEW PANEL**

The Program Review Panel is established to review, examine, evaluate, comment and report on the quality of the program, and to make recommendations for its improvement and development. The Program Review Panel must conduct scrutiny of relevant documents and materials, and make a formal visit to program members in connection with the Program Review, interviewing members of the program, and, provide a formal report on the program, included in which are recommendations for improvement to the program. The Program Review Panel must review the quality, scope, focus, direction and coverage of the all the program's activities, including: leadership and management; teaching; learning; staff-related and student-related matters; research activity, training and outcomes; publication; supervision; internal and external relations; quality assurance; development and strategic planning; and internationalization. These are all in respect of:

1. how, and how well, the program meets its own and the Faculty's/university's mission and strategy;
2. how, and how well, the program meets the Faculty's and university's mission and strategy;
3. how effectively the program meets its stated aims and objectives, and the evidence that the program uses to evaluate its own achievement of these;
4. the quality of the program and its achievement of intended learning outcomes by students;
5. the quality of the contents, structure, delivery, teaching, learning and assessment on the program, and the mechanisms and procedures to assure and enhance these in the program;
6. the quality of the research and supervision on the program;
7. the quality of the awards gained by students on completion of the program;
8. admission, retention, progression, achievement and graduation rates and levels of the students on the program and how these can be improved;
9. the quality of the staffing of the program and their suitability for the courses that they teach;
10. workloads of the staff;
11. the quality of the resources, support and training for teaching, research, publication and learning that are provided on the program;
12. links that the program makes to outside parties, and the public information that is provided on the program;
13. the quality of the leadership and management of the program;
14. the quality of the quality assurance mechanisms and procedures of the program;
15. standards reached by students and the strategies to review and improve these;
16. comparability of standards of the program and student achievement with those elsewhere;
17. student representation and support;

18. the quality of the program evaluation and self-evaluation, review and self-review, and development;
19. strategic planning and action planning on the program;
20. staff recruitment, retention and development on the program;
21. gathering, commenting on and acting on students' views and experiences of the program;
22. administrative support on the program;
23. strengths and weaknesses of the program;
24. identifying areas for development and improvement in the program and the terms of an action plan to achieve these.

The Program Review Panel reports to the Quality Assurance Office, to the Faculty and the Program Committee.



## STAGES OF A PROGRAM REVIEW

The Dean of the Faculty is responsible for coordinating the Program Review. The administrative offices of the university must be involved in Program Review. The Faculty must produce a self-evaluation report on the program. The Faculty must include an action plan in the self-evaluation report on the program.

The following are guidelines for a Program Review:

**Step One:** No less than seven months before the Program Review Panel visit takes place, the Head of the Quality Assurance Office, discuss the membership of the Program Review Panel. They normally comprise:

- a. two or more senior officers of the university (one of whom may be the Head of the Quality Assurance Office or his/her nominee);
- b. a senior academic from another Faculty in the university;
- c. one or more external consultants who have the appropriate academic expertise and experience in the field concerned;
- d. the Dean of the Faculty in question.

**Step Two:** No less than seven months before the Program Review Panel visit takes place, the Head of the Quality Assurance Office informs the Dean of the Faculty of the Program Review and consults with the Dean of the Faculty on the scope of the review and membership of the Program Review Panel. The Program Review Panel is appointed, convenes and makes arrangements for the immediate release of documents that are required for the Program Review, to the Dean of the Faculty and sets the date for the campus visit.

**Step Three:** No less than seven months before the Program Review Panel visit takes place, the Dean of the Faculty convenes a small Working Group to plan and prepare for the Program Review. That group normally comprises:

- The Dean
- The Program Coordinator
- A senior Administrative Officer in the Faculty
- A small number of academic staff from the program
- One or more student members of the program
- Co-opted members of the Faculty if desired

(It may be similar, in part, to the Program Committee)

The Working Group enlists the cooperation and collaboration of staff on the program and others as necessary, to prepare for the Program Review and in the compilation and completion of the self-evaluation document, during the visit of the Program Review Panel, and the subsequent feedback, discussion and action planning

**Step Four:** No less than six months before the Program Review Panel visit takes place, the Head of the Quality Assurance Office briefs the Faculty Working Group on the review procedure and on how to prepare the Self-evaluation document and associated documentation. Members of the Quality Assurance Office will also be available for ongoing discussion and consultation.

**Step Five:** No less than six months before the visit of the Program Review Panel, the formal request is sent to the Dean of the Faculty for documents from the Faculty to be prepared and sent by the Dean to the Head of the Program Review Panel. The Program Review Panel must receive these no less than one month before the visit of the Program Review Panel.

**Step Six:** The Working Group identifies, plans and reviews the required data and their collection for the provision of documentation and the self-evaluation report. It circulates its suggestions to appropriate staff for feedback and advice. The Working Group analyzes the data collected and prepares a draft of the self-evaluation report, circulating its drafts to appropriate staff for feedback and advice.

**Step Seven:** The Working Group sets program goals for the program, including, *inter alia*, its curriculum analysis, plans for development and improvement, staffing, student admission, program content, learning and teaching, resources, staff development, ongoing assessment of student achievement, student support, records, program evaluation, quality assurance. These can be done in conjunction with the template for Program Goals. It circulates its suggestions to appropriate staff for feedback and advice.

**Step Eight:** The draft of the final self-evaluation report is produced. The Working Group circulates its suggestions to appropriate staff for feedback and advice.

**Step Nine:** No less than two months before the visit of the Program Review Panel, The final version of the self-evaluation report is completed and approved by the Dean of the Faculty.

**Step Ten:** No less than two months before the visit of the Program Review Panel, the self-evaluation report and documentation are submitted to the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Quality Assurance Office prior to, and for, the meeting of the Program Review Panel. The Program Review Panel must receive the self-evaluation document no less than six weeks before the Program Review panel visit.

**Step Eleven:** No less than five weeks before the visit of the Program Review Panel, it meets to discuss the self-evaluation report and to consider the program and the program review.

**Step Twelve:** No less than four weeks before the visit of the Program Review Panel, the Panel agrees with the Dean of the Faculty the meetings, agenda, persons and documentation to be present for the review meeting(s) with staff and students on the program. The Dean arranges for staff and students to be present as required.

**Step Thirteen:** The Program Review Panel meets with staff and students on the program, to conduct the review. The meetings are normally completed within one day, but, in the case of a very large program, they may run over to a second day only.

**Step Fourteen:** Initial feedback is given to the Faculty at the end of the last day of the meeting(s) with the Faculty.

**Step Fifteen:** The Program Review Panel produces a draft program review report within 30 working days of the final meeting(s) with the Faculty and submits this to the Dean of the Faculty.

**Step Sixteen:** Within one week of the receipt of the draft report, feedback on the report is given by the Dean to the Program Review Panel. The draft report may be changed by the Program Review Panel in respect of factual errors, but there is no obligation on the Program Review Panel to change its evaluation or judgements.

**Step Seventeen:** No more than one week after receiving the feedback from the Faculty Board and the Program Committee, the final report is issued by the Program review Panel to the Quality Assurance Office and to the Dean of the Faculty in question.

**Step Eighteen:** Within 30 working days of receipt of the final Program Review Panel's report, the Faculty produces an action plan to address points raised in the Program Review Panel's report. This may be written in consultation with the Quality Assurance Office.

**Step Nineteen:** The action plan is sent by the Dean to the Program Review Panel and to the Quality Assurance Office, which monitors its implementation and effects in a time scale that it (the QA Office) determines.

**Step Twenty:** The Program Review Panel is dissolved once the action plan has been received from the Dean by the Quality Assurance Office.

## **DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED TO THE PROGRAM REVIEW PANEL BY THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY**

The Program Review Panel must receive documentation as follows, no less than one month before the visit of the Program Review Panel.

### *Handbooks and Public Information*

- Staff handbook
- Program handbook
- Student handbook
- Quality assurance handbook
- Public information documents and materials
- Faculty handbook
- Prospectus
- Website screen prints

### *Regulations, Policies and Codes of Practice*

- Regulations for the program and instructions to examiners
- Regulations on attendance and discipline
- Admission requirements
- Policy, procedure and codes of practice documents on:
  - (i) External advisory consultation and boards
  - (ii) Program design and amendment
  - (iii) Teaching loads
  - (iv) Study leave/research leave
  - (v) Staff development
  - (vi) Attendance
  - (vii) Academic appeals
  - (viii) Disciplinary matters
  - (ix) Scholarly activity
  - (x) Supervision of research students
  - (xi) Supervision training for staff
  - (xii) Research training for staff and students
  - (xiii) Admissions
  - (xiv) Staff engagement in scholarly and professional activity
  - (xv) External and internal benchmarking
  - (xvi) Admission, retention, assessment
  - (xvii) Leadership and management of the program
  - (xviii) Equity and equal opportunities
  - (xix) Admitting students with disabilities
  - (xx) Evaluation of the program, staff and students
  - (xxi) Language requirements for the program
  - (xxii) Non-standard entry to the program

- (xxiii) Learning
- (xxiv) Teaching
- (xxv) Assessment, marking and examinations
- (xxvi) Student support
- (xxvii) Plagiarism and cheating
- (xxviii) Quality assurance
- (xxix) Credit accumulation, transfer and exemption
- (xxx) Transfer, deferral and suspension
- (xxxi) Remedial and support work
- (xxxii) Awarding of credit
- (xxxiii) Public service

### *Reports and Plans*

- Annual program reviews for the last three years for the program under review
- Annual program review data
- Strategic plan for the next three years, together with projections of resources required, student and staff numbers, sources of income, developments on the program
- External Examiners reports for the last three years
- Faculty's strategic plan for the program
- Action plans for program improvement and enhancement
- Reports and documents from external advisors
- Outside evaluation or accreditation reports that may relate to the program

### *Program Documentation and Data*

- Indication of the level of the program (Master's/doctorate)
- Program mission statement, aims and objectives
- Program documentation
- Course-by-course documentation
- Minutes of meetings of the Program Committee and Boards of Examiners
- Minutes of meetings of curriculum development bodies and advisory groups
- Credit weighting and hours of the program and its constituent courses
- Study plan, course by course, for the whole program, to indicate the sequence with, and structure of, the whole program
- Materials and pro-formas used in the academic development and reviewing process
- Statement to show that the program meets an evidence-based need
- Instruments and procedures used to measure program effectiveness
- Fees, including break-even costs and numbers per program
- Documentation in the approval of the program
- Remedial or bridging courses or programs

- Admission scores of the applicants and admitted students for the current academic year and preceding two years
- Application rates, offer rates, selectivity rates and outcome rates for the current academic year and preceding two years
- English language requirements and levels
- Numbers and dropouts, transfer in and transfer out of the program, and throughput, for the current academic year and the preceding two years
- Time taken to complete by students, how many take more than the normal/prescribed period of study
- Completion rates for the current academic years and preceding two years
- Supervision arrangements and allocations
- Research facilities and resources for staff and students
- Research activities by staff and students
- Publication record of staff and students
- Attendance requirements
- Attendance data for each course for the current academic year and preceding two years
- Awards made for the preceding three years, by program and courses, together with summaries of grade/GPA distributions for these
- Indicators used in reviewing the program
- Process of student admission
- Budgets and estimates for the preceding two years, current year, and the next three years
- Unit costs per student

#### *Leadership and Management*

- Organizational chart, including student representation on/membership of committees and Boards and administrative support
- Membership of the Program Committee and its terms of reference
- Duties and responsibilities of the program leader(s)
- Structures/personnel with responsibility for staff development
- Membership of the Board of Examiners, External Examiners, and their terms of reference
- Student records: student data, attendance, academic reports and monitoring
- Record of staff development for the current academic year and the preceding two academic years

#### *Examining and Assessment*

- Marks, grades and awards made for the preceding three years, by program and by course, together with summaries of grade distributions for these
- Examination papers set for each course for the last three academic years

- Policy and procedures for Boards of Examiners and External Examiners
- Membership of the Board of Examiners, External Examiners, and their terms of reference
- Selected examples of student work and examination scripts that illustrate the different levels of achievement at different points in the program

### *Faculty*

- Summary CVs of all staff teaching on the program
- Summary data on all staff teaching on the program, including, for each person, and in tabular form: sex; ethnicity; nationality/home; qualifications (percentages with doctorates, Master's etc); selected publications; areas of expertise and experience; number of years teaching; level of appointment (e.g. Assistant Professor, Associate Professor); courses on which each is working on the program; teaching loads; administrative work; community/service work; research undertaken; research grants awarded
- Number and ratio of full-time and part-time academic and administrative staff
- Remuneration and conditions of service for staff at each rank
- Data on teaching assistants on the program, including, for each person, and in tabular form: sex; age; ethnicity; nationality/home; qualifications; selected publications; areas of expertise and experience; area(s) in which working on the program; teaching assistant loads
- Number of new faculty and faculty who have left each year over the preceding three years and the present year
- Number and nature of funded research programs
- Number of supervisions per staff (member by member)
- Faculty to graduate ratio
- Faculty to student ratio

### *Students*

- Copies of the program's student evaluation form and a summary of students' evaluations of faculty and courses for the current year and preceding two years
- Description of learning support services
- Description of student support services
- Characteristics and profile of students on the program

### *Resources*

- Description of resources available to the program
- Planned increases to the resources and upgrading of resources
- Policy and procedures for staff and student input into resource acquisition and usage (e.g. books)

### *Quality Assurance*

- Quality assurance procedures, mechanisms and process
- Responsibilities for QA on the program, and who is responsible for what
- Involvement of staff and students in quality assurance
- Documentation on quality assurance



## **DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAM REVIEW PANEL TO THE DEAN**

Within one month of the Program Review Panel being convened, it must provide the following documents to the Dean of the Faculty whose program is going to be reviewed:

- Principles, purposes and intended outcomes of Program Review
- Membership and terms of reference of the Program Review and the Program Review Panel
- Procedures for the Program Review
- Responsibilities and tasks of all parties involved in the Program Review
- Program, schedule, dates and times of submissions, events and requirements for the Program Review
- Key events before, during and after the visit of the Program Review Panel
- Follow-up requirements from the Program review
- Agendas and arrangements for meetings and the visit of the Program review
- List of documents required by the Program Review Panel
- Templates and pro-formas for submission of data
- Code of conduct for the Program Review and the Program Review Panel
- Request for a suitable and secure room for the Program Review Panel and documentation

## **PREPARING THE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT**

The following are guidelines for preparing for a self-evaluation report:

### **THE EVIDENCE BASE**

The self-evaluation document should be factual, explicit and should indicate its data sources. It should include evidence from, and make reference to, the following:

- Program specifications
- Annual program reviews
- External Examiners' reports
- Student recruitment, admission, progression and completion data
- Reports (if any) from accrediting or other bodies
- Feedback from former students and their employers;
- Data on the first destination of graduates;
- Comparability with other higher education institutions or other external benchmarks
- Internal policy and review documents, as appropriate

The following documents, *inter alia*, should be referred to/included in the document pack to accompany the report:

- Program specifications for the programs under review
- Staff handbook
- Program handbook
- Student handbook
- Quality assurance handbook
- Annual program reviews for the last three years for the program under review
- Annual program review data
- External Examiners reports for the last three years
- Course handbooks
- Prospectuses and program documentation
- Full course documentation
- Admission requirements
- Organizational chart
- Website screen prints
- Faculty strategic plan
- Record of staff development for the current academic year and the preceding two academic years
- Departmental policy documents and codes of practice on curricula, equal opportunities, learning, teaching, assessment, student support, marking and examinations, plagiarism and cheating, Boards of Examiners,

External Examiners, appeals, disciplinary action, quality assurance, strategy and action plans.

- Summaries of studies regarding: (a) the effectiveness of the degree program, and (b) the effectiveness of graduates
- Evidence that annual goals are set and that assessment of success occurs
- Summaries of studies of alumni and former students' satisfaction with their preparation
- Findings from surveys of student satisfaction
- Minutes of meetings of curriculum development bodies and advisory groups
- Instruments and procedures used to measure program effectiveness
- Selected examples of student work that illustrate the different levels of achievement at different points in the program
- Documentation of students' success in achieving program outcomes, including collections of student work
- Examples of assessment tools used to assess student achievements, attainments and competencies, and the 'value added' provided by the program
- Any outside evaluation or accreditation reports that may relate to the program
- Copies of the program's student evaluation form and a summary of students' evaluations of faculty and courses
- Materials and pro-formas used in the academic development and reviewing process
- Summaries of grade/GPA distribution studies
- Copies of policies regarding admission and retention of students, remedial and support work, awarding of credit, and policies governing public service
- Evidence the curriculum has breadth, depth, balance, progression, coherence, relevance, continuity, differentiation, sequencing and structure
- Program exit outcomes: knowledge, skills, dispositions, competencies
- Program proficiency levels: exit and midpoint
- Evidence that the general education outcomes are integrated into the degree requirements
- Evidence that library skills are integrated into the learning process
- Instruments and procedures used to measure educational program effectiveness
- Reports and documents from external advisors and External Examiners
- Documentation of students' success towards achieving program outcomes
- Faculty CVs

## **WHAT SHOULD A PROGRAM SELF-EVALUATION DOCUMENT CONTAIN?**

This is a suggested framework for a program self-evaluation document. For each area it is important to provide both data and a commentary. It is important to comment on the quality and the evidence for the statements of quality.

A self-evaluation report addresses eight main areas and appendices, as follows. It may also include an Executive Summary at the start. It should include a Table of Contents, cross-referencing to documents, and appendices/annexes of data.

### **SECTION ONE: PRELIMINARY INFORMATION**

1. Title and code number of the program
2. Indication of the level of the program (Master's/doctorate)
3. Credit weighting and hours of the program and its constituent courses
4. Introduction to the program:
  - a. background to the program (brief history of the program)
  - b. intended student recruitment and market
  - c. external consultation on program development
  - d. number of students in each year
  - e. the demand for graduates of the program
  - f. key features and characteristics of the program
  - g. committee structure for the program
5. Major market(s) of the program
6. Strategies to ensure that the best possible staff and students are recruited
7. Student and stakeholder evaluation and satisfaction
8. Quality of admitted students (what it is, how it is reviewed, monitored and evaluated, whether admission requirements are 'delivering' the suitable quality and calibre of students, and the evidence of this)
9. Recruitment strategies and practices and their impact
10. Strategies for student retention, and their impact
11. Quality of students admitted to the program; comments on
  - a. academic quality
  - b. equity
  - c. numbers and dropout, transfer in and transfer out of the program, and throughput
  - d. time taken to complete by students, how many take 4/5/6 years
  - e. completion rates
12. Quality of staff admitted to the program; commenting on:
  - a. academic quality
  - b. equity
  - c. staff turnover (how many new staff each year and how many staff leave each year, for the current year and preceding two years)
13. Class size
14. Staff/student ratios for programs/supervision
15. Indicators used in review

16. Current strengths and weaknesses
17. Knowledge of stakeholders
18. Stakeholder, advisory and committee input into the program
19. Career development
20. Stakeholder evaluation and satisfaction
21. External relations: industry; consultants; community; public agencies; graduate employers; professional bodies
22. Public information, which is accurate and up-to-date, about
  - a. the program
  - b. research centres and research work in the Faculty
  - c. contact details
  - d. intended learning outcomes
  - e. postgraduate programs offered and qualifications awarded
  - f. teaching and learning
  - g. assessment procedures
  - h. learning opportunities
  - i. internships, exchanges and special features
  - j. views of previous and present students
  - k. views of employers
23. External review and quality assurance
24. Proposed student and staffing numbers on the program over the next three years
25. Current strengths and weaknesses
26. Future directions
27. Key challenges and prospects
28. Key opportunities

## **SECTION TWO: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PROGRAM**

1. Leadership and management of the program
2. Membership of the Program Committee
3. How and how well, the program leaders guide, steer, develop and lead the program
4. How senior leaders: develop and reach the program vision and values; promote a culture that emphasizes academic quality; promote an environment that fosters, requires and results in ethical behaviour and high academic standards; create a sustainable faculty; create and sustain an environment for organizational performance, program improvement and student and staff learning; develop future leaders for the program; encourage frank, multi-directional communication; take an active role in reward and recognition of high standards of performance; create a focus on actions to accomplish the program's objectives; improve academic performance
5. How does the program leadership promote a safe, secure and supportive environment?

6. How does the program leadership identify key factors that affect workforce engagement and satisfaction, and foster and measure a culture conducive to high standards of academic performance and a motivated workforce?
7. How does the leadership promote cooperation, effective communication and sharing of skills and information at all levels?
8. How does the program leadership promote innovativeness in the work environment, and draw on the benefits of diverse ideas, cultures and thinking?
9. How does the program leadership promote a climate of change and sustainable development?
10. Staff professional development and maximization: breadth, needs-driven, depth, uptake and impact
11. How is communication handled within and beyond the program, and its effectiveness in supporting high standards of academic performance?
12. How frank and open is the communication?
13. How are staff informed of decisions, changes and developments?
14. What are the duties and roles of the Faculty administrative officers?
15. How are decisions reached?
16. How are agendas for meetings set and communicated?
17. Which meetings are minuted?
18. Information systems for program monitoring, review and development
19. How is information used to improve the program, the performance of students and staff and the processes of the program administration?
20. How are priorities for development identified and derived from monitoring and review, and how are these communicated to, and shared with staff?
21. Relationships to other programs
22. How are workloads decided and allocated?
23. Do all staff know what the workloads are?
24. Are workloads spread evenly and equitably?
25. External review and quality assurance
26. Performance appraisal of staff on the program
27. What student involvement is there in management and on committees and forums for the program?
28. What provisions are there for the long-range planning of the program?
29. Current strengths and weaknesses
30. Future directions
31. Key challenges and prospects
32. Key opportunities

### **SECTION THREE: PROGRAM DETAILS**

1. What does the program seek to achieve for itself and the discipline?
2. Rationale for the program:
  - a. reasons for the program
  - b. key principles of and for, and ideas behind the program
  - c. expected benefits from the program

- d. what does the program seek to achieve for the Faculty and the university?
  - e. what does the program seek to achieve for the wider community?
- 3. How the program aligns itself to the Faculty's and University's missions
- 4. Meeting students' and stakeholders' needs
- 5. Aims and purposes of the program, their comprehensiveness, realism/practicability, specificity, appropriacy for the curriculum
- 6. Aims and goals, and in relation to Faculty and university plans, and national and international trends
- 7. What are the aims that are geared towards quality assurance?
- 8. Program's role in advancing the state of the field or discipline
- 9. How does the Program Committee know that its aims, goals, purposes and objectives have been achieved?
- 10. What are the specific objectives of the program?
- 11. What is the alignment between the program aims, objectives and exit outcomes?
- 12. Intended learning outcomes of the program: intended exit competencies, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and how recently they have been reviewed or amended
- 13. Medium of instruction
- 14. Equity principles
- 15. Commentary on how issues of employability and career development are taken into account in the design and delivery of the program
- 16. Curriculum content of the program: course by course
  - a. quality of the curriculum
  - b. coherence of the curriculum within and across courses and Faculty
  - c. depth, breadth and balance of the curriculum
  - d. level and level of demand on the program
  - e. achievability of the curriculum
  - f. clarity and guidance for students
  - g. suitability for achievement of aims, purposes and intended learning outcomes
  - h. identification and communication of priorities
  - i. curriculum structure and changes
  - j. academic quality and integrity of the program
  - k. how recently the program has been reviewed or amended
  - l. how does the Program Committee assure itself of the continuing relevance of the program and its contents?
  - m. how does the Program Committee assure itself that the highest academic quality is ensured in the program, to meet the needs of stakeholders?
  - n. how is input from different stakeholders and partners gathered and used on the programs in the program?
  - o. relevance of the program
  - p. clarity of linkages to targets and how recently they have been reviewed or amended

17. Structure and sequence of the program and its contributing courses
18. Communication of organizing principles of the program
19. Progression on the program and its courses
20. Differentiation of the program to meet students' different needs, rates of learning, and learning strategies and styles
21. Accelerated learning on the program
22. Learning on the program:
  - a. provision for learning
  - b. suitability of learning opportunities and strategies for alignment to, and achievement of curriculum content, aims, purposes, intended learning outcomes and assessment requirements
  - c. quality of learning
  - d. active student learning on the program and engagement in it
  - e. students' higher order thinking and application in the program
  - f. opportunities for, and uptake of, internship
  - g. student exchange arrangements
  - h. e-learning and blended learning, and the support for these (e.g. hardware, software, access, speed, stability of system)
  - i. incorporation of new technologies for student learning
  - j. collaborative and cooperative learning
  - k. fieldwork
  - l. depth and breadth of student learning
  - m. strategies for ensuring maximum student participation in classroom sessions
  - n. implementation and evolution of the Faculty's learning strategies and internal arrangements for reviewing these
  - o. evaluation of the ways of judging, and the criteria for judging, how students progress through the program), and how this progression is supported, monitored and reviewed, from admission to graduation
  - p. students' submissions of work on time, late and penalties
  - q. internal arrangements in the Faculty for reviewing its provision of learning opportunities
  - r. improvements/enhancements to the learning on the Faculty's programs over a specified period
  - s. staff development provided for developing students' learning on the program
  - t. strategies for improving students' learning, and the impact of these
  - u. strategies for staff development on improving students' learning, and the impact of these
23. Teaching on the program
  - a. provision for teaching
  - b. quality of teaching
  - c. diversity and suitability of teaching strategies
  - d. guidance provided on teaching strategies
  - e. supervision of research students



- f. full-time and part-time/adjunct teachers on the program
- g. suitability of teaching strategies for curriculum content and achievement of aims, purposes, intended learning outcomes and assessment requirements
- h. relevance and suitability of instructional practices
- i. evaluation of the teaching strategies and how they support students in their achievement of intended learning outcomes
- j. internal arrangements in the Faculty for reviewing teaching strategies
- k. improvements/enhancements to the teaching on the Faculty's programs over a specified period
- l. staff development provided for developing teaching on the program
- m. relationship between teaching and research
- n. strategies for improving teaching, and the impact of these
- o. strategies for staff development of teaching, and the impact of these

#### 24. Time and timetabling for optimal learning

#### 25. Research

- a. provision for, support for, and quality of, research and publication
- b. how the support for research is evaluated, and how effective that support is
- c. funded and non-funded research in the program
- d. research teams, individuals, their work and its impact
- e. evaluation of the research and publication in the program. How does the Program Committee evaluate the quality of its research?
- f. range and coherence of research on the program
- g. internal arrangements on the program for reviewing research, publication and their development
- h. alignment of the research to the program's and Faculty's mission and goals
- i. improvements/enhancements to the research in the program over a specified period
- j. relationship between teaching and research
- k. strategies and methods for improving student research, research supervision and publication, and the impact of these; staff development provided for developing student research, research supervision and publication on the program and the impact of these
- l. provision and support for encouraging excellence in student research and publication
- m. how staff and students are inducted into research
- n. research training for staff and students, and knowledge transfer provided on the program, for whom, and the uptake, impact and effectiveness of these
- o. dissemination of student research to key communities
- p. research seminars and other related programs on the program

- q. research evaluation and productivity: how it is monitored, developed and its quality improved on the program
  - r. how new research opportunities are identified and addressed
  - s. resources for research on the program
  - t. how students are encouraged to undertake, report and disseminate research
  - u. how a research culture and climate is developed and sustained in the program, for staff and students
  - v. what key services are provided on the program for research and its development, and how these are evaluated
26. Supervision
- a. how supervision of research is undertaken, how effective it is, and how this is evaluated and improved
  - b. provision for, and quality of, supervision
  - c. support for supervision of research and research students
  - d. supervisor training and development
  - e. evaluation and review of the supervision arrangements and practices, and their effectiveness, on the program
  - f. improvements/enhancements to the supervision arrangements and practices on the program over a specified period
  - g. strategies for improving supervision arrangements, practices and quality, and the impact of these; staff development provided for developing supervision on the program and the impact of these
27. Resources for the program
- a. Adequacy of resources for learning and student support on the program
  - b. quality of resources
  - c. quality of facilities
  - d. physical space and requirements
  - e. library, computing, media matters
  - f. new technologies
  - g. what materials student must/should/could purchase for the program, and how they are used
  - h. administrative and technical support
  - i. support personnel
  - j. physical facilities: classrooms, laboratories, office space, tutorial rooms
  - k. equipment and instruments, and equipment needs
  - l. specialist/dedicated resources
  - m. access by students to resources and equipment
  - n. program costs
  - o. planned increases in resources
28. Health and safety on the program
29. Ethical matters relating to the program
30. Student assessment and examination on the program
- a. assessment measures and activities used

- b. frequency of examinations
- c. persons responsible for assessment, examination and collation of marks
- d. moderation of marks
- e. Board of Examiners
- f. External Examiners
- g. e-assessment
- h. examination and invigilation procedures
- i. extenuating and mitigating circumstances
- j. degree classification
- k. assessment of intended learning outcomes and other program objectives
- l. clarity and suitability of purposes, contents, criteria, type, methods and uses of assessment for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, curriculum, aims and purposes of the program
- m. what proficiency levels must the students reach and demonstrate in order to exit from the program successfully? What are the low, mid, and high proficiency levels?
- n. reliability, validity, consistency of application, transparency, moderation, reporting, efficiency and monitoring of assessments
- o. marking criteria and conventions
- p. commentary on marks/grades/awards given, and grade distributions
- q. consideration of mitigating and extenuating circumstances
- r. evidence of outcomes of assessment
- s. uses made of student assessment and examination
- t. evidence of impact of assessment on students, academic staff, program
- u. anticipated and planned changes to assessment
- v. appeals and disciplinary procedures
- w. strategies for improving student assessment, and the impact of these
- x. strategies for staff development on student assessment, and the impact of these

31. Marking, grading and confirmation

32. Student coursework

33. Communication of criteria to students for judging their work

34. Actual student outcomes and standards

- a. student outcomes
- b. standards reached by the students: achievements and attainments
- c. competencies demonstrated by the students
- d. trends in examination results
- e. comparability of standards with other institutions
- f. comments of External Examiners
- g. action taken by the Faculty as a result of data on standards and achievements

- h. employment and career outcomes of the students
  - i. feedback from former students and on their career destinations and post-graduation activities;
  - j. summaries of studies indicating the degree of success of graduates in obtaining suitable employment in the fields relevant to their studies;
  - k. surveys of employer satisfaction with the program's graduates.
  - l. success of graduates
  - m. external measures of success
  - n. excellence awards
  - o. strategies for improving students' achievement and standards, and the impact of these
  - p. strategies for staff development to improve student outcomes, and the impact of these
35. Program evaluation
- a. annual program review
  - b. periodic review (how frequently and regularly, and by whom)
  - c. plans for ongoing program review
  - d. fitness for purpose and fitness of purposes of the kinds, criteria, contents, methods, comprehensiveness, rigour of program evaluation, and the clarity and suitability of these for the program
  - e. regularity and frequency of program evaluation
  - f. outcomes and impact of program evaluation on program development
  - g. use made of program evaluations
  - h. comprehensiveness and appropriacy of programs
  - i. reliability, validity, transparency, reporting, efficiency and monitoring of program and its evaluation
  - j. external and internal review
  - k. strategies for improving program evaluation, and the impact of these
  - l. strategies for staff development to improve program evaluation, and the impact of these
36. External review and quality assurance
37. Current strengths and weaknesses
38. Future directions
39. Key challenges and prospects
40. Key opportunities

#### **SECTION FOUR: STUDENTS**

1. What does the program seek to achieve for its students?
2. What are the expectations of the students? How and how well are these met?
3. How are students challenged, their higher order thinking and critical judgement increased on the program?

4. Knowledge of students and stakeholders
5. How are students' needs, expectations and preferences identified and addressed in the Faculty?
6. How does the Faculty build relationships, networks, contacts and strategies for recruitment, retention and satisfaction of students and stakeholders?
7. Target students populations, and how these are/are not changing over time, and why
8. Profile of student population
9. Equity principles
10. Student progress and success rates, and their monitoring
11. Student understanding of the program
12. Mentoring of students
13. Student support on the program
  - a. nature and amount of student support
  - b. quality of student support on the program
  - c. the number and utilization of assistants
  - d. counselling support
  - e. extra-curricular support
14. Students with disabilities
15. How is student performance enhanced and assured to be of the highest quality?
16. Research training for students
17. What contact mechanisms exist on the program for staff and students to communicate, how well are these used, and with what outcomes?
18. How does the program build positive relationships with students in the achievement of their, the Faculty's and the program's objectives?
19. Feedback *to* students and action taken from this
20. Feedback *from* students and action taken from this
  - a. collecting and using student feedback
  - b. questionnaires
  - c. discussion and dissemination of feedback
  - d. staff/student consultative committees
21. How is student satisfaction determined on the program? Are there surveys of student satisfaction, and how are they used?
22. How is student feedback (including complaints) handled? What use is made of feedback for the program, research and administrative development?
23. How is student feedback kept up to date as programs change and new developments occur?
24. How are student feedback and other data used for program improvement?
25. How are student complaints handled?
26. Career development
27. Status of, and attention given to, orientation, guidance, career guidance and academic advice
28. Integration of students into the Faculty

29. Student representation on committees
30. Arrangements for consultations with students
31. How are students kept informed of developments and decisions on the program?
32. Are staff available for consultation with students?
33. Are there office hours for staff to be available?
34. Student evaluation and satisfaction
35. Student morale
36. Post-graduation career and employment of students
37. Alumni: communication, satisfaction, loyalty
38. External review and quality assurance
39. Student records
40. Strategies for improving student support, and the impact of these
41. Strategies for staff development to improve student support, and the impact of these
42. Current strengths and weaknesses
43. Future directions
44. Key challenges and prospects
45. Key opportunities

## **SECTION FIVE: FACULTY**

1. What does the program seek to achieve for its staff?
2. Academic staffing of the program
3. How staff are recruited and appointed to, and promoted and appraised on the program
4. Are there sufficient staff to service the program?
5. Are there sufficient staff to ensure health and safety in the program?
6. Equity principles
7. Number of (regular) faculty and areas of expertise: full-time and part-time
8. Quality, credentials and experience of the faculty
9. Match between background, expertise and qualifications of the staff and the program and courses on which they work
10. Induction and support for new staff
11. Expectations of faculty in respect of teaching, research, scholarly activity and service
12. Research training for staff
13. Supervision training for staff
14. Publications of faculty (in an Annex)
15. How does the program provide for the realization of the full potential of the staff, and reward staff in their movement toward achieving the highest possible standards of performance?
16. How are data used to improve staff and to enable them to achieve their highest performance?
17. How is a climate of staff support promoted on the program?

18. How are staff complaints, grievances and concerns identified and addressed on the program?
19. How are cooperative activities, teaching, planning and mutual support addressed on the program?
20. How can, and do, staff share and benefit from innovative ideas on the program?
21. How are staff professional development needs identified?
22. Staff professional development programs/activities and engagement of staff in staff professional development
23. What staff development is provided for curriculum content, teaching, learning, research, supervision, assessment, quality assurance, community networking and relationships
24. Why do staff engage/not engage in staff professional development?
25. How relevant, timely, sufficient and useful are the staff development activities?
26. How does the Program Committee know that the skills and capabilities of the staff are sufficient for the demands of their work, teaching, research, changes in the external environment etc.?
27. Teaching loads, their calculation and distribution
28. Teaching assistants
29. Commentary on the number of new faculty and faculty who have left each year over the preceding three years and the present year
30. Commentary on the faculty to graduate ratio
31. Commentary on the faculty to student ratio
32. Staff morale
33. Staff consultation and involvement in program matters, e.g. staffing, student numbers, budgeting, teaching, learning, assessment?
34. Staff promotion and appointments
35. External review and quality assurance
36. Strategies for staff career development, and the impact of these
37. Number of support staff
38. Future directions
39. Key challenges and prospects
40. Key opportunities

## **SECTION SIX: QUALITY ASSURANCE**

1. Policy on, and strategy and procedures for, quality assurance
2. How does the university know that the program is meeting its aims, goals and intended learning outcomes to the highest possible standards?
3. Quality assurance:
  - a. responsibilities for QA on the program, and who is responsible for what
  - b. involvement of students in quality assurance
  - c. stakeholder involvement in quality assurance
  - d. external review of the program, and its outcomes

4. Quality assurance mechanisms, processes, timeliness, frequency, contents, standards, outcomes and impact with respect to monitoring, developing and improving (i.e. how does the university inform itself about, and guarantee, the quality here)
5. How and where are quality and its enhancement discussed and continuously ensured in the program?
6. Information systems and indicator systems
7. Admissions
8. Faculty
9. Equity principles
10. Staff professional development
11. Administration
12. Stakeholder input
13. Leadership and management
14. Programs and courses
15. Curriculum content, structure, sequence and progression
16. Suitability and efficacy of aims, purposes and intended learning outcomes
17. Learning
18. Teaching
19. Research training
20. Supervision training
21. Learning resources
22. Student support
23. Monitoring student progress
24. Assessment and examining of students
25. Standards of achievement and attainment
26. Student success rates
27. How much 'value added' the Faculty provides, and how this is measured
28. Student outcomes and careers
29. Public information
30. External Examiners and accreditation agencies
31. Value for money
32. Program evaluation
33. Program developments
34. Program review, monitoring and changes
35. Use of data and information in development planning
36. Periodic review of programs
37. Performance review
38. How policy is implemented, monitored and revised
39. Involvement of students in quality assurance
40. External review and quality assurance
41. Benchmarking
42. Strategies for improving quality assurance, and the impact of these
43. Strategies for staff development to improve quality assurance, and the impact of these
44. Current strengths and weaknesses



45. Future directions
46. Key challenges and prospects
47. Key opportunities

## **SECTION SEVEN: STRATEGIC PLANNING**

1. How is strategic planning undertaken on the program, and by/with whom?
2. How is progress measured in the achievement of strategy, planning and implementation?
3. Strategies for improving strategic planning, and the impact of these
4. Strategies for staff development to improve strategic planning, and the impact of these
5. Key strategic targets and developments
6. Strategic academic objectives and timetable/time frames for their achievement
7. How the program committee converts the program's strategic aims and objectives into action plans, how these relate to key performance indicators and how these and other benchmarks are used to set performance projections
8. How are action plans deployed and monitored in order to meet the program's objectives and targets? What indicators are used to show that the action plans are on track, are working effectively and are meeting the intended targets and goals, what are the success criteria and indicators? How does the Program Committee know that the measures used cover all major areas of the action plan and the program?
9. Success criteria and indicators
10. Future directions, aligned to Faculty and university strategy and national and international trends
11. How the strategic planning of the program addresses: faculty strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; early indications of change in the external environment, including changes in student demand, employer and/or professional demands, and changes in the university that might require a review of the strategy;
12. Long-term and medium-term program sustainability
13. Alignment of program plans with the Faculty and university plans and strategy
14. Research training for staff and students and staff development for supervision
15. How the program committee collects and analyses relevant data and information pertaining to these factors as part of the strategic planning process
16. Key challenges and prospects
17. Key opportunities
18. Key indicators for the Program Committee to demonstrate that its performance is improving

## **SECTION EIGHT: GENERAL ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Strengths of the program
2. Weaknesses of the program
3. How has the program improved its quality over time, and on what evidence?
4. Recommendations for improvement
5. Student learning outcomes
6. Progress toward meeting aims of the program, Faculty and university
7. Overall conclusions

## **APPENDICES**

## WHAT SHOULD AN ACTION PLAN INCLUDE?

The Action Plan is prepared by the Faculty Board in response to the report from the Faculty/Program Review Panel. Within 30 working days of receipt of the final Faculty/Program Review Panel's report, the Faculty Board produces the action plan to address points raised and recommendations made in the Faculty/Program Review Panel's report. The Action Plan is sent by the Dean to the Faculty/Program Review Panel and to the Learning and Teaching Committee, and the Learning and Teaching Committee monitors its implementation and effects in a time scale that it (the Learning and Teaching Committee) determines.

An Action Plan address questions such as:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How will we get there?
- How will we know when we have got there?
- How will we know if we have been successful?

Put into greater detail it raises questions such as:

- Where are we now?
- What is the staff capability/capacity to move ahead?
- Which existing staff have the required expertise?
- What are the specific goals and targets?
- What is to be done (clear, specific, concrete action/activities)?
- Who is to do it (responsibilities)?
- When it is to be done by?
- How progress will be monitored (by whom, when, how)?
- How progress will be evaluated (by whom, when, how)?
- What are the success criteria (with quantitative targets against which to judge progress)?
- What timescales are there for different stages of implementation?
- What resources are required?

The Action Plan comprises:

- A series of 'SMART' objectives to address the areas of need identified in the Faculty Review report, e.g.:
  - a. **Specific**/Significant/Short-term
  - b. **Measurable**/Motivating/Manageable
  - c. **Achievable**/Agreed/Aligned/Advantageous
  - d. **Relevant**/Realistic/result-oriented/Resourced
  - e. **Time-framed**; Time-bound/Timely/Tangible

- Intended outcomes and success criteria;
- A detail of what is to be addressed (the contents and priorities);
- How the objectives and intended outcomes will be met;
- Defining tasks, targets and responsible individuals, resource allocation and costings, and time frames/dates for completion;
- Success criteria and evidence;
- Monitoring progress;
- Producing the public version of the plan in summary form.
- Targets, tasks and success criteria to check progress (monitoring) and to evaluate/check success
- Initial tasks and checks for readiness
- Tasks and routes to the achievement of targets, and means to monitor and check progress;
- Targets and intended destinations, and success criteria to check when and how well these have been achieved/reached.

A good action plan:

- Addresses all the key issues;
- Is concise and clearly written;
- Identifies priorities, specific targets and outcomes;
- Is clearly focused on classroom improvement;
- Lists manageable steps towards raising standards of achievement;
- Includes reference to monitoring and evaluation of intended outcomes and student achievement;
- Provides indicators and criteria to recognize improvement;
- Identifies and quantifies resources;
- Is drawn up consultatively.

The action plan can be set out following these headings, for each item:

- (a) Recommendation
- (b) Response
- (c) Objectives of the action
- (d) Action proposed
- (e) Responsibility
- (f) Time frame
- (g) Progress indicators
- (h) Expected outcome
- (i) Success criteria and indicators

An action plan works when:

- Leaders have a clear oversight of its implementation;

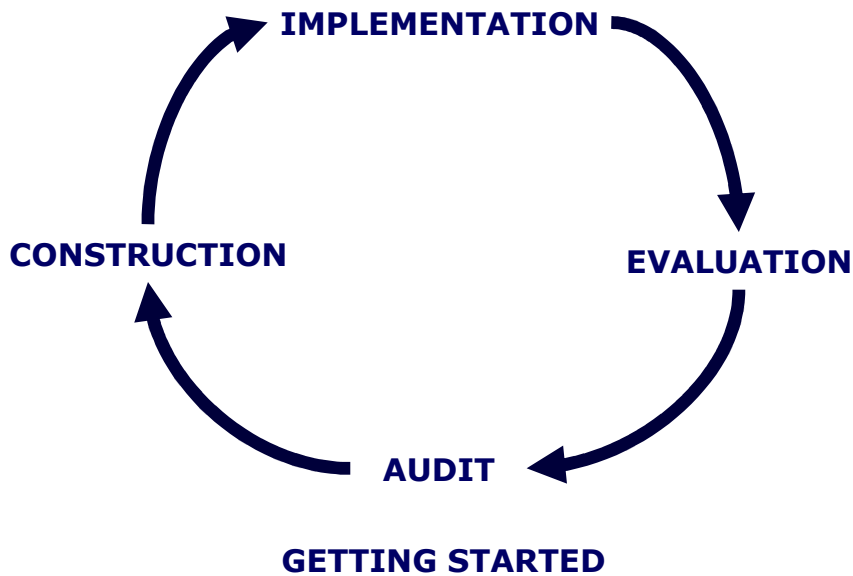
- Everyone knows what they are expected to do;
- Strategies are implemented to address under-achievement, raise expectations, and improve the ethos and standards of education;
- Resources are available;
- Mechanisms are used for monitoring the implementation and progress of plan;
- Mechanisms are in place for evaluating the effectiveness of the action.

Steps in action planning include:

1. Select the issue and decide whom to involve;
2. Review evidence of existing performance;
3. Make a self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses;
4. Describe the ideal future state of affairs;
5. State the objectives concisely and recognizably;
6. Select key features of the 'ideal future state' for use as indicators and evaluation headings;
7. Generate a list of options for action to be taken to lead to the objective;
8. Select a limited, related set of these actions;
9. Cost the actions proposed, Show plans for acquiring or allocating further resources;
10. Define tasks, targets and responsible individuals, resource allocation and dates for completion;
11. Complete a project planning chart to show how different tasks are related;
12. Choose an evaluator and agree stages and audiences for reports on progress;
13. Produce the public version of the plan in summary form.

Processes in development planning can be set out thus (Hargreaves, D. and Hopkins D. (1991) *The Empowered School*. London: Cassell):

## FOUR PROCESSES IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING



The process of development planning can be set out thus:



The development planning process (Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1991)

**ACTION PLANS:  
targets, tasks and  
success criteria**

	<b>IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>EVALUATION ACTIVITIES</b>
<b>STAGE 1</b>	<b>PREPARATIONS (Initial tasks)</b>	<b>CHECK FOR READINESS</b>
<b>STAGE 2</b>	<b>ROUTES (Tasks)</b>	<b>CHECK PROGRESS</b>
<b>STAGE 3</b>	<b>DESTINATIONS (Targets)</b>	<b>CHECK SUCCESS</b>

**THE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS**  
(Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1991)