

Periodic Review: a brief guide for Employers and Stakeholders

Introduction

This guide provides employers and stakeholders with a brief introduction to periodic reviews. If you are reading the guide, you have probably been invited to participate in the review of the courses within a Department. As an Employer, you may be someone who employs our graduates or a key local employer. As a Stakeholder, you may be someone who has graduated from the University of Worcester more than two years ago and has maintained your links with the University or you may be a member of the wider community that has an interest or ongoing involvement with the Course/Course Team.

Why does the University carry out periodic reviews?

The University carries out a review of each Department once every six years. Reviews provide an opportunity for the University and Departments to reflect on the quality of programmes; an important part of which is the student experience. The reviews are designed to complement the other quality assurance activities that departments carry out on an annual basis.

Who conducts the review?

The University's Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee (ASQEC) is responsible for periodic reviews. Each review is carried out by a review team consisting of:

- Chair: independent senior member of UW staff
- Academics from external universities x 2
- Student representative
- Staff member from within the School but from a different Department
- Senior experienced member of staff from outside the School
- AQU officer
- Other post holder (i.e.: international officer, employer rep)

What happens during a review?

The process of review begins with the Department writing a self-evaluation document called the Evaluation and Development Document (EDD). The EDD and a range of supporting documentation is considered by the review team in advance of the meetings. There are two review meetings, usually held six weeks apart; the first review meeting includes the Employers and Stakeholders meeting. The second review meeting is with senior managers and the Department teaching team. Verbal feedback is given to the Department on the key issues identified at the end of the second review meeting.

What is the role of Employers and Stakeholders?

This is an important part of the review as it allows the panel to hear directly from employers about their experiences of our students and graduates.

The meetings are conducted in as informal a way as possible. The Review Panel are genuinely interested to hear about your views, which will be taken into account in their deliberations. However, nothing you say will be directly attributed to you in the report.

How long will the meeting last?

Meetings normally last between 45 and 60 minutes.

What are the review team interested in?

The review team will be interested to hear about your experiences with the Department and the University, what has worked well, and what could be improved. Reviews provide an opportunity for individual Departments, and the University as a whole, to develop further and improve practices – your views are essential for this.

There are a range of questions that the review team may wish to ask you, such as:

- *What involvement have you had in the design and development of the Department's courses/ modules?*
- *How do the Department's courses prepare graduates for the world of work?*
- *How well do the courses balance and integrate vocational and transferable skills with academic knowledge and skills?*
- *(For alumni) As a graduate of the Department, how useful has your course been to your own employment and career progression?*
- *Do you ever host student placements and if so, how does this operate?*
- *Other than placements, do you make any other contribution to courses, e.g., giving careers talks or guest lectures?*
- *How do you rate the quality of communications with the Department?*
- *How could the Department improve engagement with employers?*
- *Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience of working with the Department/ UW?*

There will also usually be a brief opportunity at the end of the meeting for you to raise any issues or questions with the review panel. These might include, for example, issues that you have previously raised with the Department that you feel need to be addressed further or areas where the Department needs support from the University.

What are the outcomes of the review?

After the review visit, the team produces a detailed report, and (in consultation with the Department) an action plan. The report includes areas for the Department to develop further and also identifies good practice. The final report is submitted to ASQEC. The Department keeps ASQEC informed of progress with actions via its annual evaluation and monitoring reporting.