

## Periodic Review: a brief guide for External Panel Members

### Why does the University carry out Periodic Reviews?

Operating alongside annual evaluation and monitoring, periodic review is one of the principal means by which the University of Worcester assures itself of the current and future health of its taught degree programmes, identifying and assessing actual and potential risks to their quality, standards and viability and highlighting areas for development as well as good practice with the potential for wider dissemination (for quality enhancement). Periodic review enables the University to take a holistic and strategic view of a Department's complete portfolio of courses with critical advice from a panel of internal peers and external subject experts.

Periodic reviews are programmed on a six-yearly cycle and judgements are made on the overall academic health of the Department as well as the individual courses delivered by it. An outcome from the Review may include a requirement to re-approve a course within a certain time period in order to guarantee standards or the quality of the student learning experience, or exceptionally, suspension or closure.

External Panel Members receive a standard fee of **£500** paid on completion covering:

- Online attendance at the First Review Meeting
- Online attendance at the Second Review Meeting.
- Reading of the documentation and advance submission of written comments by email to the Academic Quality Officer no later than three working days before the review events.
- Review of draft report and any follow-up documentation

### Who conducts the review?

The University's Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee (ASQEC) is responsible for periodic reviews. External Panel Members will have either academic, industrial or other leadership experience considered appropriate to the Department under discussion. The number of External Panel Members involved will be determined by the size and focus of the Department under review. The remainder of the panel includes a core of internal staff and student members comprising:

- Chair: independent senior member of UW staff
- 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 (: international officer, employer representative)

The External Panel Members will be carefully selected to ensure a sufficient spread of subject expertise and independence of discussion at the periodic review event. The panel membership will reflect the size and complexity of the area under review

### 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 up to six weeks apart; the first review meeting includes the student group meeting and the stakeholder/employer group meeting. The second review

meeting is with senior managers and the Department teaching team. Review panels will be required to make a Judgement against each of the University Expectations that are mapped to the strategic goals of the University Learning and Teaching Strategy. Verbal feedback will be given to the Department on the key issues identified at the end of the second review meeting.

### **Role and Responsibilities of External Panel Members**

As an External Panel Member you are a full member of the panel. External Panel Members play a vital role, contributing to the discussions of the course portfolio and student outcomes, including the currency and sustainability of courses, academic standards and quality of the student learning experience.

All panel members will be provided with links to all of the Department courses' programme specifications and data which they should sample review. In addition, a set number of courses will have been selected to sample in more detail. It is important to note that the documents allocated to you have only been allocated to you. Whilst there will be at least one other External Panel Member on the panel, the course documents allocated to you will not be read by the other External Panel Member; this is to reduce duplication and burden on panel members.

You will be expected to:

- Familiarise yourself with the University of Worcester Periodic Review Process and contact the AQU Officer if you have any questions
- Participate in both panel meetings. You are encouraged to attend the first panel meeting but are not required to, and can participate either remotely, or via advance correspondence.
- Thoroughly read the documentation sent to you and to seek clarity where required and any additional documents to allow you to make judgements
- Complete a template particularly commenting on the Departmental course portfolio and student outcomes, including the currency and sustainability of courses, academic standards and quality of the student learning experience ahead of the first meeting
- Receive additional documentation 3 weeks ahead of the second panel meeting and prepare for the second panel.
- Following the second panel meeting, receive and respond to the Chair's approved draft report within 10 working days.

### **What are the outcomes of the review?**

After the final review meeting, the review panel will collectively arrive at a Judgement about each of the University Expectations based on the evidence provided and the discussions that take place during the review event itself. AQU will produce 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.

You will:

- receive a summary of the outcomes within one week of the second review meeting.

- receive a “Chair-approved” draft of the final report within two weeks of the review event, with the expectation that you will confirm approval or return comments within two weeks.

The final report is submitted to Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee (ASQEC).