

**Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies:
Policy for Management and Oversight**

Content	Pg No
1 Overview	1
2 PSRB Management Framework	2
3 Initial Engagement	4
4 Approval Leading to Accreditation or Recognition	4
5 Monitoring, review and ongoing communications	5
6 Consideration of PSRB Reports	5
7 Summary of Key Responsibilities	6
8 Key Steps in Securing PSRB Approval or Accreditation	7

1 Overview

- 1.1 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) are a diverse group of organisations that include professional bodies, regulators and those with statutory authority over a profession in the context of requirements for professional qualifications or licence to practice. PSRBs engage with higher education institutions through the approval, accreditation or recognition of HE programmes that meet professional standards.
- 1.2 The University encourages Schools to seek and maintain appropriate PSRB accreditation or similar recognition for its courses.
- 1.3 There is no standard typology of PSRBs or forms of approval, accreditation or endorsement of courses by PSRBs. The following are, however, typical in relation to University courses:
- Some PSRBs have a prescribed statutory or regulatory responsibility to approve or recognise programmes and/or to determine the academic standards and professional or vocational components of such programmes. In such cases, accreditation of a university course is essential for a student to graduate, qualify and become a registered professional who can practice the profession. This is typical for medical, health and some education professions., for example courses leading to registration as a nurse or midwife, physiotherapist or paramedic, other allied health professions, and courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status.

- Some statutory regulatory bodies are responsible for regulating and assessing all aspects of education standards and programmes, as is the case for example for the GMC, NMC and HCPC. In other cases, approval of accreditation is the responsibility of one body and assessment or inspection the responsibility of a different body – for example in teacher education the DfE and Ofsted respectively.
- PSRBs that do not have a statutory or regulatory responsibility for approving courses, may set professional standards and formally recognise and endorse the programme. Such endorsement is not essential for a course to be offered by the University or a student to graduate or quality but is a signal that the course meets professional expectations and has been subject to external scrutiny. Endorsement of this type may be in addition to prescribed statutory or regulatory responsibility. This is typical for some allied health professional courses and some disciplines in a range of science related programmes, for example courses in Allied Health professions and courses in Biological Sciences, Geography and Sports Science.
- Some professional bodies may offer graduates of approved programmes exemption from all or parts of further professional examination requirements, and /or membership of a related professional body or society. This is typical of some Business and Accounting programmes.
- Some programmes that are delivered in partnership and/or delivered overseas (transnational education) require the authority of a government or regulatory body. This is typical for programmes delivered in partnership in China and Hong Kong.

1.4 Details of all PSRBs related to University of Worcester programmes are held on the PSRB Register.

2 PSRB Management Framework

2.1 A consistent framework for the management of PSRBs and their specific individual requirements for accreditation/approval, monitoring and review is important to ensure:

- clarity about responsibilities for PSRB management and communications at School, College and University levels
- the University can maintain oversight of the accreditation/approval/endorsement status of its courses, ensuring accuracy of information for applicants, students and other stakeholders
- any serious risks raised by PSRBs regarding the quality and standards of provision and any risks to PSRB accreditation status are identified and managed
- the outcomes of PSRB approval, monitoring or review activity are addressed in a timely way
- opportunities for enhancing the student experience as a result of PSRB engagements or reports are shared and acted upon.

- 2.2 At School level, responsibility and regular contact is managed through the Course Leader or other designated Academic Lead for each specific PSRB. The Academic Lead in association with the Head of School manages the operational requirements for maintaining accreditation/approval, monitoring, review and reporting to the PSRB, liaising where necessary with other colleagues and stakeholders, and managing communications with the PSRB.
- 2.3 Where a PSRB accredits or recognises multiple programmes, the School should identify an overall Academic Lead for that PSRB so that, where necessary, communications can be co-ordinated. Where accreditation is across more than one School (as for example is the case for HCPC) the Head of Academic Quality or other designated University senior postholder will be the nominated Institutional Lead, liaising closely with all relevant School staff.
- 2.4 Schools are responsible for identifying and managing any potential risks associated with PSRB accredited courses. This includes 'exception reporting' (where a concern or risk to the quality management and/or the academic or professional standards and/or the learning environment arises) where this is required by PSRBs. Serious matters which impact on the student experience and/or the accreditation status of the course should be reported to the relevant PVC and Director of Quality and Educational Development as appropriate.
- 2.5 College LTQE Committees are responsible for identifying through the annual and continuous monitoring processes any emerging or ongoing risks to the accreditation status of courses and ensuring action plans are put in place to mitigate the risks.
- 2.6 At institutional level AQU maintains oversight of the accreditation status of courses through the maintenance of a Register of PSRB accredited or recognised programmes. A PSRB engagement form should be completed and forwarded to AQU in relation to forthcoming PSRB visits, approval or review activities. The Register records the following information:
- Award title
 - Name of PSRB
 - Nature of PSRB recognition (e.g., exemption, accreditation/approval, use of protected title or entry to profession, recognition, licence to practice etc.)
 - Delivery organisation covered by PSRB recognition
 - Name of School PSRB academic lead
 - Name of PSRB administrative contact
 - Method of recognition (e.g., approval and review, inspection, continuous approval and exception reporting, self-certification)
 - Date of approval
 - Date of next review
 - Requirements for annual reporting to PSRB
 - PSRB website

- 2.7 AQU also maintains a central SharePoint site for the location of all PSRB definitive documentation, reports for PSRBs and reports from PSRBs and general correspondence. This is a shared accessible repository for Schools and AQU. It is advisable that all correspondence with a PSRB goes through a single person, normally the designated School Quality Administrator.
- 2.8 AQU reports annually to ASQEC on PSRB related quality assurance activity to identify good practice, any strategic risks and lessons learned.
- 2.9 Central management and support for PSRB related approval, monitoring and review activity is considered on a case-by-case basis in discussion between key senior managers within the School, College and Academic Quality.

3 Initial Engagement

- 3.1 The intention to seek accreditation or recognition from a PSRB should be agreed through Academic Planning and Portfolio Group (APPG) – this is normally at the time a new course is being proposed and should wherever possible involve a conjoint approval process with the PSRB. The APPG process will also ensure that information for prospective students regarding PSRB accreditation or approval is clear and accurate.
- 3.2 If significant changes or amendments are made to the course and this requires PSRB approval, this should be stated on the APPG Significant Change form. The School should contact the AQU Officer with PSRB responsibility to ensure they are informed. The School, in association with the AQU, must ensure both internal processes and any PSRB processes are co-ordinated and communicated. The Head of AQ should agree with the School whether there is a need for central sign-off of documents in advance of them being forwarded to the PSRB.
- 3.3 Where APPG agrees that PSRB accreditation or recognition will be sought, the Head of AQ or designated AQU Officer with PSRB responsibility will discuss with the School what this will involve and will review the PSRB process for approval. This will form the basis for determining responsibilities for communications and management of the process, from application or request for approval onwards.

4 Approval Leading to Accreditation or Recognition

- 4.1 Monitor and evaluate School plans to support improvements in student outcomes and student educational experience (e.g. student retention and success, inclusion, employability, the achievement of graduate attributes, manage any risks to PSRB accreditation and recommend actions to mitigate risks, promote teaching excellence and innovations.
- 4.2 Responsibility for the preparation of documentation required for course accreditation/recognition/approval by PSRBs primarily rests with the relevant course team within Schools.

- 4.3 The preliminary meeting for a new course approval will consider the appropriate timings and deadlines with a key aim to synchronise the process with the PSRB concerned, and wherever possible to arrange conjoint approval meetings.
- 4.4 University staff preparing documentation should be mindful of any PSRB requirements that would seem to require a departure from University regulations or processes and ensure that advice is sought from AQU.
- 4.5 PSRB accreditation reports (from both professional and statutory/regulatory bodies) should be forwarded to the Head of AQ on receipt. Where there are conditions or recommendations, the response should be signed off by the Head of School and the Head of AQ before it is sent off.

5 Monitoring, review and ongoing communications

- 5.1 The preparation of annual monitoring or review reports for PSRBs, should follow the same principles as for approval in that the School is responsible for producing documentation with formal sign off by the Head of School. The report should be filed in the SharePoint site.
- 5.3 Where PSRBs carry out periodic reviews (including inspections) with a view to assuring the continuation of accreditation, Schools should notify AQU in the first instance. A discussion will determine the degree to which the review process will be managed at School level or by the AQU, and the involvement of AQU in the process. Review reports for PSRBs should normally be signed off by the Head of School and the Director of QED or nominee before they are submitted.
- 5.4 Where PSRBs require exception reporting, this is managed by the School. As stated at 2.4 above: serious matters which impact on the student experience and/or the accreditation status of the course should be reported to relevant PVC and Director of Quality and Educational Development as appropriate.

6 Consideration of PSRB Reports

- 6.1 Consideration of PSRB reports arising from approval, monitoring or review is an integral part of University quality management processes:
- PSRB reports should be considered by course teams through annual evaluation processes to inform Annual Evaluation Reports.
 - The Head of AQ reviews all PSRB reports received to identify any potential University wide issues and/or reports that identify significant risks to quality or standards
 - The Head of AQ provides an annual report to ASQEC on PSRB approvals and reviews, drawing out any common themes, risks, and good practice. This feeds into the Annual Academic Quality and Standards report for Academic Board
 - PSRB reports of accreditation, re-accreditation, annual monitoring or review should be considered by ASQEC either as part of the approval or re-approval process, or by exception for enhancement or learning purposes.

7 Summary of Key Responsibilities

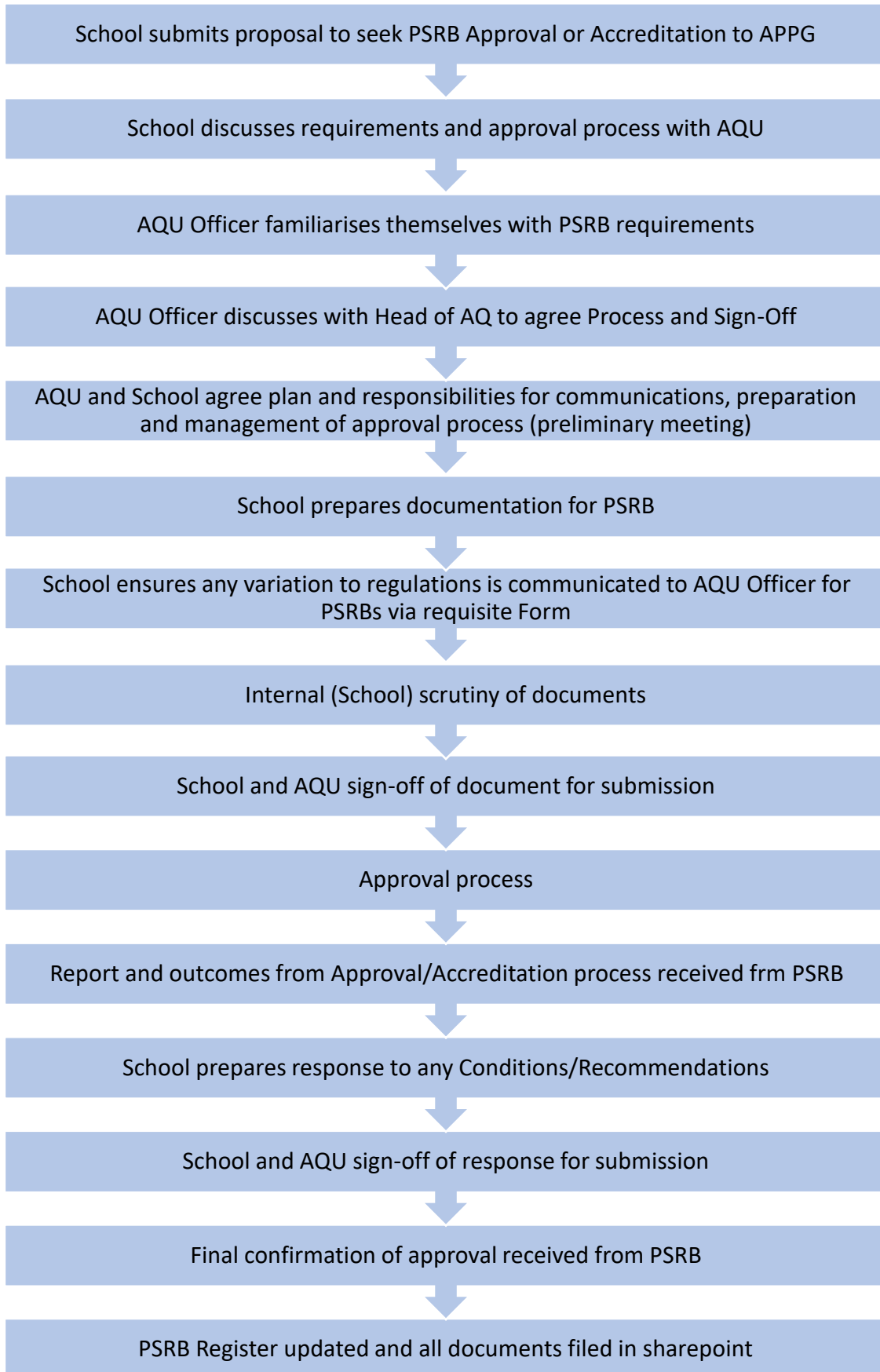
7.1 AQU is responsible for:

- maintaining a register of all PSRB related courses
- maintaining the PSRB SharePoint site.
- providing advice and guidance for the application, approval, monitoring and review processes.
- leading the management and administration of conjoint approval processes.
- ensuring cross-School co-ordination and liaison where a PSRB accredits programmes in different Schools.
- reviewing applications and associated approval and review documentation for PSRBs.
- reviewing reports and key communications from PSRBs to identify potential risks and implications for the University.
- producing an annual report for ASQEC on PSRB approval and review activity, identifying risks, common themes and good practice, and reporting on PSRB activity to ASQEC.

7.2 Schools are responsible for:

- identifying a School Academic Lead for the PSRB (where there is more than one course accredited by the PSRB) who will be responsible for ensuring School oversight of the PSRB's accreditation requirements and communications related to these, and where appropriate meeting with PSRB representatives.
- identifying a School Quality Administrator responsible for communications with the PSRB and ensuring these are filed in the central PSRB SharePoint site.
- ensuring effective arrangements are in place for communications with PSRBs and relevant School and AQU contacts as appropriate, including use of the PSRB engagement form for this purpose
- managing all PSRB-related courses in the School to ensure that the courses continue to meet PSRB requirements, and reporting serious risks to quality of the student experience or accreditation to relevant members of the University Executive.
- working with AQU to prepare for approvals, review and other engagements and reporting to PSRBs, assessing risk and agreeing relative responsibilities (the PSRB engagement form is available for use as appropriate).
- overseeing the progress of actions and meeting of conditions set by PSRBs, reporting back to the PSRB and AQU as required.
- ensuring the accuracy of information on webpages and student facing documentation about PSRB accreditation and requirements
- informing PSRBs of any changes to approved courses and managing any exception reporting required
- ensuring effective oversight at senior management level of all PSRB engagements and communications, including monitoring and review of the PSRB register, receipt of PSRB reports and meeting any financial obligations, for example, annual accreditation fees.

Key Steps in Securing PSRB Approval or Accreditation



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Recent Changes:

Committee	Date	Change