

# 6a

## Academic Review

### Reflective Analysis Document Guidance

#### Document Outline

Review / Evaluate



Current Practice



Taught / Research



All levels, modes,  
locations



Engage student body

- In advance of the Review event, the Discipline Team will undertake a **review and evaluation of current practice** (taught and research; all levels, locations and modes of study). All activities will be undertaken **collectively** and **collaboratively** between the School/Discipline Team and the student body.
- The report, recommendations and actions from the previous review should be used as a source of reference for the reflective exercise.
- Outcomes of the review and evaluation exercise will be used to produce the **Reflective Analysis** which will:
  - ★ provide brief and concise summaries of practices, procedures and activities – *to provide the Review Team with basic and sufficient understanding;*
  - ★ critically evaluate and analyse practices, procedures and activities, identifying strengths, weaknesses, future plans and developments.
  - ★ be written as a formal report and follow a basic structure;
  - ★ be approved through the School Committee structure and Senior Management Team;
  - ★ be submitted **six weeks** before the review event.
- Further information on the report's basic structure is provided within the following sections. Some useful hints and tips are provided on the final page of this guidance.

#### Section 1 Introduction and Overview

Portfolio



Disciplines



Taught Programmes



Research Degree  
Provision



Student Numbers



Approval

A brief introduction, to introduce the Review Team to the School and reviewed discipline. Information should be brief and concise; eg:

- ★ Brief overview of the School and its disciplines
- ★ Taught Programmes and Research Degree Provision (*within the discipline being reviewed*), eg:
  - Management of Taught Programmes; Management of Research Degree Provision, eg:
    - *committees, key roles, administration; if CDTs or equivalent, how these integrate into structures*
  - Professional accreditation
  - IT Infrastructure
  - Other key information the Review Team should be made aware of
- ★ Overall student numbers (taught and research) by study level, location and mode of delivery
- ★ Brief explanation on the process followed for producing and approving the reflective document

## Section 2 Student Experience (Taught)

- ★ All students, levels, locations & modes of delivery (including PGR student learning experience)
- ★ Brief and concise descriptions of processes, which are evaluated, analysed and summarised
- ★ Five recommended key headings (+ others as relevant).....

1. **Teaching and Learning**, eg
  - Lectures, tutorials, labs
  - Infrastructure (physical and virtual)
  - Employability and Professional Development (eg PSRB, societies, industrial links, engagement initiatives and opportunities etc)
2. **Student Support**, eg
  - Enrolment
  - Induction
  - Personal Tutoring
  - Additional support requirements
3. **Student Voice and Engagement**, eg
  - Student representation, feedback + consultation (*including closing the feedback loop*)
  - Other forms of feedback (*eg graduates, employers, PSRBs, partners etc*)
  - Working in partnership with students (*eg engagement in School committees*)
4. **Student Overview**
  - Opportunity for UG and PGT students to contribute to the RA by commenting on their student learning experience (managed by the relevant School Officers). See [Document 6b: Student Engagement](#)
5. **Summary**
  - Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

## Section 3 Student Experience (Research)

- ★ All students, levels, locations & modes of delivery (including PGR student learning experience)
- ★ Brief and concise descriptions of processes, which are evaluated, analysed and summarised
- ★ Five recommended key headings (+ others as relevant).....

1. **General Information**, eg
  - Overview of research degrees (eg types, funding etc)
  - Management of research degrees (including management of CDTs and equivalent if you have them)
  - Research environment (eg evidence of expertise, facilities etc)
2. **Student Support**, eg
  - Selection and admissions
  - Induction (eg for students starting in Oct, Jan and May)
  - Supervisory arrangements / mentoring arrangements
  - Development of Research and Generic Skills
  - Progress Review
3. **Student Representation, Engagement and Development**, eg
  - Student representation, feedback + consultation (*including closing the feedback loop*)
  - Operation of Research Student Committee
  - Research culture / community
  - Engagement and development, eg:
    - o Engagement with the RFA
    - o Seminars, poster sessions, conferences, presenting, publishing
    - o outreach, industry
4. **Student Overview**
  - Opportunity for students to contribute to the RA by commenting on their student learning experience (to be managed by the PGR Student Representative). See [Document 6b: Student Engagement](#)
5. **Summary**
  - Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

**Describe**  
High level summary  
of the process

**Evaluate**  
What works well  
and not so well?

**Analyse**  
How do you know?  
What might be the reasons?

**Conclude**  
What conclusions have you  
reached?  
What needs to be done?

## Section 4 Quality and Standards (Taught)

- ★ Processes for assuring quality and standards, and in a multi-location / mode environment
- ★ Brief and concise descriptions of processes, which are evaluated, analysed and summarised
- ★ Five recommended key headings (+ others as relevant).....

1. **Academic Standards**, eg
  - Taught Programme oversight and decision-making
  - Assessment policies and practices, eg:
    - Setting, marking, moderating
    - Assurances across multiple modes/locations
    - Boards
  - Chief/External Examiners process (+ examples of key issues/actions)
  - Induction and monitoring of new staff (*inc. familiarisation with policies, practices etc*)
  - Monitoring and review processes; how outcomes are used/taken forward
2. **Currency of the Curriculum**, eg
  - Development of skills (including graduate attributes)
  - Use of research as a learning style
  - Internationalisation of the curriculum
  - Preparation for employment
  - Incorporation of feedback from various sources (eg External Examiners, PSRBs, etc)
  - Externality (eg comparison with other subjects and institutions; industrial advisory boards, employers)
3. **Reference Points**, eg
  - SCQF and QAA Benchmark Statements
  - Use of the QAA Quality Code and University Codes of Practices.
  - Professional expectations: PSRBs; industry trends;
  - Other reference points
4. **Quality of Teaching**, eg
  - Monitoring teaching quality
  - Processes to maintain quality (eg staff development, mentoring, peer review)
  - Initiatives to enhance teaching (eg innovation in teaching)
5. **Summary**
  - Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

## Section 5 Quality and Standards (Research)

- ★ Processes for assuring quality and standards of research degree programmes
- ★ Brief and concise descriptions of processes, which are evaluated, analysed and summarised
- ★ Four recommended key headings (+ others as relevant).....

1. **Academic Standards**, eg
  - Research Degree provision oversight and decision-making
  - Progress review arrangements
  - Examination procedures (eg Examiner reports)
2. **Quality of Supervision**
  - Induction, support and mentoring of less experienced supervisors
  - Managing supervisory loads
  - Initiatives to enhance supervision
  - Processes to monitor and maintain quality of staff (eg staff development, mentoring, peer review)
3. **Quality and Enhancement**
  - Monitoring and Review Processes and how outcomes are used/taken forward
  - Feedback from other sources (eg funders, PSRBs, Industrial Advisory Boards, employers, etc)
  - Use of the QAA Quality Code and University Codes of Practices.
4. **Summary**
  - Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

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## Section 6 Quality Enhancement (Taught)

- ★ Learning & Teaching Strategy
- ★ Analysis and comparison of statistics
- ★ Supporting international development
- ★ Four recommended key headings (+ others as relevant)....

- 1. Learning & Teaching Strategy / Enhancement Plan**
  - Engagement with and reflection upon activities in pursuit of the University's Learning & Teaching Strategy objectives (reference the School's L&T Strategy/Enhancement Plan):
    - enhancing student learning;
    - reshaping the learning environment;
    - developing staff;
    - growing and diversifying the student population.
- 2. Review and Analysis of Statistics**
  - A review and analysis of statistics and other performance indicators over recent years for all levels (UG, PGT) across all locations and modes of delivery.
  - Comparisons over recent years should be included and trends reflected upon.
- 3. Internationalisation**
  - Activities and plans in support of international business development. eg
    - Intercampus Transfer, Student Mobility, Internships and Placements
    - Internationalisation of the Curriculum
    - International student recruitment
- 4. Summary**
  - Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

## Section 7 Quality Enhancement (Research)

- ★ Innovation; Enterprise
- ★ Collaborations
- ★ Economic and Societal Impact
- ★ Thought leadership
- ★ Four recommended key headings (+ others as relevant)....

- 1. Research and Innovation Strategy**
  - Engagement with and reflection upon activities in pursuit of the Strategy 2025 Excelling in Research and Enterprise Implementation Plan:
    - Collaborations with funders and business
    - Research student 'thought leadership' (eg high profile publications, media engagement, social media profiles, communication with the public)
    - Economic and societal impact of research student work
    - Enterprise (eg commercial activity arising from research student work)
- 2. Review and Analysis of Statistics**
  - A review and analysis of statistics and other performance indicators over recent years for all levels and across all locations and modes of delivery, eg:
    - PGR - pass and failure rates, and rate of resubmissions
    - Thesis submission and completion timescales.
    - Complaints and appeals
  - Comparisons over recent years should be included and trends reflected upon
- 3. Internationalisation**
  - Activities and plans in support of international business development and the University's internationalisation strategy, eg
    - Intercampus Transfer, Student Mobility, Internships and Placements
    - International joint and dual degrees
    - International student recruitment
- 4. Summary**
  - Summarise the **key** findings, reflections, conclusions and actions

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## Appendices

- ★ As a minimum, documentation listed below should be appended to the Reflective Analysis document

- **Programme Specifications**  
*For all taught programmes*  
*For all research programmes with taught elements*
- **Academic Review**  
*Previous review's action plan and progress report*
- **Internal Audit**  
*Most recent: report, action plan + progress report*
- **Annual Monitoring and Review**  
*Previous two years' report*
- **Organisational Chart**  
*Responsibilities for managing the discipline/programmes*
- **School Learning and Teaching Strategy/Enhancement Plan**
- **School Research Strategy (where available)**
- **List Enhancement activities/projects**

- ★ Other documents may be appended (*to be agreed with Academic Quality*)
- ★ Reduce the size of the Reflective Analysis by cross-referencing to appendices

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## Hints and Tips

- ★ Keep in mind the end purpose of the document
- ★ Each RA will vary in length, a rough guide is 15-30 pages
- ★ Reduce the size of the RA by cross-referencing to appendices
- ★ Keep factual information brief and concise
- ★ Emphasise the **evaluation** and **analysis** which will be helpful
- ★ The content of the RA will help the Review Team prepare for meetings and reach conclusions.....

### Key Themes

Information in the RA will help the Review Team identify key themes, to then form questions to ask students (and may then be discussed with staff).

### Exploration

If something is well described and evaluated there may be less of a need to explore in depth. **Standard topics** need to be explored to reach conclusions, **topics** include.....

### Conclusions

The Review Team will conclude on the effectiveness of processes for **maintaining academic standards** and will recommend whether programmes should be **re-approved** for ongoing delivery.

### Example discussion topics.....

#### Student Experience

- Student learning experience (taught)
  - eg induction, personal tutoring, IT, library, careers, employability, graduate attributes etc
- Student learning experience (research)
  - Eg induction, supervision, mentoring, development, teaching etc
- Quality of teaching
  - eg views on teaching, learning materials
- Assessment and Progress
  - eg criteria, feedback on assessment, progression, supervision, PGR review
- Student representation and feedback opportunities

#### Programme Quality & Academic Standards

- Progress and Assessment policies and practices
  - setting, marking, moderating (across multiple campuses)
  - PGR progress review
  - Quality of supervision
- Curriculum review and development (taught)
  - activity across multiple campuses
  - external benchmarks (eg incorporation of External Examiner comments; industrial relevance).
- Monitoring and Review processes and progressing outcomes
- Mechanisms for receiving and addressing student feedback (inc student surveys)