



Quality Assurance Code of Practice

Annual Monitoring of Units and Programmes

This document is primarily intended for:

Students
 Unit convenors
 Directors of Studies
 Assistant Registrars (Faculty/School)
 Members of Faculty/School-level and University-level Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees
 First point of contact: Assistant Registrars (Faculty/School)
 Technical specialist: Academic Registry

Preface: Arrangements for 2018/19	1
1. Purpose and scope	3
2. Principles	3
3. Annual monitoring of units.....	3
Feedback from students using the unit evaluation tool	4
4. Annual monitoring of programmes	6
The Report (where required)	7
Appendices to the Report.....	8
5. Scrutiny of programme annual monitoring reports.....	9

Preface: Arrangements for 2018/19

- In order to deliver on the objectives set out in the Education Strategy 2016-2021, during 2018/19 activity and resource will focus foremost on laying the foundations for subsequent wider transformational change, rather than on routine activity.**
- Departments will continue to monitor their programmes through the ongoing examination of key indicators** – such as External Examiner reports, student feedback (including through surveys and discussions at Staff/Student Liaison Committees), and programme data (including admissions, retention and degree outcomes data) – and take action where appropriate. Programme data will continue to be made available to Departments and Faculties/the School for monitoring purposes – specifically, statistical data on admission, retention and degree outcomes (provided by Academic Registry); student survey data (provided by the Centre for Learning & Teaching); and data on the first destinations of graduates (provided by the Careers Service).
- No routine reporting on the annual monitoring of programmes will be required through completion of QA51 Forms 1 and 2.** The requirement to submit an annual monitoring report will be risk-based.
- Programmes involving collaborative provision** are by their nature considered to be higher risk and therefore it is a requirement that annual monitoring reports are completed for these programmes (see **section 4** below and [QA51 Form 3](#)). A report should be completed by each partner for each programme they deliver.

5. For other programmes, where appropriate - for example if key data indicate an issue of concern in relation to a programme - the Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching)/Head of Teaching & Learning in the School may require the relevant Department to produce a programme monitoring report. If so, the report format and process as set out in **section 4** below should be followed unless otherwise advised by the Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching) /Head of Teaching & Learning.
6. In order to facilitate informed student engagement with the enhancement of the learning experience, Departments are expected to make key indicator data (as outlined in paragraph 2 above) available for discussion at SSLCs and to ensure that feedback from SSLCs is duly considered (see also [QA48](#) Student Engagement with Quality Assurance and Enhancement). Departments are strongly encouraged to share the key findings contained in any programme monitoring reports, produced in accordance with paragraphs 4-5 above, with the SSLC for discussion.
7. Departments will continue to carry out unit monitoring (see section 3 below) and to record unit-level monitoring as set out in section 3.4.
8. Departments will also continue to conduct online unit evaluation and to report the outcomes of this to students as set out in section 3.7ff below. Some changes to unit evaluation for 2017/18 have been agreed by ULTQC and Senate, including:
 - Changes to the core questions for standard units, along with provision of a list of discretionary questions, from which a maximum of two can be selected
 - Availability of the unit evaluation report templates ([QA51 Forms 6-10](#)) to download from SAMIS, pre-filled with the quantitative results data for the unit
 - Adjustment to the normal timing of the fixed period for evaluation of standard units.
9. **Faculties/the School will not be required to produce summary reports on the annual monitoring of programmes (QA51 Form 5a or 5b).** Associate Deans (Learning & Teaching)/ the Head of Teaching & Learning in the School will monitor programme data and activity in their Faculty/School. University Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee and Senate will continue to monitor key data across the institution.

1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1 This Quality Assurance (QA) Code of Practice statement relates to the annual monitoring of units and programmes for all taught programmes of study leading to an award of the University of Bath. This QA statement also applies to programmes involving collaborative provision and student exchange (see [QA20](#) and [QA37](#)). For the annual monitoring of Research Degree provision, see [QA7](#).
- 1.2 Annual monitoring is a key component of the University's mechanisms for managing quality and standards. It draws upon the related processes of external examining ([QA12](#)), input from Staff/Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) ([QA48](#)), as well as the views of professional or regulatory accrediting bodies ([QA8](#)). Annual monitoring of programmes feeds into the periodic review of programmes, forming part of the evidence base for period review (Degree Scheme Reviews [QA13](#)).

2. Principles

- 2.1 The University is committed to the regular monitoring of its units and programmes in order to:
- maintain the quality and validity of units and programmes
 - facilitate continuous enhancement of provision to reflect developments in the sector, institution and discipline
 - record the quality and standards of its provision as appropriate.
- 2.2 The University recognises that the process of monitoring and enhancement of units and programmes is iterative and happens through a range of informal and formal mechanisms. Annual monitoring provides Departments/School/the Learning Partnerships Office (LPO) with a defined opportunity to take a holistic view of both the unit/programme(s) and the environment in which learning and teaching occurs, drawing together evidence and observations from a range of internal and external sources, in order to identify actions to be taken and report on progress being made as required.
- 2.3 Annual monitoring is an academic process underpinned by peer review and informed student involvement. The monitoring of units and programmes is risk-focused and aligned with the University's Education Strategy.
- 2.4 University Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee (ULTQC) is responsible for monitoring the core indicators of the quality and standards of learning and teaching across the institution—survey results, retention and degree outcomes, External Examiners' reports, and destinations data—and reporting annually to Senate and Council on performance and activity to continuously improve the student academic experience.

3. Annual monitoring of units

- 3.1 The purpose of annual monitoring of units is to maintain and enhance the quality of units. Annual monitoring encompasses two elements:
- monitoring of the unit (of which an evaluation by students forms a part – see 3.7ff) covering for example unit aims, learning outcomes, teaching modes, unit content and structure, assessment practice and notably formative assessment (see [QA16](#) Assessment, Marking and Feedback, paragraph 5.6) as well as the environment in which learning and teaching occurs, e.g. teaching space, support services and staff development issues
 - recording that monitoring.

- 3.2 Heads of Departments have overall responsibility for ensuring that unit monitoring takes place and that any actions are completed. Directors of Studies are responsible for ensuring that annual monitoring is undertaken for each unit for which the Department/School/LPO is responsible.
- 3.3 Unit convenors should undertake the monitoring of the unit(s) for which they are responsible at the end of the academic session and take any action necessary. The process for this is common to the monitoring of all units and should encompass the following:
- reflection on the actions taken since last year to support enhancement and an assessment of the effectiveness of those actions
 - evaluation of the effectiveness of formative assessment opportunities (see [QA16 Assessment, Marking and Feedback](#) paragraph 5.6)
 - evaluation of feedback from staff, students (including unit evaluations - see 3.7ff) and External Examiners, and of formative and summative assessment results
 - identification of areas for improvement and enhancement, and planning of appropriate action to be taken as a result.
- 3.4 It is open to the Department/School Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee (D/SLTQC) to decide how the outcomes of this monitoring should most appropriately be recorded. This may be through a series of separate written reports for each unit; through the minutes of discussion of the units in the appropriate programme/teaching committee (or equivalent) or the Board of Examiners for Units; or through a summary report that forms an appendix to the annual monitoring report for the programme, if applicable. A template ([QA51 form 4](#)) is available for this purpose, but its use is not mandatory. Whichever method is deemed most appropriate, the core elements that should be recorded are:
- the names of the units being evaluated
 - a note of actions taken since the previous year
 - formative assessment methods (not specified in the unit description)
 - a summary of the unit convenor's evaluation highlighting issues to be addressed, and identifying aspects of good practice to be shared across the University
 - a note of actions planned for the coming year.
- 3.5 Where a unit is offered in more than one cycle per year, the process of ongoing monitoring and enhancement will necessarily be undertaken in stages aligned with the cycles in which the unit is offered. However, the formal monitoring of units and recording of that monitoring should still be undertaken on an annual basis, with appropriate attention being given in the resulting report to any differences between cycles.
- 3.6 Unit convenors may wish to involve staff external to the Department/School/LPO in the process of monitoring. This would be particularly appropriate where the unit is taken by students from other Departments/School/LPO.

Feedback from students using the unit evaluation tool

- 3.7 Student feedback makes a significant contribution to unit monitoring. Departments will obtain formal feedback from students using the University's unit evaluation tool. The tool automatically incorporates mandatory [core questions](#) agreed by Senate. There are four sets of core questions applicable to:
- [standard units](#) (these questions apply to most units delivered at the University)
 - [placement units](#)
 - [study abroad units](#)
 - [distance learning units](#)

- [Combined placement and study abroad units](#)

- 3.8 Unit convenors are responsible for selecting the set of core questions appropriate to the unit. A maximum of two discretionary questions selected from a list provided may also be added to a unit evaluation. The decision rests with D/SLTQCs as to who has responsibility for selecting discretionary questions and on what basis. Advice and support for using the unit evaluation tool, including user instructions, are available on the [unit evaluation web page](#). The Centre for Learning & Teaching (CLT) also provides advice and support for online unit evaluation.
- 3.9 When using the standard unit questions, the core question on the effectiveness of teaching should be repeated for each member of staff who makes a significant contribution to teaching on the unit. This may include, for example, postgraduate students who teach (Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)), Lab Demonstrators, non-academic or external staff. In reporting the outcomes of unit evaluation to students (see 3.11 (iv)), the scores for this question should be reported anonymously, i.e. without any reference to named individuals.
- 3.10 The evaluation of student feedback is normally undertaken by the unit convenor. The Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring that a summary of the outcomes of unit evaluation and unit convenors' feedback (strengths identified, areas for development, proposed actions) is fed back to students in a timely manner via Moodle (see 3.11 (iv)).
- 3.11 As agreed by ULTQC and Senate, the following measures are mandatory (with the exception of point (i)):
- Unit convenors are strongly encouraged to undertake an **informal** mid-semester evaluation of the unit (anonymously, where possible). Unit convenors may find it helpful to use an [Electronic Voting System](#) for this purpose. **The University's online unit evaluation tool should not be used for mid-semester evaluation.** In the first taught session following mid-semester evaluation, unit convenors should briefly discuss the feedback received and any changes planned as a result (or, if changes are not possible or desirable, why this is the case).
 - Unit evaluation should take place during a fixed period – normally during weeks 9 and 10 of each semester for standard units, with unit evaluations staying open for a maximum of 3 weeks and closing before the examination period. The evaluation of placement units, study abroad units and distance learning units should take place at a time deemed appropriate by the unit convenor.
 - Students should be encouraged to complete the survey using a mobile device during the final lecture of the unit, where possible.
 - For all units, within eight calendar weeks of the close of the survey, the appropriate template for the reporting of unit evaluations (QA51 Form 6 for standard units, Form 7 for placement units, Form 8 for study abroad units, Form 9 for distance learning units and Form 10 for combined placement and study abroad units) should be completed and uploaded to the department's unit evaluation Moodle repository (see (v) below) by the relevant unit convenor. The report template can be downloaded from SAMIS including the quantitative results data for the unit, and the unit convenor should complete the report with their qualitative comments. An email should be sent to students (usually by departmental administrative staff) to notify them when the report is available and confirm where it can be found.
 - Departments should provide a central unit evaluation repository in Moodle where reports are stored for ease of access, and to which a link is provided from the following central web page: www.bath.ac.uk/students/student-feedback/unit-

[evaluation/feedback](#). The repository should be clearly signposted from relevant Department and individual unit Moodle pages.

- (vi) Following posting of unit evaluation reports on Moodle a summary report should be submitted to the SSLC for discussion.
- 3.12 A response rate of 30% or 30 respondents, whichever is the lower, will normally provide a sufficiently sound basis for scores to contribute to the evaluation of the unit. (Inviting students to complete the survey in class (see 3.11 (iii)) will help to ensure that response rates are above this threshold). For units with response rates that do not meet this threshold, the unit convenor should provide a response for students on Moodle, explaining that the response rate was insufficiently robust but that the feedback received will still be taken into consideration. The CLT offers support and advice to unit convenors on good practice with respect to increasing response rates to obtain more representative feedback, including qualitative comments that provide additional context for numerical scores.
- 3.13 All qualitative feedback on a unit is valuable and should be considered by the unit convenor. However, open comments from student surveys including unit evaluations are not *normally* shared with students or the Students' Union. If there are open comments which it would be useful to share (e.g. if a number of useful suggestions have been made on the same theme), the unit convenor is responsible for removing any inappropriate comments and any information that would allow an individual to be identified.
- 3.14 Before students are able to access the online unit evaluation screen, they will be asked to read and electronically sign a statement confirming their intention to offer constructive feedback and clarifying the types of inappropriate and/or offensive comments which are unacceptable. They will need to complete this process once a semester (not for each individual unit). Academic staff are encouraged to report any offensive or discriminatory comments to their Head of Department.
- 3.15 D/SLTQCs should discuss the action to be taken for those units with low evaluation scores or, in the case of units with very high scores, how good practice might be shared.

4. Annual monitoring of programmes

- 4.1 The purpose of annual programme monitoring is to maintain and enhance the quality of programmes, by undertaking a holistic appraisal of the programme based on key indicators and the outcome of unit monitoring. Annual programme monitoring draws upon a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence to support the identification of good practice, success and areas for improvement in relation to the programme (e.g. aims, learning outcomes, teaching modes unit content and structure, assessment practice, placements and exchanges) as well as the environment in which learning and teaching occurs (e.g. teaching space, support services and staff development).
- 4.2 Heads of Departments have overall responsibility for ensuring that programme monitoring takes place and that resulting actions are completed.
- 4.3 **During 2017/18, activity and resource will focus on laying the foundations for wider transformational change, in accordance with the University's Education Strategy. ULTQC has agreed that no *routine* reporting on the annual monitoring of programmes will be required. Reporting on programme monitoring will be risk-based. It is a requirement that annual monitoring reports are completed for all programmes involving collaborative partners. For other programmes, the Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching)/ Head of Teaching & Learning in the School may require a programme monitoring report to be produced, for example if key data indicate an issue of concern in relation to a programme. Where an annual monitoring report is required, the report**

format and process as set out in this section should be followed unless other requirements are specified by the Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching)/Head of Teaching & Learning.

- 4.4 Directors of Studies are responsible for compiling required annual monitoring reports and for implementing associated action plans. An annual monitoring report may relate to a single programme or a group of inter-related or cognate programmes. For programmes involving collaborative partners, a report should be completed by each partner for each programme they deliver.
- 4.5 Whether or not they are required to produce a report, Departments will monitor their programmes through the ongoing examination of key indicator data – such as External Examiner reports, student feedback (including through surveys and discussions at SSLCs), and programme data (including admissions, retention and degree outcomes data) – and take action where appropriate.
- 4.6 Academic Registry is responsible for providing statistical data relating to admission, retention, and degree classification. The Careers Service is responsible for providing data on the first destinations of graduates. The CLT is responsible for providing student survey data. Advice and support on the data for annual monitoring is available from Academic Registry and the CLT as appropriate.
- 4.7 A significant element of annual monitoring of programmes is the gathering and evaluation of feedback from students. D/SLTQCs are expected to ensure that arrangements are made for the collection of student opinion on their programme of study, including from SSLCs (see [QA48](#) for information on the SSLC annual summary that can be utilised in annual monitoring reports). These arrangements should ensure that all students are encouraged to provide feedback on their learning experiences in ways that enable them to express their views freely, and that enable the widest range of students to engage, including part-time students, distance learners, students in partner organisations and those with a disability. It is expected that Departments/School/LPO will engage with students, including the involvement of the departmental or programme-level SSLC, when formulating action plans in response to student survey data. Departments/School/LPO should also ensure that feedback is provided to students on actions taken in response to student feedback.
- 4.8 The CLT coordinates, and provides advice and support for, the following taught student surveys: National Student Survey (NSS), UK Engagement Survey (UKES), and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES).
- 4.9 Required annual monitoring reports and action plans, including those for relevant LPO programmes, should be drawn up by a meeting of the programme/teaching committee (or equivalent) and student representatives. Templates for reporting are attached to this statement - [QA51 Form 1](#) (undergraduate), [Form 2](#) (postgraduate), [Form 3](#) (collaborative provision) - and should be used, as appropriate. Reports should be signed by the Chair of the Department/School/partner organisation Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee or equivalent and submitted to the Faculty/School Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee (F/SLTQC).
- 4.10 The annual monitoring report for programmes should encompass:

The Report (where required)

- a) Summary of the year under review including reference to any significant issues of good practice or concern relating to:
- demand and recruitment
 - programme content, delivery, assessment

- support and guidance for students including equalities issues
- learning and teaching resources
- student exchange and placement provision
- personal tutoring
- retention, progression, degree classifications
- staffing and staff development
- careers education and employability
- collaborative working/partnerships

and based upon evidence including:

- statistics on demand, recruitment, retention, progression, classifications and first destinations, and
- feedback from
 - External Examiners
 - students (e.g. unit evaluations, NSS, UKES/PTES and other survey data, SSLCs, focus groups)
 - issues raised in meeting the needs of particular groups of students (including disabled students)
 - staff (e.g. from annual monitoring of units, minutes of programme management/teaching and learning committees or similar)
 - employers
 - placement providers
 - period review (Degree Scheme Review) – where appropriate
 - Professional Accreditation – where appropriate.

- b) Composite action list including any actions ongoing from the previous report.
- c) Points of good practice or concern for wider dissemination - to be drawn to the attention of the Faculty/University.

Appendices to the Report

- a) Statistical data
- b) External Examiners' report(s) and Departmental response(s)
- c) Placement unit convenor's report – where applicable.

- 4.11 The University considers student retention rates of less than 90% in the first year of an undergraduate programme to be a marker of concern, except for programmes overseen by the LPO where the marker for concern is a retention rate of less than 80%. In such instances, Directors of Studies are expected to evaluate the reasons for the lower retention rate, identifying the actions that are being taken in response.
- 4.12 ULTQC may indicate a theme to be addressed in annual monitoring reports for programmes. This theme will usually relate to an emerging area of strategic or institutional interest (e.g. feedback to students). Similarly, F/SLTQCs may wish from time to time to indicate additional themes of Faculty/School significance for consideration.
- 4.13 Key indicator and programme data should be made available to, and discussed with, student representatives and staff through SSLCs and D/SLTQCs as appropriate. Departments/School/LPO are also strongly encouraged to share the key findings contained in any programme monitoring reports, that are produced in accordance with paragraph 4.3 above, with the SSLC for discussion. Departments/School/LPO may wish to provide copies of annual monitoring reports to the relevant External Examiners for information.

- 4.14 Open comments from student surveys are not *normally* shared with students or the Students' Union. Where there are open comments which it would be useful to share (e.g. if a number of useful suggestions have been made on the same theme), the Director of Studies is responsible for removing any inappropriate comments and any information that would allow an individual to be identified.

5. Scrutiny of programme annual monitoring reports

- 5.1 The aim of undertaking scrutiny of annual monitoring of programmes at Faculty/School and institutional level is to:

- ensure accountability for action plans and identify issues of concern
- incorporate an element of peer review into the annual monitoring process
- offer an opportunity for wider themes to be highlighted at institutional level
- promote enhancement and disseminate good practice across the University.

- 5.2 **During 2017/18, the reporting of programme monitoring will be risk-based. Associate Deans (Learning & Teaching)/the Head of Teaching & Learning in the School will monitor programme data and activity in their Faculty/School. ULTQC and Senate monitor key data across the institution.**

- 5.3 Those annual monitoring reports that are produced will be considered by the F/SLTQC. For programmes delivered by collaborative partners, the Link Academic Adviser should be invited to comment upon the annual monitoring report prior to its consideration by the F/SLTQC.

- 5.4 The F/SLTQC is responsible for considering the annual monitoring report in detail, assuring itself that the report covers all required areas and that the action plan is both specific and sufficient to the purpose of ensuring that the process results in quality enhancement. The F/SLTQC is also responsible for:

- ensuring that good practice identified is shared across the Faculty/School/LPO
- assuring itself that the quality of the action plan is appropriate
- monitoring implementation of the action plan
- ensuring that the overall focus and coherence of the programme has been maintained in the light of any incremental changes to the programme since the last periodic review (Degree Scheme Review) or the Programme Approval
- ensuring that any Faculty/School-level issues are addressed
- assuring itself that a report has been produced for each programme where the need has been identified.

Where necessary the F/SLTQC may refer a report back to the relevant Director of Studies for further work.

- 5.5 Associate Deans (Learning & Teaching)/ the Head of Teaching & Learning in the School will monitor programme data and activity in their Faculty/School, taking into consideration:

- areas of good practice to be shared across the institution
- principal themes arising, including any issues requiring consideration at institutional level or by a professional service e.g. Student Services, Careers Service
- programmes where there are particular issues for concern and the actions that are being taken in response (including a retention rate for the first year of undergraduate programmes of less than 90% or less than 80% in the LPO)
- particularly critical External Examiners' reports
- particularly poor student feedback

- institutional student survey data and the actions taken by Departments/the School in relation to survey data, such as NSS, PTES and internal university student surveys as appropriate.
- 5.6 As directed by ULTQC, Faculties/the School may be required to produce summary reports on the annual monitoring of programmes (**QA51 Form 5a or 5b**). **In 2017/18, in the absence of routine reporting on programme monitoring, it will not be necessary for Faculties/the School to produce a summary report.**
- 5.7 ULTQC will consider any reports it has requested from F/SLTQCs alongside institutional management information on student retention and progression, in order to:
- evaluate the effectiveness of the annual monitoring process
 - address any issues of institutional-level significance that arise, referring matters to relevant University officers, committees and services as appropriate
 - disseminate aspects of good practice
 - monitor student progression and retention trends
 - assure itself that where issues of concern have been raised with regard to particular programmes, that these issues are being appropriately addressed.
- 5.8 In accordance with [QA20](#) Collaborative Provision, ULTQC will monitor new collaborative arrangements through the receipt of annual monitoring reports after the first year of a collaborative programme. Academic Registry produces an annual report for ULTQC summarising issues arising from the review and monitoring of collaborative provision.

Statement Details		
Issue Version:	2.11	
Date:	November 2018	
Antecedents:	University Learning Teaching and Quality Committee	13 July 2011, Minute 121 27 September 2011, Minute 140 31 May 2012, Minute 240 10 July 2012 Minute 279 9 July 2013 Minute 428 8 July 2014 Minute 552 7 July 2015 Minute 671 22 September 2015 Minute 692 5 July 2016 Minute 807 11 July 2017 Minute 940 18 January 2018 Minute 1002
	Senate	11 th December 1991 Minute 8666 14 th June 2006, Minute 12387
	Quality Assurance Committee	15 th November 1999, Minute 139b 8 th May 2000, Minute 166 5 th June 2006, Minute 623 (1) 1 st July 2008, Minute 857 (5) (8). 3 rd July 2009, Minute 976 (7) 13 th July 2010, Minute 1098 (8)
	Academic Studies Committee	19 th May 1992, Minute 50 23 rd June 1992, Minute 62 5 th November 1992, Minute 75(iii) 3 rd December 1992, Minute 94 11 th February 1993, Minute 103
	QA27 Undergraduate Retention Rates	
	QA36 Quality Management in Teaching - Student Feedback and Evaluation of Programmes	
	Report of the Teaching Efficiencies Working Group	
		Registrar's Office document at October 1994
Related Documentation:	QAA Quality Code Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review	
Author:	Academic Registry	