



Quality Assurance Code of Practice

Education Annual Review and Enhancement*

*Also known as Annual Review of Units and Courses

This document is primarily intended for:

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

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1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1 This Quality Assurance (QA) Code of Practice statement relates to Education Annual Review and Enhancement (EARE), also known as the annual review of units and courses, for all taught courses of study leading to an award of the University of Bath, including Professional Doctorates. This QA statement also applies to courses involving collaborative provision and student exchange (see [QA20 Collaborative Provision](#) and [QA37 Student Exchange Arrangements](#)).
- 1.2 For the annual review of research degree provision, see [QA7 Research Degrees](#).
- 1.3 For the quarterly and annual monitoring of degree apprenticeship provision, see [QA51\(A\)](#).
- 1.4 Annual review is a key component of the University's mechanisms for managing quality and standards. It draws upon the related processes of external examining ([QA12 External Examining \(Taught Provision\)](#)), input from Staff/Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) ([QA48](#)), as well as the views of professional or regulatory accrediting bodies ([QA8](#)). Annual review of courses feeds into the periodic review of courses, forming part of the evidence base for periodic review ([QA13 Degree Scheme Review](#)).

2. Principles

- 2.1 The University is committed to the regular review of its units and courses to:
- maintain the quality and validity of units and courses
 - 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 review and enhancement of units and courses is iterative and happens through a range of informal and formal mechanisms. Annual review provides Departments/School/the Learning Partnerships Office (LPO) with a defined opportunity to take a holistic view of both the unit/course(s) and the environment in which learning and teaching occurs, drawing together evidence and observations from a range of internal and external sources, to identify actions to be taken and report on progress being made as required.
- 2.3 Annual review is an academic process underpinned by peer review and informed student involvement. The review of units and courses is risk-focused and aligned with the [University's Strategy](#).
- 2.4 Education, Quality and Standards Committee (EQSC) is responsible for reviewing 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. University Doctoral Studies Committee (UDSC) is responsible for doctoral provision, including professional doctorate courses.

3. Annual review of units

- 3.1 The purpose of annual review of units is to maintain and enhance the quality of units. Annual review encompasses two elements:
- reviewing 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 review.
- 3.2 Heads of Departments have overall responsibility for ensuring that unit review takes place and that any actions are completed. The Director of Teaching, supported by the Director of Studies (Taught Provision or Doctoral, as appropriate) is responsible for ensuring that annual review is undertaken for each unit for which the Department/School is responsible.
- 3.3 Unit convenors should undertake the review 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 review 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), or for professional doctorates Faculty/School Doctoral Studies Committee (F/SDSC), to decide how the outcomes of this review 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 course/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 course, if applicable. A template (QA51 form 4) is available for this purpose, upon request from Academic Registry 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 (or unit occurrence)
- 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 review and enhancement will necessarily be undertaken in stages aligned with the cycles in which the unit is offered. However, the formal review of units and recording of that review 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 reviewing. 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 review. 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 six 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](#)
- [Professional doctorate units](#)

3.8 Unit convenors (in association with Directors of Studies for Professional Doctorate courses) 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 for an undergraduate or postgraduate taught course. The decision rests with D/SLTQCs or F/SDSC as to who has responsibility for selecting discretionary questions and on what basis. Advice and support for using the unit evaluation tool includes the [unit evaluation web page and a User Guide](#). The Student Engagement Team, Centre for Learning & Teaching (CLT) provides advice and support for staff on online unit evaluation.

3.9 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 Teaching, supported by the Director of Studies (Taught Provision or Doctoral, as appropriate) 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 EQSC and Senate, the following measures are mandatory (with the exception of point (i)):

- (i) Unit convenors are strongly encouraged to undertake an **informal** mid-delivery evaluation of the unit (anonymously, where possible). Unit convenors may find it helpful to use tools such as an [electronic voting system](#) for this purpose. **The University's online unit evaluation tool should not be used for mid-delivery evaluation of single semester units, however for units which are longer in duration than a standard single semester, evaluations can run twice following a written email request to colleagues in DDaT via it-samis@bath.ac.uk.** 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). Advice and support for using the unit evaluation tool includes the [unit evaluation web page and a User Guide](#).

Annually, each September, the Student Engagement Team recommends the open and close dates to the PVC (Education). 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. Unit convenors seeking to run evaluations outside the standard timeline above should seek advice and gain approval from the Student Engagement Team. The evaluation of placement units, study abroad units, professional doctorate units and distance learning units should take place at a time deemed appropriate by the unit convenor.

- (ii) Students should be encouraged to complete the survey using a mobile device during the final lecture of the unit, where possible.
- (iii) 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, Form 10 for combined placement and study abroad units and Form 11 for professional doctorate 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.
- (iv) 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: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/unit-evaluation-feedback/>. The repository should be clearly signposted from relevant Department and individual unit Moodle pages.

- (v) Following posting of unit evaluation reports on Moodle a summary report should be submitted to the appropriate SSLC for discussion.
 - (vi) All Unit evaluation results are available via the [University's Business Intelligence Portal](#) for senior colleague including Directors of Studies and Teaching.
- 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 several 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), or at an appropriate point where the unit is not delivered within a set semester. Academic staff are encouraged to report any offensive or discriminatory comments to their Head of Department.
- 3.15 D/SLTQCs and F/SDSCs 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 review of courses

- 4.1 Directors of Studies are expected to review their courses on an annual basis. The purpose of annual course review is to maintain and enhance the quality of courses, by undertaking a holistic appraisal of the course based on key indicators and the outcome of unit review. Annual course review 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 course (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). For the approval of course changes made after EARE see QA4.
- 4.2 Heads of Departments have overall responsibility for ensuring that course review takes place and that resulting actions are completed. Associate Deans (Education) are responsible for maintaining an oversight of the performance of courses in their Faculty/School.
- 4.3 The outcome of annual course review is reported via a department report. Reporting at course level is risk-based. There is no requirement to produce individual course reports unless requested by the Associate Dean (Education) or Head of the Learning Partnerships Office. Templates for course reporting are provided upon request from

academicstandards@bath.ac.uk for - QA51 Form 1 (undergraduate), Form 2 (postgraduate), Form 3 (collaborative provision).

- 4.4 For Degree Apprenticeships the quarterly and annual monitoring process set out in [QA51\(A\)](#) must be followed.
- 4.5 Heads of Departments will produce an annual department EARE report evaluating their department's performance in education. EQSC will agree the format and key themes for the report each year. Reports will be based on core indicators including student surveys, external examiner reports, recruitment and admissions, progression, degree outcomes, graduate outcomes. Reports should normally be considered at DLTQC and SSLCs. The report will be submitted to the Faculty/School LTQC. F/SLTQC will submit department reports for consideration at February EQSC.
- 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 review is available from Academic Registry and the CLT as appropriate. The Department of Planning, Performance and Strategic Change will support the analysis and presentation of data.
- 4.7 A significant element of annual review of courses 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 course of study, including from SSLCs. 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 course-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), and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES).
- 4.9 Open comments from student surveys are *normally* shared with students or the Students' Union, the exception being Unit Evaluations. In OUEs, where there are open comments which it would be useful to share (e.g., if several useful suggestions have been made on the same theme), the Director of Teaching is responsible for removing any inappropriate comments and any information that would allow an individual to be identified.

5. [Scrutiny of EARE reports](#)

- 5.1 The F/SLTQC is responsible for considering the department EARE report (and evidence base) in detail and assuring itself that:
- key risks have been identified
 - good practice identified is shared across the Faculty/School/LPO
 - the action plan is appropriate
 - actions from previous reports have been followed up
 - any Faculty/School-level issues are addressed
- 5.2 EQSC will consider the department EARE reports and:

- identify areas of risk or good practice
- 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

5.3 In accordance with [QA20 Collaborative Provision](#), EQSC will monitor new collaborative arrangements through the receipt of annual review reports after the first year of a collaborative course. Academic Registry produces an annual report for EQSC summarising issues arising from the review and monitoring of collaborative provision.

Statement Details																	
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Antecedents:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Education, Quality and Standards Committee</td> <td> 21 January 2022, Minute 166 15 March 2022, Draft Minute 180 19 October 2023, Minute TBC </td> </tr> <tr> <td>University Learning Teaching and Quality Committee</td> <td> 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 16 July 2019 Minute 1197 14 Nov 2019 Minute 1269 </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senate</td> <td> 11th December 1991 Minute 8666 14th June 2006, Minute 12387 2 February 2022, Minute TBC </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quality Assurance Committee</td> <td> 15th November 1999, Minute 139b 8th May 2000, Minute 166 5th June 2006, Minute 623 (1) 1st July 2008, Minute 857 (5) (8). 3rd July 2009, Minute 976 (7) 13th July 2010, Minute 1098 (8) </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Academic Studies Committee</td> <td> 19th May 1992, Minute 50 23rd June 1992, Minute 62 5th November 1992, Minute 75(iii) 3rd December 1992, Minute 94 11th February 1993, Minute 103 </td> </tr> <tr> <td>QA27 Undergraduate Retention Rates</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>QA36 Quality Management in Teaching - Student Feedback and Evaluation of Programmes</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Report of the Teaching Efficiencies Working Group</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Education, Quality and Standards Committee	21 January 2022, Minute 166 15 March 2022, Draft Minute 180 19 October 2023, Minute TBC	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 16 July 2019 Minute 1197 14 Nov 2019 Minute 1269	Senate	11 th December 1991 Minute 8666 14 th June 2006, Minute 12387 2 February 2022, Minute TBC	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	
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