PERIODIC REVIEW OF SUBJECT AREAS

GUIDELINES

2023-24

1.   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of internal periodic review (IPR) is to monitor the quality and standards of all the undergraduate and modular postgraduate programmes and awards offered by each level 1 department or school and to confirm revalidation of all such provision and to assess provision against the Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration. It covers:

- clinical and non-clinical undergraduate provision,
- postgraduate modular programmes and awards offered by departments and schools, including MRes programmes,
- online programmes delivered in partnership with Kaplan Open Learning,
- programmes delivered at the Truman Bodden Law School (TBLS),
- all accredited CPD and Continuing Education provision

Each department, level 1 school, or subject/discipline should undergo periodic review normally every six years and, where possible, reviews will be scheduled to take account of accreditation events or visits by professional or regulatory bodies (PSRBs).

The process is intended to enable subject areas to reflect on enhancement of their provision, their performance in relation to the student experience and student achievement, and issues identified through the annual subject action plan process.

1.1   Principles of periodic review

a)   **The process is inclusive of students and is student-focused.** All students, including those on the online programmes and those at other campuses, are expected to have the opportunity to play a key role in the preparation for a periodic review of their subject area. They should be engaged in the development of the Self Evaluation Document (SED) and have the opportunity to comment on it; students will be invited to participate in the periodic review meetings. Students should also be consulted on the action plan drawn up in response to the outcome of their periodic review. The timing of the stages of the review should therefore respect the constraints, such as exams and vacation periods, on student availability for contributing to the documentation and for attending the review meetings and follow-up meetings.

b)   **Periodic review is the vehicle for the formal revalidation of all programmes offered in the subject area.** There will be an emphasis on the scrutiny of the programme specifications and their alignment with the Liverpool Curriculum Framework, the FHEQ and subject benchmark statements, to enable the

IPR Panel to approve the revalidation of the taught provision up to the date of the next IPR or an applicable University Approval Panel.

c) **Periodic review enables the University to assure itself that the OfS Conditions of Registration continue to be met;** specifically in respect of the following:

- The academic experience (Condition B1)[1];
- Resources, student support, and student engagement (Condition B2)[2];
- Student outcomes (Condition B3)[3];
- Assessment (Condition B4)[4]; and
- Standards (Condition B5)[5].

d) **Periodic review is a constructive process to promote enhancement and identify and disseminate good and/or effective practice.** The periodic review process should facilitate constructive discussion and reflection that will raise awareness of successes and identify areas for enhancement and development: the process thus enables the sharing of good practice and experience across the University.

e) **External input is integral to the periodic review process.** An essential aspect of the periodic review process is the role of externals, namely one or more subject experts from another UK higher education institution who is a member of the review Panel, and the consideration and review of reports from external examiners and any professional bodies, where the latter are relevant.

f) **Periodic review makes effective use of management data to gain an institutional understanding of performance.** The periodic review process enables the University to gain a sound knowledge and awareness of how it is performing in each subject area, and equally important, the process ensures that appropriate action plans and responses are developed to address issues highlighted and that these are communicated to staff and students.

2. THE PERIODIC REVIEW PROCESS

2.1 The Level for Conducting Periodic Reviews

Generally, periodic reviews will be conducted at departmental level (level 1); this is to ensure that all programmes in a cognate discipline or subject area are covered in the same review, and Appendix 1 shows the level at which periodic review would be undertaken according to the current structure within each Faculty. However, it is recognised that in some areas it may be more appropriate to conduct periodic reviews against a different structure to that represented by the departments and schools. Where this is required, negotiations should be held between AQSD and the representatives from the relevant areas to agree the best way to organise the structure for periodic review, ensuring that all provision will be covered by a review. The PVC for Education will be responsible for giving final approval on the proposed structure for review resulting from the negotiations.

2.2 The Periodic Review Panel

The periodic review of an area will be undertaken by a Panel which should be constituted as follows:

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[1] See note 1 for details of B1.
[2] See note 2 for details of B2.
[3] See note 3 for details of B3.
[4] See note 4 for details of B4.
[5] See note 5 for details of B5.

Chair	Faculty APVC for Education or their nominated Deputy
A member of academic staff from another school within the same Faculty	For the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Science and Engineering, this means a member of academic staff from one of the other level 2 schools in the Faculty, but not from the same school within which the area under review is located. For the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, this means selecting a member of academic staff from another level 1 school or department in the Faculty, but not from the same Institute within which the area under review is located.
A Representative from the Faculty Academic Quality and Standards Committee or the Faculty Education Committee, or in Humanities and Social Sciences from the Faculty Education, Enhancement and Assurance Committee	This should not be someone who is from the area under review. If it proves impossible to select a representative from outside the area of review, then a suitable alternative should be proposed for approval by the APVC (Education).
A member of academic staff from a different Faculty in the University	
A Sabbatical Officer of the Liverpool Guild of Students	
A member of academic staff with relevant subject expertise from another UK higher education institute	Where the area under review covers more than one subject or discipline, it may be necessary to have more than one external subject expert on the Panel. Each external subject expert should be completely independent of the review area, having had no involvement within the previous three years with the department/school. Where the provision covers a range of programmes within the same subject area such that one external expert could not reasonably be expected to consider all the programmes then a second external subject expert could be appointed and this could be an existing external examiner. The selection of external subject experts will be subject to approval by the Chair of the Panel.
A representative from Professional Services	This could be someone from central Professional Services or from within the Faculty; if the latter, the person should not be a member of the level 2 team for the level 1 review area
A representative from the Centre for Innovation in Education	

To support the process:

A professional services manager/officer from the Faculty will be appointed as Secretary to the Panel, to provide administrative support for the review process and to prepare the papers for meetings.

A representative from AQSD will be appointed as the <u>Minute Secretary</u> to take minutes of the meetings and to draft a report of the review, to be agreed by the Chair and the review Panel; they will also provide advice, guidance and support during the planning, preparation and conduct of the review. The representative will attend all review meetings including private meetings of the review Panel.

Examples of how the review Panels would be constituted are shown in <u>Appendix 2</u> to this guidance.

It is the responsibility of the Faculty Director of Operations to establish and confirm the membership of each review Panel.

2.3   Summary of the Process

The review process will be conducted through online meetings over a number of days within a defined period (not normally exceeding seven working days). The meetings will be held through Zoom or Teams. The Panel Secretary is responsible for arranging the meetings, in consultation with the Panel Chair, and in sending out the diary invitations and the relevant links. The Panel Chair and Secretary, in consultation with the relevant level 1 area, may arrange for some meetings to be conducted on-campus, or through a hybrid format. See section 3 below.

The review will be held in two stages. One focuses on the general provision and the student experience, as reflected in the SED, relevant data, and the feedback from students. The other stage is programme revalidation. All current programme/subject component specifications should be submitted to enable the review Panel to re-confirm the academic standards of the programmes, to affirm that the current programmes align with the Liverpool Curriculum Framework, remain up to date with developments in the sector and remain fit for purpose, and to formally revalidate the programmes.

For each programme covered by the review, the outcome of the review should confirm one of the following:

a)   that the programme is **revalidated**; or

b)   that the programme is revalidated and there are some **recommendations** for review and/or modification (these will be for the programme team to consider, but it will not be mandatory that the recommendations are adopted); or

c)   that the programme is revalidated **subject to conditions** that must be met; or

d)   that the programme is **not validated** and should be withdrawn. This would only be agreed by the Panel where there was clear evidence that the programme was not fit for purpose and should not continue to recruit; this decision would include a requirement to establish robust provision for teaching out existing students. In these circumstances the relevant SSP should report its support for or against the withdrawal of the programme to the relevant Faculty Academic Quality and Standards Committee (FAQSC/FEEAC). The FAQSC/FEEAC will then make a recommendation to the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) which will make the final decision to approve the programme withdrawal and the teach-out arrangements.

2.4   Preparing for the review

All programmes within the level 1 area should have been evaluated for alignment with Liverpool Curriculum Framework, using the Liverpool Curriculum Framework Programme Level Self Evaluation Questionnaire and Self-Assessment Rubric (PSEQ), to indicate the extent to which the programmes currently reflect the Liverpool

Curriculum hallmarks and graduate attributes and any further enhancements that could be made to the programmes. These planned enhancements should be recorded in Appendix 15 of the level 1 periodic review documentation. [The PSEQ has been designed by the Centre for Innovation in Education (CIE); CIE staff can provide advice and support in its use and interpretation.]

The level 1 area should outline any additional proposed changes to existing programmes using the template at Appendix 15. These proposals will be considered at the IPR by the Panel. Proposed changes will therefore be considered by default as programme revalidations without the need for the level 1 area to submit separate DEPP forms in advance to the FAQSC/FEEAC Panel. Endorsement by the relevant Curriculum Board(s) and the SSP in preparation for the IPR event is optional and would not require external review but should be reported to the IPR Panel. The external Panel member(s) will act as the external programme reviewer(s) for the revalidation of the programmes.

In the event that programmes have been subject to revalidation at a UAP in 2023-24 prior to the IPR event, then the relevant DEPP forms and the UAP Report of Decisions should be included in the IPR documentation with the revised programme specifications.

To prepare for the review the level 1 area will also analyse data including NSS results, the OfS student outcomes data dashboard, student evaluations of their modules and programmes, external examiners' reports, professional or regulatory body reports if relevant, data on admissions, retention, student progression and achievement, TEF metrics and split metrics, complaints, appeals and disciplinary actions, graduate employment, widening participation, and equality and diversity (see also section 5.3 below).

The review area then prepares a Self-Evaluation Document, which students from the review area are invited to contribute to and provide a brief commentary on the final draft. The SED and the Student Commentary are used by the Panel to structure the discussions it will have with the review area staff and with students on the programmes.

Review areas may decide to offer incentives to students who participate in or contribute to the periodic review process; this should be decided and paid for at the local level. Guidance on possible incentive methods are contained in Appendix 14

Other documentation will be available to the Panel including plans for enhancement of the academic provision resulting from the PSEQ exercise, a full set of programme/subject component specifications, annual subject action plans, student handbooks, minutes of Staff-Student Liaison Committees (SSLC) and student engagement focus groups, etc. Having surveyed the documentation, the review Panel will meet with various staff and with students over the review period.

2.5   After the review

The Minute Secretary will produce a report on the findings of the Panel. The report will then be presented to the Head of the review area so that an action plan can be drawn up. The report and action plan will be considered by students either at the relevant SSLC(s) or through other means of consultation and then progressed to the relevant Faculty and University committees for approval. The Head of the review area will produce a progress report on the action plan for submission to Faculty and University Committees six months later. Actions from the review plan may also feed into the annual subject action planning process as appropriate.

3.   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **review area School Director of Operations[6]:** coordinates the activity of the professional support staff in preparing for and supporting the review process

The **review area professional support staff**:
- collate the data sets required to inform the production of the SED
- collate the additional background reports, sets of minutes and programme documentation for the Panel, e.g. in SharePoint
- recruit, with the aid of the Faculty Student Voice Coordinator, the student representatives who will contribute to the writing of the SED and those who will write the commentary on the SED, and make the SED available to the students
- identify a representative sample of students from all programmes and groups of students, contact those students selected to meet the Panel and ensure the students are invited to the appropriate meetings
- confirm with the Panel Secretary the list of student attendees, their programme and year of study
- arrange briefing sessions for review area staff or students by AQSD, as required
- ensure the SED and the students' commentary, together with other relevant documentation are available to the Panel e.g. in Sharepoint
- attend online meetings during and after the event as requested by the Head of the review area

The **review area academic staff**:
- review the current programmes in the context of the Liverpool Curriculum Framework and complete the PSEQ exercise
- make any subsequent proposals for changes to the existing programmes/subject components for consideration by the review Panel
- review and analyse the data sets
- assist the Head of the review area in the production of the SED prior to the event
- assist the Head of the review area in the production of the action plan after the event
- attend meetings during and after the event as directed by the Head of the review area

The **Head of the review area** is responsible for:
- ensuring that the PSEQ has been completed for all programmes within the level 1 department/school
- ensuring that the data to underpin the self-evaluation document and the review process has been provided by the professional support staff
- ensuring that an effective plan is developed and implemented to explain the review process to as many students as possible, inclusive of the diversity of protected characteristics, and that there is active engagement with the students during the process, for example through existing student forums, focus groups and special events. The Faculty Student Voice Coordinator should be consulted on the plan.
- ensuring the completion of the self-evaluation document in consultation with academic colleagues and students
- proposing the potential candidate(s) for the external reviewer(s) and verifying their availability for the proposed review dates
- submitting the nominations for the external reviewer(s) to AQSD for checking against the appointment criteria
- selecting the staff to attend the meetings with the Panel
- the production of the action plan in consultation with academic colleagues and students

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[6] This term includes Heads of Operations in the Institutes in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

- ensuring that the action plan on the review report is ready for submission by the Chair of the Panel to the relevant Faculty Academic Standards Committee/ Faculty Education, Enhancement and Assurance Committee within the period allowed
- ensuring that any conditions of programme revalidation are met by the required dates and submitted to AQSD
- reporting progress on the Action Plan as required by AQSC.

The **Faculty Director of Operations** is responsible for:
- ensuring that all those involved in the review in the Faculty are meeting their obligations and responsibilities
- resolving issues that may arise in the Faculty's preparation for and follow-up of periodic reviews
- liaising with the review area to identify a potential date for the periodic review, in accordance with the agreed schedule and in recognition of the constraints on students' availability imposed by term dates and the dates of examination periods
- liaising with the review area to agree the number of external Panel members required and to agree potential candidates
- appointing the Panel Secretary
- ensuring that the external reviewer has been invited to take part in the review by the Chair of the Panel
- liaising with the Chair of the review Panel to identify potential Panel members and subsequently confirming the Panel membership and the dates of the review with AQSD

The **Chair of the Periodic Review Panel** is responsible for:
- liaising with the Head of the review area to identify the Panel members and to agree any proposed themes to explore good practice
- once agreed with the Faculty Director of Operations, inviting the external reviewer(s) to take part in the event
- organising the event in accordance with these guidelines and for managing the work of the review team by assigning aspects of the review area's provision to Panel members
- approving requests from the Panel for additional documentation
- chairing the preliminary meeting with the Head of the review area, approximately one week before the first review meeting
- co-ordinating the Panel members' contributions to the Periodic Review Report and approving the final draft on behalf of the Panel
- ensuring that all meetings in the review are conducted in a professional, constructive and supportive manner
- chairing any private Panel meetings held during the review event
- chairing the post-review meeting to discuss the programme revalidation approvals, the review report and action plan
- submitting the review report and action plan to the relevant Faculty Academic Standards Committee/ Faculty Education, Enhancement and Assurance Committee within the period allowed
- the final sign-off of changes to programmes where conditions of approval have been imposed

The **Secretary to the Review Panel** is responsible for:
- checking the documentation and the schedule for the review with AQSD prior to dispatch to the Panel members
- issuing Zoom or Teams invitations to the Panel members, and staff and students as appropriate, for the online meetings
- liaising with the review area in respect of arrangements for any on-campus or hybrid meetings that are agreed

- receiving requests from the Panel for additional documentation, securing the Chair's approval for the additional documentation, and liaising with relevant professional services to receive and distribute the documentation
- arranging any pre- and post- review meetings between the Chair of the Panel, the Head of the review area and AQSD as required
- arranging any briefing sessions for Panel members by AQSD
- liaising with AQSD as necessary
- supporting the Chair in his/her role and ensuring that all preparations are timely. The Panel Secretary is not required to attend the meetings during the review event other than the private meetings of the Panel if requested to do so by the Chair.

The **Panel members are responsible for:**
- scrutinising all the documentation received, in particular the programme/subject component specifications and documentation relating to the aspects of provision allocated to them for the review
- sending any requests for additional information to the Secretary to the Panel to forward to the Chair
- sending preliminary comments on the review documentation to the Minute Secretary five working days before the event
- contributing to the agenda settings for the meetings and to the discussions during the review
- chairing or co-chairing one of the meetings as directed by the Panel Chair, taking the lead in asking questions and providing any summary notes to the Minute Secretary for incorporation into the final Review Report. It is normal practice for the Guild Representative to chair the meeting with the students.
- commenting specifically on the level of student engagement in the review process based on the evidence provided in the supporting documentation and on the students' attendance and contribution to the meeting during the review event
- the external reviewer is responsible for confirming the standards of the provision under review and its relationship to the relevant Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

The **students from the review area** have the opportunity to participate in the review by:
- helping to identify the issues that should be addressed in the SED
- contributing to the production of the SED
- commenting on the final version of the SED
- attending the meeting with the review Panel
- contributing to the action plan and commenting on the final version of the action plan through their SSLC

The **Faculty Student Voice Coordinator**:
- supports the review area professional support staff in the active recruitment of students for the different stages of the periodic review process
- liaises with the Head of the review area to support the development and implementation of the plan for communicating and engaging with students in relation to the periodic review process. Note: the Head of the review area has primary responsibility for the plan and its implementation.
- coordinates the AQSD briefing sessions for student participants
- liaises between the students and the review area as appropriate
- supports the student participants in the production of the Student Commentary on the SED

The **representative from the Centre for Innovation in Education**:
- supports the Panel by providing general advice on curriculum design
- advises the Panel on the programmes' alignment with the Liverpool Curriculum

AQSD supports the review by:
- offering briefing sessions with the following groups to explain the periodic review process and to answer any questions
  - the Chair and Secretary
  - the Panel members
  - staff from the academic area under review
  - the students from the review area
- liaising with the Chair, the Panel Secretary and the review area to ensure that appropriate preparations are being made for the review and to advise as necessary
- requesting initial comments on the programme specifications and the SED from the Panel Members, such that they are received approximately five working days before the event and collating these for the Chair
- maintaining notes of each of the review meetings such that summaries can be provided, if requested by the Chair, at the start or end of sessions
- drafting a report on the review for approval by the Chair and review Panel members
- arranging for the final sign-off of the programme revalidations by the Panel Chair and reporting as appropriate to all stakeholders and AQSC

4. PERIODIC REVIEW DOCUMENTATION

4.1 The Curriculum Documentation

A report outlining the proposed changes to the programmes and the reasons for them should be produced. A template for this is provided at Appendix 15. This will be used with the programme/subject component specifications by the review Panel to determine programme revalidations. In the event that programmes have been subject to revalidation at a UAP in 2022-23 prior to the IPR event, then the relevant DEPP forms and the UAP Report of Decisions should also be included in the IPR documentation with the revised programme specifications.

4.2 The Self Evaluation Document (SED)

A template for the SED is at Appendix 6. The SED should be an evaluative and reflective document which explores the review area's strengths and weaknesses in respect of:

a)   the proposed curriculum (including alignment to the Liverpool Curriculum Framework hallmarks and attributes);

b)   the learning environment and support for students; and

c)   staff resources and development.

These should be explored in respect of all the review area's programmes, including on-line provision, and provision at the Truman Bodden Law School (TBLS), for which the review area is responsible. The on-line and off-campus cohorts should be considered both discretely and in comparison to their Liverpool counterparts.

4.3 Supporting Documentation for Periodic Review

In addition to the SED other supporting documentation that should be available for the review Panel includes:

a)   The plan for communicating and engaging with students in the review process (see Appendix 14)

b)   Copies of the current programme specifications for all the programmes under review (including on-line programmes delivered in partnership with Kaplan Open Learning and programmes delivered at TBLS, where applicable)

c)   Copies of the proposed new programme specifications for programmes subject to changes which are to be approved by the IPR Panel

d)   A summary of the proposed programme changes, including alignment with the Liverpool Curriculum Framework (Appendix 15)

e)   Records of any relevant design workshops held to support the proposed curriculum changes

f)   The appropriate QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) (available from the QAA website)

g)   The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (available from the QAA website)

h)   Student handbooks

i)   Departmental guidance documents for staff

j)   Diagram of the committee structure in the review area

k)   Staff list and profile (summarising main teaching/research interests and administrative responsibilities)

l)   A summary of staff development activities undertaken over the last three years

m)   The peer review of teaching schedule for the subject area for the last three years with an anonymised overview of generic outcomes

n)   NSS results and the review area's responses to them

o)   Student evaluations of their modules and programmes and the review area's responses to them

p)   External examiners' reports and responses to them for each programme for the last three years

q)   Professional or Regulatory body reports if relevant

r)   The data set used to inform the SED:
   - admissions
   - retention
   - student progression and achievement,
   - OfS student outcomes data dashboard
   - TEF metrics and split metrics
   - formal complaints, appeals and disciplinary cases for the last three years (this information can be obtained from the Student Conduct, Complaints and Compliance Team in SAS)
   - graduate employment
   - widening participation
   - equality and diversity

s)   The Annual Subject Action Plans from the last three years

t)   Minutes of the Staff/Student Liaison Committee from the current and previous academic sessions

u)   Any relevant reports or minutes from Curriculum Boards or School Scrutiny Panels

v)   As required, a video with commentary for any subject area issues or special features relating to physical space or infrastructure

5.   Preparation for Periodic Review: Key Dates

Ideally the preparations should follow these key dates.

Date	Action	Responsibility
Advance planning **15 months in advance of the IPR event.**	Negotiation of the level of review, where this is requested	**Dean of Level 2 School/Institute** for initiating the request, negotiations to be held between representatives from the School and AQSD with Faculty and the Level 1 area as appropriate
	Potential dates for the review identified	**Faculty Director of Operations** with review area
	Potential external Panel member(s) identified and their availability checked	**Faculty Director of Operations** with **Head of review area** (and Chair of Panel if more than one external reviewer needs to be appointed)
	Appoint Chair and Secretary for the review	**Faculty Director of Operations**
	Briefing of Chair and Secretary if required	**AQSD** with Chair of Panel and Secretary
	Confirm dates of review with AQSD	**Faculty Director of Operations**
	Commence review of existing curriculum against the Liverpool Curriculum Framework	**Head of review area** with programme teams and CIE as appropriate
	Commence collation of data sets to support the SED and the review • NSS results / student evaluations; • Intake standards, conversion rates on applications, data on clearing etc.; • Student numbers; • Progression data including retention rates, final degree results;	**School Director of Operations** with relevant professional services departments and **Head of review area**

Date	Action	Responsibility
	- TEF metrics and split metrics - Employment data; - Widening participation/diversity and equality data; - External Examiner reports from the previous three years; - SSLC minutes from the current and previous academic session - Annual subject action plans - Programme specifications and information on recent modifications, new programmes and programme suspensions and withdrawals - Feedback from alumni and/or employers; **but only** where this is applicable and available	
	Draft a plan for engaging students in preparation for the review (e.g. drafting or reviewing the SED), participation during the review and giving feedback to students during and after the review, setting this in the context of the timing and schedule for the review. This should include ways to involve and include Combined Degree students studying a 25% or 50% subject component from the review area. Guidance on this is at Appendix 14	**Review area** with Faculty Student Voice Coordinator
12 months before the review	Complete the review of the existing provision against the Liverpool Curriculum Framework (PSEQ) and identify enhancement activities/ curriculum changes	**Programme teams** with CIE support as required
Three–six months before the review	Agree and implement the student communication and engagement plan. Guidance on this is at Appendix 14	**Head of review area** in liaison with the Faculty Student Voice Coordinator
	Make data sets available to the review area team to inform the preparation of the SED	**School Director of Operations** with relevant professional services departments

Date	Action	Responsibility
	Identify potential candidates for the remaining Panel membership. AQSD should be advised if any of the Panel members being considered have training requirements for periodic review	The **Faculty Director of Operations**, in liaison with the **Chair of the Panel**
	Briefing of review area academic staff by AQSD	**AQSD** with Head of review area
	Briefing of students from the review area. If this includes students from TBLS or the online programmes an online briefing session may be arranged	**AQSD** with **Faculty Student Voice Coordinator** (with the assistance of the review area for students on online programmes)
Three months before the review	Make arrangements for any design workshops and commence discussions on proposals for changes to the programme specifications to be considered by the IPR Panel	**Review area programme leaders**
	Invite the proposed external reviewer(s) to take part in the periodic review, if this has not already been done. A suggested letter is set out in Appendix 3	**Chair of the Panel**
	Completed SED made available to the students, including students at TBLS and on the online programmes where relevant, for commentary (template available at Appendix 6)	**Review area** with Faculty Student Voice Coordinator
Two months before the review	Confirmation of the full membership of the review Panel with the Chair, the review area and AQSD	**Faculty Director of Operations**
	Students invited to attend the student meeting.	**Review area** and relevant professional support services staff
One-two months before the review	Supply list of students to Chair and Secretary to the Panel Confirmation to Chair and Secretary that the students attending the meetings are	**Review area** and relevant professional support services staff **Review area** and relevant professional support services staff

Date	Action	Responsibility
	representative of all the programmes and all the students (as outlined in 6.3 below)	
	Ensure Appendix 15 is completed to outline the approvals being sought at the IPR for any programme changes	**Review area programme leaders**
One month before the review	Upload the SED and the students' commentary, together with other relevant documentation and statistics (see below) to Sharepoint and notify the Chair of the Panel that this has been done	**Review area with Secretary to the Panel**
	Check the documentation with AQSD before giving the Panel members access to the Sharepoint site at least three weeks before the review	**Secretary to the Panel**
	Assign responsibility for scrutiny of one or two aspects of provision to each Panel member	**Chair of the Panel**
	Liaise with the review area to agree the timetable of meetings for the review. This should include arrangements for TBLS and online student representatives, as applicable, to participate in the student meeting(s).	**Chair of the Panel** with review area
	Circulate the draft timetable, the SED, the student commentary on the SED and other associated documentation to the Panel	**Secretary to the Panel**
	Forward any specific requests for further information, to the Chair of the Panel.	**Panel members**
	Scrutinise the programme specifications, DEPPs and Appendix 15 as directed by the Chair of the Panel	**Panel members**
Two weeks before the review	Preliminary meeting to finalise the arrangements for the review. An agenda for this meeting is available at Appendix 4	**Chair of Panel** with Head of review area, Secretary to the Panel and AQSO

Date	Action	Responsibility
	Initial comments on the SED from the Panel members sent to the Minute Secretary for collation for the Chair of the review	**Minute Secretary**
At least one week before the review	Collated comments sent to the Chair	**Minute Secretary**

Throughout the preparations the representative from **AQSD** should liaise closely with the Chair, Secretary to the Panel and the review area to ensure appropriate preparations are being made for the review and to advise as necessary.

A flow chart to show activity to prepare for periodic review is at Appendix 5 to these guidelines.

6   THE PERIODIC REVIEW EVENT

The periodic review meetings should take place over a defined period of no more than seven working days. The first stage of the review, should be allocated to meeting with the students and the review area staff and the latter stage of the review devoted to programme revalidation. The meetings with staff and students should not last more than 2.5 hours and the aim should be for any private meetings of the Panel to last no more than 1 hour.

6.1   Normal sequence of meetings

a)   Private meeting of Panel Members and the Minute Secretary to agree:
(i)   the issues to be explored in the first stage of the review
(ii)   who will chair/co-chair the meetings
(iii)   the allocation of the detailed scrutiny of the programme specifications and revalidation documentation to members for the second stage of the review

b)   Meeting with students from the review area. If students from the online programmes delivered with Kaplan Open Learning (KOL) or students from TBLS, are included in the review a separate meeting may be needed.

c)   Private meeting of the Panel to summarise student issues and identification of good practice to be pursued in the meeting with staff

d)   Meeting with academic and professional support staff

e)   Private meeting of Panel to summarise issues/good practice to be included in the review report

f)   Meeting with the academic staff for formal programme revalidation. This should operate in a similar fashion to the UAP meetings, with nominated members of the Panel taking responsibility for the scrutiny of particular programmes or groups of programmes. A checklist for Panel members for revalidation of programmes is provided in Appendix 9

g)   Private meeting of Panel to confirm conditions of programme revalidation

6.2 Suggestions for scheduling and conducting online meetings

Below is a **suggested** schedule for the meetings that are planned over a seven-day period; areas are free to have a different schedule, planned over fewer days:

Day 1 – private Panel meeting (mtg 1) and meeting with the students (mtg 2)

Day 2 – private Panel meeting (mtg 3) and meeting with academic and professional support staff (mtg 4)

Day 3 – private Panel meeting (mtg 5)

Day 4 – no meetings, Panel members prepare for the programme revalidation

Day 5 – meeting with academic staff for programme revalidation (mtg 6.1)

Day 6 – a further meeting with academic staff for programme revalidation (mtg 6.2)*

Day 7 – private meeting of the Panel (mtg 7)

* Two meetings for the revalidation of programmes are shown in the above schedule, this might be needed where there are a large number of programmes owned by the department.

Below are some protocols to be considered for conducting online meetings:

a)   The Microsoft Team or Zoom platforms should be used for the online meetings. It is suggested that Microsoft Teams might be the preferably because, for example, documents can be more easily accessed and shared using Microsoft SharePoint.

b)   Agree how introductions will be done at each meeting, e.g. the chair of the Panel or the lead for the meeting can use the list of Panel members and attendees to ask each in turn to introduce themselves.

c)   Agree how/when to use the chat function and who is responsible for monitoring it, e.g. using the chat function might be a useful way to start off the meeting with students.

d)   Agreeing protocols for Panel members and attendees to indicate when they wish to speak.

e)   Agree on the best use of document sharing, how this will be managed and who will do it, e.g. this might be appropriate in programme revalidation when reviewing programme documentation.

f)   Ensure that meetings are set up to manage the entry of attendees to the online meeting room, e.g. to enable a 15-minute private Panel meeting scheduled prior to a meeting with staff from the department.

g)   If meetings are to be recorded, this should be stated at the start of the meeting and, if possible, include a statement that it will be recorded in the invitation sent to attendees.

h)   Agree back-up arrangements if Panel members or attendees lose connection during a meeting, e.g. a back-up to chair the meeting, or take notes etc.

6.3 The focus of the meeting with students

The meeting with students, including students from the online programmes delivered with KOL and students from TBLS, enables reviewers to establish student views on the issues being considered. These meetings

provide an opportunity not only to hear the direct views of those present, but also to establish more generally whether there are effective arrangements for student feedback and representation. The meeting should be chaired/co-chaired by the Student Guild representative.

The meeting(s) with students is (are) private, attended by students and the Panel members only; members of staff from the subject department/school under review must not be present. During the meeting, the review Panel will seek the views of students on all aspects of the review area's provision.

The level 1 department/school is responsible for inviting students to the meeting, and should ensure that there is representation from all years of all programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Undergraduate students from single honours, joint and combined honours (if any) programmes and students from joint, major and minor subject components in the Combined Degrees in the Faculty of HSS should be represented. Postgraduate taught students, including MRes and students from the online programmes, should be represented. Part-time students, mature students and international students should also be invited to participate if such groups are represented in the review area's student profile. Departments/schools should encourage as many students as possible to attend this meeting, beyond and in addition to Course Representatives and those who provided the Student Commentary.

An aide mémoire for this meeting is attached at Appendix 7.

6.4 The focus of the meetings with staff

The general meeting with staff from the review area enables the reviewers to explore issues raised in the SED or by the students or as evidenced in the supporting documentation in relation to the general student experience and development of staff. This may include the learning environment, responses to feedback from students or other stakeholders, support for students and support for staff in enhancing academic provision. Appropriate academic and professional support staff are selected by the Head of the review area.

An aide mémoire for this general meeting is attached at Appendix 8

The programme revalidation part of the procedures is based on scrutiny of the effectiveness of the content, design and organisation of the curricula in enabling the intended outcomes of programmes to be achieved. Specific issues that are likely to be pursued by reviewers include:
- academic and intellectual progression within the curriculum;
- appropriateness of content in relation to the level of the award;
- inclusion of recent developments in the subject;
- reflection of best practice in pedagogy.

The programmes should also be reviewed in the context of the aims of the Education Strategy 2016-26 and the Liverpool Curriculum Framework hallmarks and attributes. Programmes should be underpinned by the hallmarks of research-connected teaching, active learning and authentic assessment. Programmes should demonstrate how programme structure and activities are used to develop the graduate attributes of confidence, digital fluency and global citizenship. Programmes should provide an opportunity to apply knowledge in a real world setting in partnership with employers. There should be an opportunity to create knowledge in partnership with researchers. There should be an opportunity to consider knowledge in a global context in partnership with the University's international community.

Progress toward or achievement of one or more of these aims could inform enhancement developments for the review area's provision.

An aide mémoire for programme revalidation is attached at Appendix 9

7. AFTER THE PERIODIC REVIEW EVENT: KEY DATES

Date	Action	Responsibility
Within one week of the review event	Draft report on the review event and on the programme revalidations provided by the Minute Secretary to the Chair for initial comment.	**AQSO**
	Confirmation of the academic standards of the provision	**External Panel member(s)**
Within three weeks of the review event	A full report on the review and on the programme revalidation decisions should be produced and circulated to the Chair of the Panel and the Panel members for comment before it is finalised. The report should contain points for commendation, areas for development and any conditions of programme approval and the date(s) by which they must be met. The report should also include a recommendations section, in response to which the review area can produce an action plan. A template for the periodic review report is attached at Appendix 10 and a template for the action plan is attached at Appendix 11.	**AQSO**
Within four weeks of review event	Full Periodic Review and Programme Report made available to Head of review area to enable an action plan to be prepared. Review Report and proposed action plan discussed at SSLC or with a group of student representatives from the subject area, to allow students in the subject area to be consulted on the action plan prior to it being finalised. Review the student communication and engagement plan in light of the report and	**Chair of Panel and Head of review area**

Date	Action	Responsibility
	action plan to ensure effective methods are in place to provide feedback to students. See Appendix 14 for guidance.	
	Ensure that any conditions of programme revalidation have been met and submitted to AQSD for final sign-off by the Panel Chair	**Head of review area**
	Arrangement for the final sign-off of the programme revalidations by the Panel Chair and reporting to all stakeholders and AQSC	**AQSO**
Within six weeks of the review event	Final review report and action plan discussed at the post-IPR meeting chaired by the review Panel Chair and serviced by the Panel Secretary. Present at the meeting should be the relevant AQSO, Head of review area and other staff from review area and level 2 as appropriate to discuss the recommendations and the action plan. The purpose of the meeting is to enable any matters of relevance to level 2, the Faculty and the University to be elicited and progressed at the earliest opportunity. The meeting should result in agreed methods and responsibilities for providing feedback on the review and the action plan to relevant areas (both staff and students). The meeting should agree the date for submitting the report and action plan to the relevant FAQSC/FEEAC. This should be the FAQSC/FEEAC meeting closest to **8 weeks** after the review. The date for submitting the report and action plan to AQSC should also be agreed.	**Chair and Secretary of Panel with Head of review area**

Date	Action	Responsibility
	The meeting should also set the date for reporting progress on the action plan to the relevant FAQSC / FEEAC in approximately six months' time. If the committee dates have not been confirmed, an approximate date, i.e. month/year, should be agreed, based on the committee's schedule of meetings in previous years. Further to this, the date for submitting a report on progress to the University AQSC should be agreed, based on previous years' meeting dates if future dates are not confirmed. There should be sufficient time after the FAQSC/FEEAC meeting for feedback to the department and any required follow up and for FAQSC/FEEAC to report its decision to AQSC.	
6 months after the post-IPR meeting	The Faculty Management Group should confirm that actions for the School and/or Faculty have been addressed or responded to. A progress report should be submitted from the Head of the review area via the FAQSC/FEEAC to the University AQSC, which will approve the progress report, or approve the report subject to certain conditions or points for clarification, or request that a second progress report be submitted after a further six months (or such other timeframe as determined by AQSC). After the progress report has been considered by AQSC, feedback on the action plan should be provided to staff and students in accordance with agreed communication plans and methods. A template for the progress report is included in <u>Appendix 11</u> and guidance on	**Faculty Director of Operations** **Head of review area**

Date	Action	Responsibility
	communication and feedback is at Appendix 14.	

8. SCHEDULE OF PERIODIC REVIEWS

A schedule of periodic reviews for 2022-23 to 2025-26 is attached at <u>Appendix 12</u>.

9. THE COSTS OF PERIODIC REVIEWS

A (taxable) fee of £750 should be paid to each external Panel member. These costs should be paid by the Faculty within which the periodic review is undertaken.

10. APPENDICES

A number of appendices have been prepared to support this document:

Appendix 1   Level of review

Appendix 2   Constitution of review Panels

Appendix 3   Suggested letter of invitation to externals to act as reviewers in a periodic review and programme revalidation

Appendix 4   Agenda for Chair of the Panel and Head of Department's/School's Preliminary Meeting

Appendix 5   Preparation for Periodic Review Flow Chart

Appendix 6   Guidelines for producing the SED for periodic review/Template for student commentary on SED

Appendix 7   Aide mémoire for the meeting with students

Appendix 8   Aide mémoire for meetings with staff

Appendix 9   Panel Members' Checklist for Programme Revalidation

Appendix 10   Periodic Review Report Template

Appendix 11   Action Plan Template

Appendix 12   Schedule of periodic reviews

Appendix 13   Template for the external reviewer's comments

Appendix 14   Guidelines for engaging students in the process and for communications and feedback to staff and students

Notes:

1. **OfS Condition B1: Academic experience**

   Scope

   B1.1 This condition applies to the quality of higher education provided in any manner or form by, or on behalf of, a provider (including, but not limited to, circumstances where a provider is responsible only for granting awards for students registered with another provider).

   Requirement

   B1.2 Without prejudice to the principles and requirements provided for by any other condition of registration and the scope of B1.1, the provider must ensure that the students registered on each **higher education course** receive a high quality academic experience.

   B1.3 For the purposes of this condition, a high quality[7] academic experience includes but is not limited to ensuring all of the following:
   a.   each **higher education course** is **up-to-date**;
   b.   each **higher education course** provides **educational challenge**;
   c.   each **higher education course** is **coherent**;
   d.   each **higher education course** is **effectively delivered**; and
   e.   each **higher education course**, as appropriate to the subject matter of the course, requires students to develop **relevant skills**.

   B1.4 Insofar as **relevant skills** includes technical proficiency in the English language, the provider is not required to comply with B1.3.e to the extent that it is able to demonstrate to the OfS, on the balance of probabilities, that its English language proficiency requirements, or failure to have English language proficiency requirements, for one or more students, are strictly necessary as a matter of law because compliance with B1.3.e in respect of that student, or those students:
   i.   would amount to a form of discrimination for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010; and
   ii.   cannot be objectively justified for the purposes of relevant provisions of that Act; and
   iii. does not fall within an exception or exclusion provided for under or by virtue of that Act, including but not limited to provisions of the Act that relate to competence standards.

2. **OfS Condition B2: Resources, support and student engagement**

   Scope

   B2.1 This condition applies to the quality of higher education provided in any manner or form by, or on behalf of, a provider (including, but not limited to, circumstances where a provider is responsible only for granting awards for students registered with another provider).

   Requirement

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[7] For this periodic review process, 'high quality' is as defined above in B1.3, but is also considered in the context of the B3 student outcomes data and whether the review area meets or exceeds the numerical thresholds set in B3.

B2.2 Without prejudice to the principles and requirements provided for by any other condition of registration and the scope of B2.1, the provider must take all reasonable steps to ensure:

a.   each **cohort of students** registered on each **higher education course** receives **resources** and **support** which are sufficient for the purpose of ensuring:
  i.   a high quality academic experience for those students; and
  ii.   those students succeed in and beyond higher education; and

b.   effective **engagement** with each **cohort of students** which is sufficient for the purpose of ensuring:
  i.   a high quality academic experience for those students; and
  ii.   those students succeed in and beyond higher education.

B2.3 For the purposes of this condition, "all reasonable steps" is to be interpreted in a manner which (without prejudice to other relevant considerations):

a.   focuses and places significant weight on:
  i.   the particular academic needs of each **cohort of students** based on prior academic attainment and capability; and
  ii.   the principle that the greater the academic needs of the **cohort of students**, the number and nature of the steps needed to be taken are likely to be more significant;

b.   places less weight, as compared to the factor described in B2.3a., on the provider's financial constraints; and

c.   disregards case law relating to the interpretation of contractual obligations.

3.   OfS Condition B3: Student outcomes

Scope and application

B3.1 This condition applies to the quality of higher education provided in any manner or form by, or on behalf of, a provider (including, but not limited to, circumstances where a provider is responsible only for granting awards for students registered with another provider).

B3.2 This condition applies as an initial and general ongoing condition of registration for each relevant provider and as a general ongoing condition of registration for any provider that is not a relevant provider.

Requirement

B3.3 Without prejudice to the principles and requirements provided for by any other condition of registration and the scope of B3.1, the provider must deliver positive outcomes for students on its higher education courses.

B3.4 For the purposes of this condition, delivering positive outcomes means that either:

a.   in the OfS's judgement, the outcome data for each of the indicators and split indicators are at or above the relevant numerical thresholds; or

b.   to the extent that the provider does not have outcome data for each of the indicators and split indicators that are at or above the relevant numerical thresholds, the OfS otherwise judges that:
  i.   the provider's context justifies the outcome data; and/or
  ii.   this is because the OfS does not hold any data showing the provider's numerical performance against the indicator or split indicator; and/or

iii.   this is because the OfS does hold this data but the data refers to fewer than the minimum number of students.

4.   **OfS Condition B4: Assessment and awards**

Scope

B4.1 This condition applies to the quality of higher education provided in any manner or form by, or on behalf of, a provider (including, but not limited to, circumstances where a provider is responsible only for granting awards for students registered with another provider).

Requirement

B4.2 Without prejudice to the principles and requirements provided for by any other condition of registration and the scope of B4.1, the provider must ensure that:
a.   students are **assessed effectively**;
b.   each **assessment** is **valid** and **reliable**;
c.   **academic regulations** are designed to ensure that **relevant awards** are **credible**;
d.   subject to paragraph B4.3, in respect of each **higher education course**, **academic regulations** are designed to ensure the effective assessment of technical proficiency in the English language in a manner which appropriately reflects the level and content of the applicable **higher education course**; and
e.   **relevant awards** granted to students are **credible** at the point of being granted and when compared to those granted previously.

B4.3 The provider is not required to comply with B4.2d to the extent that:
a.   a **higher education course** is assessing a language that is not English; or
b.   the provider is able to demonstrate to the OfS, on the balance of probabilities, that its **academic regulations**, or failure to have any **academic regulations**, for assessing technical proficiency in the English language for one or more students are strictly necessary as a matter of law because compliance with B4.2d in respect of that student, or those students:
i.   would amount to a form of discrimination for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010; and
ii.   cannot be objectively justified for the purposes of relevant provisions of that Act; and
iii.   does not fall within an exception or exclusion provided for under or by virtue of that Act, including but not limited to provisions of the Act that relate to competence standards.

5.   **Condition B5: Sector-recognised standards**

Scope

B5.1 This condition relates to the standards applied to higher education provided in any manner or form by, or on behalf of, a provider (including, but not limited to, circumstances where a provider is responsible only for granting awards for students registered with another provider).

Requirement

B5.2 Without prejudice to the principles and requirements provided for by any other condition of registration and the scope of B5.1, the provider must ensure that, in respect of any relevant awards granted to students who complete a higher education course provided by, or on behalf of, the provider (whether or not the provider is the awarding body):
a.   any standards set appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards; and

b.   awards are only granted to students whose knowledge and skills appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards.