Annual Programme Review Policy

Introduction

1. Annual Programme Review (APR) is a vital part of the quality assurance process. This policy has been written in accordance with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education 2018, specifically the section on 'Monitoring and Evaluation', and the expectation that, in order to deliver high quality courses, providers should review their core practises regularly and use the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.

2. APR gives departments the opportunity to reflect upon the teaching, learning and operation of a programme in the previous academic year through the production of an evaluative report. The process also aims to identify successes and good practice, which could be shared throughout the College, and to identify any areas requiring resolution or further development.

Objectives

3. The purpose of the APR process is to maintain and enhance the quality and effectiveness of Spurgeon's taught programmes, specifically:

   a. To review the appropriateness and effectiveness of the learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment strategies of a programme and consider the planning of any consequent changes to modules and/or programmes;
   b. To ensure that any problems arising in a particular programme are reported, along with the steps taken to resolve them;
   c. To monitor and review the student experience, through various feedback and evaluations and that appropriate action is taken as required;
   d. To consider any relevant external comments on the wider aspects of the programme(s), including those of External Examiners and, where appropriate, Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and employers;
   e. To identify any trends in student recruitment, progression and achievement, particularly with respect to identifying if more could be done to support certain groups of students in meeting the learning outcomes of their programme(s);
   f. To report on any new developments/enhancements in learning and teaching that might be disseminated within and outside the department.

Responsibilities and Reporting requirements

4. The Unit Tutor is responsible for ensuring student evaluation forms are completed at the end of each taught unit.

5. Completion of the APR review form is the responsibility of the Programme Director or equivalent. However, the APR should be a collaborative process which constitutes a collective reflection and not just the views of a particular individual. To that end, the relevant Programme Committee will be consulted.

6. The Programme Committee is responsible for co-ordinating and collecting the data to be considered as part of the APR process, having an input into the review report and ensuring feedback to staff and students as relevant.

7. The Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC) will consider the APRs to:
   a. Identify any key themes or trends
   b. Highlight areas of good practice for dissemination
   c. Identify any areas of concern
   d. Identify any enhancement activities be taken forward on a programme or College wide basis.

8. The APR should specify any actions identified as a result of the review discussions, identify who will follow up on them and provide a timeframe.

9. A summary report of all programme reviews will be taken to the Academic Board. Programme reviews for programmes validated by partner Universities are sent to the appropriate staff at those institutions.

10. APR should normally be completed by the beginning of December following the completion of the previous academic year, and considered at the first AQAC after this.

11. Where a programme has a very small cohort, an APR should still be submitted but this can be brief and should focus on how standards are assured and the student experience maintained in the context of small numbers of students.

12. APR should be undertaken for all programmes which are in the process of teaching out, including for the final year of the programme(s). In these circumstances, the APR should focus on the student experience and how any specific issues encountered as a result of teaching out have been addressed.

Student engagement

13. Students' views play a core part in the development of actions designed to enhance their learning experience and the quality of their programme. When compiling APRs, the Programme Committee will review the various sources of student feedback considered throughout the year. This includes:

   - Discussions at Staff-Student Liaison Committees
   - Unit evaluations
   - Results from the National Student Survey (NSS) etc. if applicable.

14. Student representatives will be involved in developing and reviewing the draft APR as they are represented on the Programme Committees and the AQAC.

Actions within APRs will be updated and/or new actions added in response to feedback from students.

15. Students will be provided with updates on those actions designed to enhance student satisfaction and/or actions taken in response to student feedback. This would normally occur at Staff-Student Liaison Committees.

Procedure

16. The relevant Programme Director and Programme Committee will gather and consider all the evidence available to inform the process.

17. To facilitate the production of APR reports, an APR pro-forma is provided.

18. Input for the completion of the Annual Programme Review pro-forma will include:
    a. student recruitment, performance and achievement data (any trends in this data and factors which may be affecting it). This may include use of sources such as HESA, NSS and Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey;
    b. student feedback from unit evaluations (including an assessment of the effectiveness of student evaluation and engagement);
    c. any issues arising from the Progression and Awards Board;
    d. any external examiners' comments or feedback;
    e. any staff comments or feedback;
    f. issues from employers, alumni or professional, statutory and regulatory bodies;
    g. any examples of good practice or other achievements in respect of teaching excellence;
    h. any other information deemed relevant. Appropriate survey methods can be employed to collect additional information.

19 The AQAC should consider the completed APRs. The Committee may decide to investigate any issues in greater detail, request further information or revisions to the review, or challenge the conclusions of a review.

20 As a result of the process the AQAC may wish to make amendments to the programme. Any amendments to the programme specification must be approved by the relevant Curriculum Modification Policy or revalidation procedures.

21 Once the AQAC is satisfied with the report, they will submit it, together with any recommendations they deem appropriate, to the Academic Board.

22 Feedback should be given to students via the Staff-Student Liaison Committee and a summary of the APRs and outcomes posted on Moodle.

23 Completed APRs should be retained by Programme Directors in accordance with the College's Record Retention Schedule.

Document control box			
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