Policy for the Consideration of Accreditation Reports from Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies

1. A number of the University’s degree programmes are accredited or recognised by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs). This policy has been developed to standardise the institutional consideration and monitoring of PSRB reports and School responses with the aims of ensuring consistency and assuring quality. This document outlines how and when Schools should report on accreditation visits and reviews as well as how Faculty and University-level committees are responsible for engaging with and monitoring the reports.

2. The principles and guidelines below refer to periodic re-accreditation and major reviews and flow of data. Routine monitoring ensures that the University is acting in accordance with the (Competition and Markets Authority CMA) requirements. Further information on CMA is available on the Learning Teaching Development Services (LTDS) website.

Principles

3. The University recognises that the nature of PSRBs and their requirements are extremely varied and specific to individual programmes and Schools. For this reason, responsibility for engagement with PSRBs resides primarily with academic units.

4. The process of accreditation by PSRBs is demanding, but it can also result in valuable feedback on a range of issues of interest not only to the subject level but also to the Faculty and University.

5. For the above reason, and because the University is responsible for assuring the quality and standards of awards, the University seeks to pursue a practical and proportionate approach to the quality assurance and monitoring of programmes accredited by PSRBs.

Procedure

Responsibilities to enable timely communication of data to enable accurate records

See appendix 1

6. Academic Units are asked through Boards of Studies, to keep Faculty Education Committees and LTDS up to date regarding any PSRB activity and provide an academic and professional support staff contact for each accreditation. Notification of expected accreditation activity should be sent by email to the Faculty Education Committee Secretary and LTDS at the start of the academic year. Boards of Studies should also keep Faculty Learning and Teaching Teams and LTDS informed about new, renewed and/or lapsed accreditations. This includes occasions on which it is decided not to renew accreditation. See the Boards of Studies Business Schedule, Meeting 1.

7. Faculty Education Committees should include a reminder to Schools about PSRB updates on the agenda for the first Board of Studies meeting of the Autumn Term. Faculties should ensure
notification of visit dates and/or schedules for renewal of accreditation have been communicated to LTDS.

8. LTDS are responsible for maintaining a central record of programmes that are accredited or recognised by PSRBs, to include a timeline noting visit dates and/or schedules for renewal of accreditation and dates by which reports can be expected.

9. LTDS are responsible for using this central record to update accreditation information in SAP which feeds into the Higher Education Achievement Record, to provide the data to the Planning Office for data returns, to provide data to Marketing and Student Recruitment for accurate marketing of Programmes and for publishing the Register of PSRBs.

10. Any notification of visit/renewal not included in the Board of Studies Autumn update to Committees outlined above (for example due to short notice/unplanned circumstances) should be reported to LTDS and Faculty teams as soon as possible to ensure accreditation information held centrally and published, remains as factually correct as possible.

11. Any loss of accreditation by a PSRB should be notified to LTDS as soon as the Subject Area becomes aware of this. LTDS are responsible for communicating this via the Registrar to the Office for Students as a reportable event within five days of the date that the event is identified.

Consideration of Reports and Monitoring of School Responses:

12. If after a visit or review, the PSRB compiles a draft report, this should be considered by the relevant Head of School and the person at School level with direct responsibility for the review. Any issues requiring immediate action should be identified and action taken promptly.

13. Schools should not submit copies of correspondence with PSRBs to the Faculty Education Committee, although such records should be kept for review if necessary. In the instance that no actions are required, the School should submit the formal letter of reaccreditation to the Faculty Education Committee to be considered at its next meeting.

14. When the final report and/or accreditation notice is received by the University, the Board of Studies should prepare a response to the PSRB, if this is required by the latter. LTDS and Faculty Learning and Teaching teams should be notified of the final report/accreditation notice when received. Regardless of whether or not the PSRB requires a response, the Board of Studies should prepare a formal action plan to be submitted to the Faculty Education Committee, on receipt of the accreditation report.

15. The formal action plan and response, together with the PSRB report, should be considered by the Faculty Education Committee. To monitor quality and standards on behalf of the University, the Faculty Education Committee should review the action plan and, if necessary, engage in dialogue with the School to identify additional required actions. Faculty Education Committees are also responsible for evaluating and monitoring the implementation of any Faculty-level recommendations, and for monitoring the implementation of action plans through the Annual Monitoring and Review (AMR) process (see below).
16. Faculty Education Committees are responsible for submitting to Taught Programmes Sub-Committee (TPSC) the report and the minutes extract from the relevant discussion at Faculty Education Committee, typically within one month of the relevant meeting. If applicable, Faculty Education Committees should report on the satisfactory progress or conclusion of any actions taken in response to accreditation visits/reports and identify any areas of exemplary or innovative practice.

17. TPSC should receive all Faculty Education Committee reports and annually produce an overview report for UEC that identifies good practice examples for dissemination and considers any University-level recommendations as well as any general areas of concern.

18. Faculties and TPSC are responsible for noting the completion of PSRB accreditation visits and for ensuring that the above schedule for consideration and monitoring is followed. Where TPSC feature an agenda item relating to accreditation or PSRB, the secretary will update LTDS colleagues to ensure the data loop is closed.

**PSRB Visits and Responses in Relation to AMR and Learning and Teaching Review (LTR)**

19. Each School should include any ongoing actions from the accreditation process on the AMR action log. Faculty Education Committees are responsible for monitoring this implementation of any ongoing actions.

20. Given that PSRB recognition is critical to subject-area provision, LTR should consider accreditation reports and actions plans where appropriate.

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Point of contact with PSRBs:
Responsibility to:
- Respond to PSRB reports using Boards of Studies.
- Keep key colleagues up to date re PSRB activity in a timely fashion such as visit dates/occurrences, accreditation/re-accreditation awards, expiry, or decision not to seek renewal, PSRB reports and BoS responses.
- Provide an academic and PS contact for each accreditation.
- Notification of all accreditation activity should be sent (in one email) to:
  1) Faculty Education Committee Secretary
  2) ltds@ncl.ac.uk

Data flow for accreditation activity

- **Academic Unit**

  - **Faculty Education Committees**
    - Responsibility to:
      - Ensure Accreditation reports and BoS responses are considered and reported (with FEC minutes) to TPSC@ncl.ac.uk.
      - To double check LTDS were copied in.
      - To remind BoS at the start of the year to let them know of accreditation activity in that academic year.

  - **Taught Programme Sub-Committee**
    - Responsibility to:
      - Consider BoS response to PSRB reports and report to UEC.
      - To produce an overview report annually for UEC.
      - To ensure Data Coordinator in LTDS has been informed.

  - **University Education Committee**
    - Responsibility to:
      - Oversee the monitoring of action taken.

  - **Learning and Teaching Development Service**

- **Unistats data collated by Planning Office (early June)**
- **Published Register of PSRBs (early June)**
- **Higher Education Achievement Record - Exams and Awards (early June)**
- **Marketing of programmes (all year round for next prospectus)**
- **Any other users (ad hoc / available all year via spreadsheet)**

Relevant policies:
- Consideration of reports from PSRBs
- Competition and Markets Authority
- BoS Terms of Reference and Schedule
- Programme Changes

Schools are asked not to contact Marketing directly with accreditation information.

Responsibility to:
- Maintain master data regarding PSRB accreditation:
  - Maintain a central spreadsheet
  - Publish (internally) accreditation information from the sheet
  - Provide info to key users by deadlines, reminding Schools of need to communicate activity before each deadline
  - Maintain the central register of PSRBs (including deletions resulting from withdrawal of programmes)
  - Report the Register of PSRBs to TPSC annually
  - Report any loss of accreditation via the Registrar to OfS as a reportable event within 5 days of the date that the event is identified.

Key users of Accreditation data:
- Faculty Education Committees
- Taught Programme Sub-Committee
- University Education Committee
- Learning and Teaching Development Service
- Unistats data collated by Planning Office (early June)
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