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1. Overview of BIQAES

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document provides guidance on the Birmingham Integrated Quality Assurance and Enhancement System (BIQAES, pronounced 'bikes'). BIQAES encompasses the key processes which the University has put in place to monitor, review and enhance academic standards, the quality of its learning, teaching and assessment and the academic support given to students. It is intended as a reference document for University staff and students, and those outside the University involved in its quality processes.
- 1.2 BIQAES was created to signal the importance of quality issues at all levels and to bring together the breadth and depth of experience across the University and the HE sector as a whole. It is informed by the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA's) Academic Infrastructure, which comprises the Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education, Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, Subject Benchmark Statements and Programme Specifications. Further information is available at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/default.asp>.
- 1.3 The Academic Quality Unit (AQU) is responsible for the implementation and development of BIQAES. This includes advising Schools and Colleges and monitoring the outputs of the various review processes, in support of the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC). The AQU reviews the effectiveness of BIQAES on a regular basis, taking account of feedback and external developments, and updates the guidance annually.
- 1.4 BIQAES is only one element of the University's academic policy and quality framework within which Schools and Colleges are required to work. The broader academic policy and quality framework also includes the External Examiner system, student representation system, programme approval processes and University legislation and Codes of Practice.

2 Purpose

- To monitor the quality of the student learning experience, and of learning and teaching opportunities
- To identify, encourage and disseminate good practice, and to identify and eliminate weaknesses
- To provide an opportunity for Schools, Colleges and the University to test the effectiveness of systems and procedures for monitoring and enhancing academic quality and standards
- To encourage the development and enhancement of these systems, in the context of current and emerging provision
- To provide public information on the University's capacity to assure the quality and standards of its awards
- To provide a framework for the consideration of feedback from students and External Examiners about academic quality and standards

3 Components and Scope

- 3.1 BIQAES consists of the following components:
 - Annual Module and Programme Review
 - Comprehensive Programme Review (CPR)
 - School Quality Review (SQR)
 - Review of Collaborative Arrangements

- Specific Checks
- Thematic Review

The Key Processes and Documentation Reference Lists, formerly components of BIQAES, are now available on the AQU website at <http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/aqu/> for **optional** use by Schools and Colleges.

Further information about each component is provided below.

- 3.2 BIQAES covers all credit-bearing programmes offered by the University, including placements, years abroad, collaborative programmes, and all credit-bearing modules.
- 3.3 BIQAES reviews all aspects of academic quality in Schools and Colleges; from the appropriateness and currency of programmes and modules, to the effectiveness of systems for supporting students and enhancing their learning opportunities.
- 3.4 The components draw on the outputs from the quality assurance processes in Schools and Colleges, and test the effectiveness of those processes in relation to all full-time and part-time programmes, including research programmes.

4 Information to Inform Review Processes

- 4.1 A core body of data is central to BIQAES review processes. It includes:
 - The QAA's Academic Infrastructure (the Code of Practice, Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, Subject Benchmark Statements and Programme Specifications; see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/default.asp> for further information)
 - Student feedback information, module questionnaires and reports from Staff-Student Committees (SSCs)
 - Results of the National Student Survey and internal student surveys
 - External assessments of the School's provision, in particular External Examiner reports, external accreditation reports and reports on reviews of collaborative provision by the QAA and University-appointed Collaborative Programmes Officers
 - Information on student complaints, appeals, conduct and fitness to practise provided by Academic Services
 - The University's annual Statistical Profile and BIQAES statistical datasets, in particular the datasets concerning entrant profiles, retention and completion rates, classification of degrees, and employability, assessed in relation to equality and diversity factors (gender, age, ethnicity, disability and overseas status); see below for further guidance

Guidance on interpretation of statistical data at School level

- 4.2 Suggestions of ways in which the BIQAES datasets can usefully be analysed are included in the contents sheets of the relevant dataset. These can be summarised as follows:
 - (1) **Longitudinal or 'trend' analysis** – Schools should consider the direction of the trends (e.g. are retention rates and completions improving or worsening over time?). Positive trends are indicators that existing policies and processes are functioning effectively, but negative trends might indicate the need for a detailed review of the area and development of an action plan. In determining whether a trend is positive or negative, the relative importance of a particular issue, and whether action is required, it will be necessary to take into account the context of the programme or School, its profile and its aims.
 - (2) **Exception reporting** – any significant exceptions to general trends (e.g. a sudden leap in the number of First or Third class degrees being awarded or high non completion rates on particular programmes) should be identified and investigated. The pivot tables allow

exceptional data to be examined in more detail e.g. by double clicking on a cell in the worksheet of completions it is possible to view the demographic profile and entry qualifications of the students not completing and consider what practical action could be taken to improve success rates in the future.

- (3) **Comparative analysis** – data at programme or School level can be compared with the same data at a higher level, e.g. College or University. For example, non-completion rates for a particular School should be assessed to see if there are significant differences from the College or University rates. In addition, Schools might find it useful to compare their performance with that of other cognate disciplines within the same College in order to identify significant differences and consider whether or not they are reasonable and acceptable.
- (4) **Review of previous actions** – the statistics can be reviewed to assess the impact of specific actions previously undertaken, e.g. if a School Quality Review from 2006 suggested that action be taken to reduce withdrawal rates amongst postgraduate taught students, does the data show an improvement in this area and, if so, can this be reasonably attributed to the action taken?

5 Management of BIQAES

5.1 The components within BIQAES are monitored and drawn together by the UQAEC, with support from the AQU. Meetings of the UQAEC provide a broad-based check on the effectiveness of academic quality systems in place within Schools and Colleges, and across the University.

5.2 The membership of the UQAEC is as follows:

- Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality)
- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellors (Teaching, Learning and Quality)
- Directors of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (DQAEs)
- Director of the Graduate School
- Guild of Students Vice-President (Education and Access)
- Director of Academic Services or nominee

Staff in attendance, either regularly or for specific items, include the Director of Educational Development, the Director of Student Support and Development, staff from the Centre for Learning and Academic Development (CLAD), and staff from Academic and Student Administration. The Academic Quality Manager is Secretary to the Committee. The Terms of Reference for the UQAEC are available on the web at <http://www.committees.bham.ac.uk/committees/QualityAssuranceandEnhancementCommittee.shtml>

5.3 The members of the UQAEC, in particular the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, his Deputies, and the DQAEs, play a key role in quality enhancement as well as quality assurance. However, Schools and Colleges share an equal responsibility in ensuring that BIQAES maintains its robustness as an integrated quality assurance and enhancement system.

5.4 The Committee meets between four and six times a year to consider a range of information, including:

- reports or summaries arising from BIQAES review components (Annual Review, SQR, CPR, Spec Checks, Thematic Review)
- summaries of External Examiner reports and School responses
- summaries of SSC annual reports
- matters arising from Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies' reports
- reports on student complaints, appeals, conduct and fitness to practise

- student survey results

5.5 On this basis, areas may be identified for further review, normally in the form of a Specific Check or a Thematic Review.

6 Further information

6.1 Further information about BIQAES and the UQAEC is available from the AQU on 0121 414 6381 or y.j.binning@bham.ac.uk.

2. Annual Module and Programme Review

1 Overview

- 1.1 The Annual Review process provides Schools with an opportunity to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching portfolio, both at the modular and programme level, with a view to the continual enhancement of provision for students. The adoption of a consistent approach to the process at School level allows Annual Review to be carried out systematically and with the necessary rigour. Subsequently, Colleges and the University are able to detect any areas of concern and to disseminate good practice.
- 1.2 The objectives of Annual Review are:
 - To enable academic staff to reflect, individually and collectively, on the effectiveness of the programmes and modules within their remit, assessing the success of students against the intended learning aims and outcomes;
 - To provide an effective mechanism for identifying and minimising areas of risk and to capitalise on opportunities for innovation and enhancement in relation to teaching and learning;
 - To provide an efficient system for reporting the outcomes of review and monitoring accountability for academic provision at different levels in the University, demonstrating the University's commitment to improving academic quality.

2 Information used in Annual Review

- 2.1 During the annual review process, Schools should ensure that they utilise all the primary inputs below and may supplement this with the secondary inputs and any other information available in the School.
- 2.2 Primary Inputs (compulsory information to be used during Annual Review):
 - a) BIQAES statistical datasets and commentaries

The BIQAES datasets provide retrospective data on a number of key indicators for Schools (e.g. first year retention and completion rates, classification of degrees and employability) and data regarding entrants for the current academic session. BIQAES datasets are available at www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/staff/biqaes or through contacting the Data Analysis and Reporting Team (DART) of the Planning Office¹.

The Planning Office also provides Schools with commentaries which review the key indicators (retention, classification of degrees and employability) against a number of equality and diversity factors i.e. disability, ethnicity, gender, age and overseas status, in the context of both College and wider University trends. A 'traffic light' system is used to indicate areas which merit further consideration and investigation.

The BIQAES datasets and commentaries should be used to complete the admissions and programme performance sections of the School summary form.

¹ Queries about BIQAES datasets should be directed to Julie Darroch, Head of Data Analysis and Reporting.

b) BOXI reports

These reports cover student performance for the current academic session at the module and programme level in terms of progression, withdrawal, failure and degree classifications.

c) External Examiner feedback

Information from External Examiners from oral reports delivered at Board of Examiners' meetings, and the annual report form template which must be completed by all External Examiners².

d) Student feedback

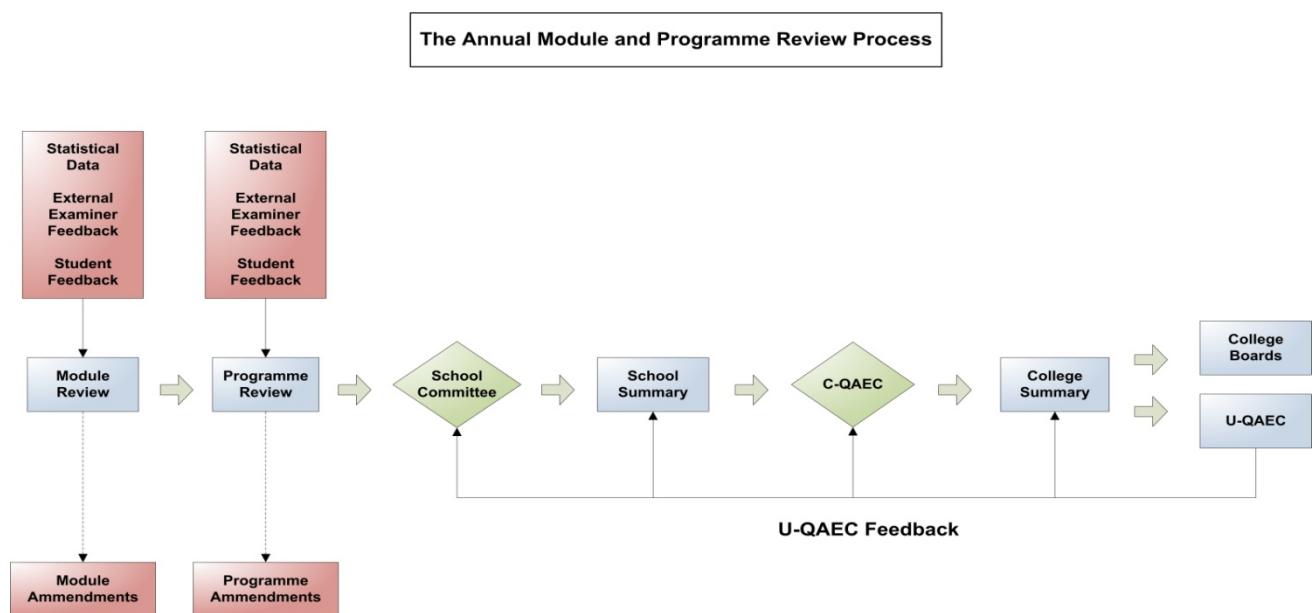
Information gathered through module evaluation questionnaires, Staff Student Committees (SSCs), including the annual SSC report, and both internal and external student surveys (e.g. National Student Survey, Birmingham Student Survey and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey).

2.3 Secondary Inputs (additional information which may be of use during Annual Review):

- Staff feedback gathered during the academic session (e.g. through committee meetings or teaching and learning forums in the School)
- Material available to students (e.g. student handbooks or website information)
- 'Module boxes' (which may contain sample teaching materials) if used within a School
- Programme specifications
- Reports from accrediting or other external bodies (where applicable)

3 The Annual Review Process

3.1 This diagram summarises the main stages of the Annual Review process:



² Examples of the report form template are available at www.bham.ac.uk/external.

3.2 There are essentially 3 key templates for Schools to complete during Annual Review. The deadlines for submission of these forms are set out in the timelines for the undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate taught (PGT) Annual Review, which are published on the Academic Quality Unit (AQU) website.

3.3 For UG Programmes:

| Form | Completed by | Sent to |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Annual module review | Module Leaders | Programme Directors |
| Annual programme review | Programme Directors | Head of School (HoS) and School Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (HQAE) |
| School summary | HoS or nominee ³ | Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (DQAE) (cc to AQU) |

3.4 For PGT Programmes:

| Form | Completed by | Sent to |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Annual module review | Module Leaders | Programme Directors |
| Annual programme review | Programme Directors | HoS and HQAE |
| School summary | HoS or nominee ⁴ | DQAE (cc to AQU) |

3.5 In addition, the DQAE will submit a College Summary form to AQU for discussion by the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC).

4 Annual Module Review Forms

4.1 The annual module review form must be completed by module leaders for all modules which have been offered by the School in the academic session under review. Schools may choose to arrange a meeting to conduct the module review, if a collective discussion is considered helpful.

4.2 Module review forms should provide a high-level overview of the module's performance, taking into account the following inputs:

- Student numbers – noting in particular any significant changes in comparison to previous years;
- Module performance⁵ – student performance in comparison to previous years and in relation to other comparable modules at the same level⁶;
- Student feedback – from module evaluation questionnaires, other methods of student input (e.g. SSCs);

³ E.g. the HQAE.

⁴ E.g. the HQAE.

⁵ BOXI programme and module reports on progression, withdrawal, failure and degree classification data will be sent to Schools in late June. Schools will also be able to download the BOXI reports themselves.

⁶ Note: comparison of module performance may take place during the programme review stage, rather than being carried out by individual module leaders

- d) External Examiner feedback – at this stage this is likely to be based on oral reports received at Board of Examiners meetings;
- e) Module leader feedback – overall reflections from the teaching staff on the module's performance during the year and any planned changes or enhancements.

4.3 Following consideration of the inputs to annual module review and completion of the form, the summary action list should be completed with details of any proposed actions resulting from the review. For each action, a deadline should be specified alongside a named academic lead responsible for ensuring the action is completed.

Module amendments

4.4 As a result of the review process the School may wish to make amendments to a module. Any amendments to the module specification, including the method of assessment and examiner, must be proposed and approved by the relevant College Committee before the start of the next academic session (see the Annual Review timeline for precise deadlines), via the Modification to Module process: www.as.bham.ac.uk/cdu/modules/modify.shtml. This ensures that the data which is published for students' use, used for calculation of overall module marks and utilised for exam scheduling is correct before the next session starts. **In-session modifications to modules are not permitted.**

4.5 **The completed module review forms must be returned to the relevant Programme Director in accordance with the review timeline.**

5 Annual Programme Review Forms

5.1 A programme review form should be completed by the Programme Director or equivalent (depending on the size of unit of review) for each cluster, or group, of cognate programmes, as agreed between the School and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality). A single discipline School may, if agreed with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality), complete a combined programme review / School summary form.

5.2 Although it is the responsibility of the Programme Director (or equivalent) to complete the programme review form for their programme, or cluster of programmes, s/he is encouraged to liaise with module leaders in completion of the form. In addition, Schools are expected to arrange a meeting to discuss all the programme review forms to be completed within the School and to agree the final content of these reports. The meeting should be chaired by the School HQAE, and include the School Head of Education (HoE), the relevant Programme Director(s) and members of the programme team.

5.3 The inputs for completion of annual programme review forms are as follows:

- Annual module review forms;
- Statistical data – from BIQAES data and commentary from the Planning Office, and BOXI reports⁷;
- Student feedback – from programme/module evaluation questionnaires, SSC Annual Reports, National Student Survey results (if available at programme level) or from other sources of student feedback utilised (e.g. focus groups). Please note that the annual SSC report should be appended to the programme review report;
- External Examiner feedback – this should be from External Examiner Annual Report forms if they have been received and/or from oral reports received at Board of Examiners meetings. Please note that if the External Examiner Annual Report has been received then the School response should be appended to the programme review report;

⁷ BOXI reports on supplementary examination results will be sent to Schools in mid-late September to aid completion of the forms.

- Any other information deemed relevant – e.g. staff feedback, reports from accrediting or other external bodies.

5.4 Schools may also wish to check the completeness and accuracy of their programme specifications as part of the review process.

Joint Honours and Major / Minor Programmes

5.5 For joint honours or major / minor programmes the 'lead' School is responsible for reviewing the programmes, taking into account input which shall be provided by the other School(s) involved in the delivery of the programme.

5.6 Following consideration of the inputs to annual programme review and completion of the form, the summary action list should be completed with details of any proposed actions resulting from the review. For each action, a deadline should be specified alongside a named academic lead or committee responsible for ensuring the action is completed.

Programme Amendments

5.7 As a result of the review process the School may wish to make amendments to a programme. For both undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes, any amendments to the programme specification, either major or minor, must be approved by the relevant College Committee no later than mid-April of the session prior to the one in which the change will take effect. All modifications must be managed via the Modification to Programmes Process: www.as.bham.ac.uk/cdu/programmes/modify.shtml. Schools can view all programme requirements as they are stored in Banner/BIRMS via the Programmes and Modules Handbook (www.as.bham.ac.uk/cdu/students/index.shtml).

5.8 **The completed programme review forms should be returned to the HQAE in accordance with the review timeline.**

6 School Summary Forms

6.1 One School summary form (or combined programme review / School summary form if applicable; see 5.1) should be completed per School⁸ by the HoS⁹. The School summary form should draw together the information in the annual programme review forms to identify significant trends across the School and draw comparisons between programmes. The form should also highlight notable achievements in the School or any areas of particular concern.

6.2 In reviewing the performance of programmes within the School, it is important to refer to the BIQAES statistical data set and the commentaries provided by the Planning Office.

6.3 An action plan should be completed detailing any *School level* actions identified following the Annual Review process. For each action, a deadline should be specified alongside a named academic lead or committee responsible for ensuring the action is completed.

6.4 The form also provides the School with the opportunity to bring any specific issues to the attention of the College.

6.5 **The completed School summary form, together with the related annual programme review forms, should be returned to the DQAE according to the review timeline. A copy of the School summary and programme review forms should be sent to AQU.**

⁸ Exceptions to this must be agreed with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality) via the AQU.

⁹ This task may be delegated to the HQAE.

7 College Summary Forms

- 7.1 Once received, the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC) should consider all School summary forms. The CQAEC may also request to see the annual programme review forms. The Committee may decide to investigate any issues in greater detail, request further information or revisions to the reports received or challenge a School's conclusions.
- 7.2 Following the CQAEC meeting, the DQAE should prepare the College summary report on the outcomes of the Annual Review process for consideration by the UQAEC.
- 7.3 The list of College-level actions should be completed indicating who is responsible for overseeing the action and an indicative deadline for completion of the action.
- 7.4 **Once completed, College summary forms must be returned to the AQU, together with the School summary forms and programme review forms.**

8 Student Involvement in Annual Review

- 8.1 Schools should ensure that Annual Review takes into account feedback from students at both module and programme level. This can be achieved through analysis of questionnaires, feedback from Student Reps at SSCs or specific focus groups the School may have held during the year. Schools are also encouraged to involve Student Reps at meetings held during the Annual Review process to maximise student involvement in the process. However, Schools should consider when and how it is appropriate to involve students in the process, given issues of confidentiality, particularly at the level of module review.
- 8.2 Once the Annual Review process has been completed at School level, the School must ensure that a summary of the outcomes of the process is shared with the student body through an appropriate forum (e.g. through SSCs with Student Reps tasked with wider dissemination to their cohort, or via WebCT).

9 Collaborative Provision

- 9.1 For the purposes of Annual Review, the University's collaborative provision will be divided into three categories. Programmes in Category A will undergo Annual Review in summer / autumn 2010, whilst programmes in Category B will not undergo Annual Review until summer / autumn 2011. For programmes in Category C, discussions will take place during 2010/11 with the collaborative organisations to assess whether their existing systems for Annual Review meet the University's requirements.
- 9.2 **Category A** - Programmes of study which are 'owned' by the University, delivered for example, by University staff although off-campus. Students on these programmes are registered students of the University of Birmingham¹⁰.
- 9.3 For programmes of this nature Schools should use the **standard (on-campus) annual programme review forms**. Schools should normally complete a separate form for the collaborative programme. However, if there are 'standard' programmes leading to the same award as the collaborative provision, it is possible to complete one form reviewing all these programmes, provided that clear reference is made to the performance of the collaborative provision. Where one collaborative organisation offers a number of programmes at the same level, one report form may be completed.

¹⁰ For the avoidance of doubt, please note that the Year Abroad component of a programme does not fall within this definition of collaborative provision.

- 9.4 The completed form/s should be submitted to the HQAE, so it can be considered alongside other programmes in the School. A copy of the form should be sent to the Collaborative Provision Manager, Margaret Cannadine (m.e.cannadine@bham.ac.uk; tel ext 44891).
- 9.5 **Category B** - Programmes of study developed and delivered solely by the collaborative organisation. Students on these programmes are registered students of the collaborative organisation.
- 9.6 For programmes of this nature the collaborative organisation will be required to complete a separate **Collaborative Provision Annual Review form** in conjunction with the University's Collaborative Programmes Officer or equivalent. A separate form should be completed for each collaborative programme except where one collaborative organisation offers a number of programmes at the same level, when one report form may be completed.
- 9.7 The completed form/s should be submitted to the HQAE, so it can be considered alongside other programmes in the School. A copy of the form should be sent to the Collaborative Provision Manager, Margaret Cannadine (m.e.cannadine@bham.ac.uk; tel ext 44891).
- 9.8 **Category C** – Programmes of study developed and delivered solely by the collaborative organisation, with its own Annual Review processes deemed equivalent to those of the University. Discussions will take place during 2010/11 to 'validate' these Annual Reviews and obtain copies of the outputs.

3. Comprehensive Programme Review

1 Introduction

1.1 Comprehensive Programme Review (CPR) comprises the detailed and rigorous review of every programme offered in a School, considered as complete units, within a five-year cycle. Every programme should be subject to CPR at least once every five years. CPR is conducted primarily by Schools, although Colleges are involved in and maintain oversight of the review process as detailed below. Where appropriate, Colleges may take the lead in conducting CPR.

2 Scope

2.1 CPR should cover all undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes offered in the School, including Joint Honours 'halves', off-campus, external and collaborative provision and any research programmes with a significant taught element (MPhil(B), MRes, professional Doctorates, PhD with Integrated Study etc). Research training provided for doctoral research students should also be included.

2.2 Doctoral research provision which does not include significant taught elements, such as the majority of PhD and MPhil(A) programmes, is not required to be considered under CPR. The rationale for this is that CPR is primarily concerned with the programme content, as detailed in paragraph 2.5 below, and programmes which are made up almost entirely of individual research have no common 'content' as such. However, some Schools/Colleges have found it helpful to conduct a review of their entire doctoral research portfolio, combining elements from CPR and School Quality Review (SQR).

2.3 Wherever possible, reviews of programmes delivered through a collaborative arrangement should be timed to coincide with the review of the formal agreement or memorandum underpinning the arrangement, so that any changes to the programme can be addressed when the renewal of the arrangement is being discussed.

2.4 Those Schools which run a number of programmes sharing a significant common core may choose to consider provision across a year or stage as a separate review activity. This provides a valuable way of reviewing, for example, the balance of assessment or skills development across a programme year, but such 'stage' or 'year' review will not provide the overview of each programme as a whole which is required for CPR. 'Stage' or 'year' review is not a compulsory component of CPR and if Schools find that this additional layer only duplicates or anticipates other parts of the review process, they are free to work without it.

2.5 CPR should not duplicate the SQR process: CPR is primarily concerned with the content and coherence of programmes, rather than the effectiveness of related quality assurance and enhancement systems.

3 Aims and objectives

3.1 The aims and objectives of CPR are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on the School's teaching and learning provision
- To confirm that programmes (taught and research) are meeting appropriate academic standards and are appropriately resourced
- To ensure the currency and relevance of the programmes in relation to developments in pedagogy and research, and to employer and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) needs

- To gauge the effectiveness of integrated skills training for research, employability and the personal development of students
- To check on the accuracy of information and guidance provided for students
- To verify that programme requirements do not present unnecessary barriers to disabled students, and do not discriminate against applicants from particular cultures or backgrounds

3.2 CPR is:

(a) Primarily a **formative process**, intended to provide a forum for exchange within the School and College, and for a genuine reflection and discussion on the programmes. Schools are encouraged to treat the review as a chance to interrogate and develop their provision.

(b) Both a **quality assurance and quality enhancement process**. While it offers a valuable opportunity for Schools to check for gaps in provision, or to identify problems with methods of assessment or delivery, CPR is envisaged mainly as a developmental process. Schools should take the opportunity, wherever possible, to consider the future development of their programmes; in the light of the changing employment context, emerging research trends, or developing learning and teaching methods or tools.

4 Inputs

4.1 Key inputs to CPR include:

Internal information / reports:

Last CPR report

Annual review reports

BIQAES statistical datasets (available on the intranet at www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/staff/biqaes)

Data on student complaints/appeals¹¹

Student Handbook / Programme Handbooks

Programme Specifications, module descriptions and learning outcomes

Assessment schemes and criteria

School Learning & Teaching Strategy

SQR reports

Collaborative Programmes Officers' reports on collaborative provision

University legislation – regulations, codes of practice, policies, protocols etc.

Student Feedback:

Programme/module questionnaires

National Student Survey and Birmingham Student Survey results

Feedback on supervision

Staff Student Committee (SSC) report

SSC minutes

External information / reports:

External Examiner reports (full) for last 5 years (or, since last CPR)

Summary of External Examiner issues

Reports from PSRB visits/accreditation

Relevant national frameworks and benchmarks (e.g. Quality Assurance Agency Academic Infrastructure [Code of Practice, Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, Subject Benchmark Statements and Programme Specifications], accreditation guidelines, guidance from HE Academy subject networks or professional associations)

¹¹ Note: this data is not routinely issued as part of the BIQAES statistical data set, so it needs to be requested directly: complaints data from the Complaints Officer (J Luckett, Academic Quality Unit); appeals data from the Student Conduct and Appeals Section of Academic Student Administration

- 4.2 This information should be used to inform the preparation of a summary input document (often styled as a 'self-evaluation document') as a way of bringing together a wide range of information for the benefit of the review team, drawing its attention to the most pertinent issues. It would be useful to include a brief overview of the programme/s, with reference to the Programme Specification/s, noting any significant changes since the last Review.
- 4.3 The summary document might follow the same structure as that specified for the outcome report in the Framework for Outcome Reports of CPR on page 18.
- 4.4 Schools are free to re-use any appropriate material prepared for external reviews (e.g. PSRB accreditation) which have taken place in the twelve months prior to the CPR.
- 4.5 Many Schools also use 'module boxes' as a basis for review – each box containing the module description and marking scheme together with module feedback forms and sample assessments.

5 Timetables

- 5.1 The timetable and selection of programmes for review is determined by individual Schools and Colleges. College CPR timetables must be forwarded to the Academic Quality Unit (AQU) at the start of each academic session and whenever any revisions are made. The AQU will submit the timetables to the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC) for approval, and will subsequently monitor the timetables and advise Colleges of any programmes which appear to be overdue for review.
- 5.2 Where Schools or Colleges find that their CPR timetable does not operate as effectively in practice as they had envisaged, timetable change may be possible, provided no programme escapes review within the five year period. Such requests must be notified to the AQU as soon as possible, for approval by the UQAEC.
- 5.3 Where, in exceptional cases, a School or College believes there is a legitimate reason for deferring a CPR beyond the five-year maximum timeframe, approval must be sought, via the AQU, from the UQAEC or the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality) as its Chair.

6 Who to involve in the Review

- 6.1 The School must involve an external advisor from another institution, professional body or industry. The involvement of an external advisor is key to the conduct of the review. Ideally, this advisor will be expected to attend the key review discussions or event(s) in person and to provide input into the outcome report, but the external is not expected to provide a separate, independent report for the School.
- 6.2 The external advisor should not be a current or recent (serving in the last 3 years) external examiner for programmes in the School, since their use to review the standards of a programme which they were responsible for developing or maintaining could present a conflict of interests.
- 6.3 There is no set fee for external advisors, but it would be expected to be between £100 and £500 (plus expenses) or in line with the fees normally paid to External Examiners in that subject area. Schools should ensure they have factored any costs into the economic costing of provision. Schools are also free to seek external input into module or stage review if they wish.
- 6.4 The staff involved in CPR will vary according to the unit (programme or subset) under review and to the organisation of the School. In general terms, however, it is expected that the following would normally be members of the review team:

- **The independent external advisor**, as above.

- **Staff with a quality remit or a learning and teaching remit**, such as the School Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (HQAE) or Head of Education (HoE) (or equivalent roles). While CPR is concerned primarily with academic content rather than process, it is also a key part of the University quality assurance and enhancement system. It should therefore involve staff involved in quality activity within and/or beyond the School.
- **A member of staff from another School**. This provides a way of sharing practice and ideas, and an opportunity to gain an additional perspective.
- **Student(s) from the programme(s) under review**. Some Schools have found it helpful to invite students to contribute directly (in addition to via module feedback forms etc) to reviews of programmes or subsets.

Schools may wish to invite the AQU to participate in the review.

In addition, **staff involved in the design, delivery and management of the programme(s) or modules under review** are likely to contribute to the inputs for the review and discussions with the review team. CPR is designed to explore - in some detail, and in operational (as well as strategic or philosophical) terms - the ways in which a programme is configured and taught. Staff involved in the day-to-day delivery of modules or programmes should therefore be involved, in addition to senior staff involved in its organisation, and in determining the strategic academic development of the School.

7 Review Topics

7.1 Given the variety of ways in which Schools organise academic review processes and the wide range of provision offered across the campus, there is no single schedule or format for a CPR, or the discussions that contribute to it. However, for the review to be effective, it would normally be expected to cover the following matters in some detail:

- The overall coherence of the programme/module/stage (in terms of levels and progression, subject matter, key skills, balance of assessment methods)
- Methods of delivery and assessment, and their relationship to objectives and learning outcomes
- The currency of content (in relation to research developments and employment trends)
- The relationship between teaching and research in the School
(What features of the learning experience support the development of attributes benefiting from the research context?)
- The extent to which the programme accords with and supports the University's academic mission and strategy
- The development of transferable skills, and the needs of employers
- Availability and access to learning resources, study space and staff support
- The viability of the provision (in relation to market changes or anticipated changes in staffing)
- The relationship of provision to University legislation and external frameworks

This does not claim to be an exhaustive list of topics, and Schools and Colleges should supplement or adapt it as appropriate to their context.

8 Outputs

8.1 The formal outputs from CPR are as follows:

- (a) an internal report for the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC), based upon the Framework for Outcome Reports of Comprehensive Programme Review on page 18.

The outcome report for the CQAEC should provide a full record of the process, summarise the key findings and contain well-formulated recommendations. Further guidance is available in the Framework for Outcome Reports of Comprehensive Programme Review on page 18.

The School and the College should work together to follow up actions/recommendations and to identify and act upon any wider issues arising from CPRs.

(b) a summary report prepared by the College for review by the AQU and the UQAEC.

At the end of each academic session, the College should prepare a summary report regarding all the CPRs in the College. This should include the following details:

- A list of the programmes which have been subject to CPR during the previous session
- The recommendations and commendations/good practice arising from each review
- A copy of the action plan prepared by the School following each review
- Any concerns or significant issues identified during consideration of the reports and action plans by the CQAEC

The summary report should be considered at the CQAEC, then submitted to the AQU, which will review the report and arrange for the report and any key issues and actions to be brought to the attention of the UQAEC. The UQAEC and the AQU may take follow-up action as appropriate, which might include audit checks on progress against recommendations or actions identified in reports.

FRAMEWORK FOR OUTCOME REPORTS OF COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME REVIEW

STYLE

Relatively formal e.g. ensure abbreviations are explained (Note: the report will be read by the CQAEC and possibly the UQAEC also)

Minimal description, with the focus on the findings of the Review and recommendations arising

Suggested length – 3 - 6 sides of A4, depending on the number of programmes reviewed

STRUCTURE AND MAIN HEADINGS

Introduction

- Dates of review days/meetings
- Members of review team (role and name) (recommended size: approx 4 internal staff, plus an external adviser (required) and student member (optional):

Internal staff are likely to include:

- the HoE and the HQAE (or equivalent roles)
- a member of staff from another School, within or outside the College (e.g. another HoE and HQAE)

(Note: the Programme Director/s should not normally be part of the review team. Instead, s/he is/are responsible for preparing information for the review and is/are likely to participate in discussions with the review team)

- List of programme/s reviewed (full title and Banner code)
- Methodology e.g. details of any meetings held with staff/students (list names / roles/year of study)

Main body of outcome report

All reports should be structured around the following six main headings. The sub-headings are indicative, so additional sub-headings may be used.

Under each heading, provide a BRIEF description of key findings linked to identification of either:

- areas of excellence/good practice; and/or
- areas of concern/requiring improvement, with an associated recommendation.

The emphasis of the report is likely to be on sections 1 - 2, which relate directly to the aims and objectives of CPR (BIQAES Guidance, section 3).

The other sections should be addressed in relation to programme content, delivery, assessment and development, rather than with respect to the underlying systems and processes, which are considered in SQR.

1 Strategy, Recruitment and Admissions

*School Plans / strategies, particularly relating to learning and teaching
Programme aims and learning outcomes (Programme Specification)
Viability of Programmes – data on applications, acceptances and registrations
Marketing
Widening participation*

2 Teaching, Learning, Curricula and Assessment

*Programme Structures
Skills and personal development
Comparison with Subject Benchmark Statements
Accreditation / review reports from any relevant PSRB
Approaches to Curriculum Development
Methods of teaching and assessment*

3 Student Progression and Achievement

BIQAES data on progression / retention / degree classification etc.

4 Learning Resources

*Teaching and Study Space
Use of IT and Web CT
Library resources*

5 Student Support and Development

*Sources of information / guidance e.g. Programme Specification, module outlines, Handbooks, website
Induction processes
Personal tutorial system / use of 'Progress'
Support during placements / year abroad etc
Dissertation support
Careers and employability*

6 Staff Support and Development

*Peer observation of teaching
Training / support for PGs and UGs involved in teaching*

Good practice

Identify any particular instances of good practice AND how it will be disseminated, within the School/College/University.

Recommendations

- Must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-based) – there needs to be clarity as to who is expected to act and within what timescale e.g. whether actions are required at School and/or College level; the recommendations must specify which individual role/s or committee/s are asked to take action.
- Recommendations 'to the University' need to be addressed to a specific individual/office/committee (seek advice from the AQU, if unsure).
- Indicate a process for reviewing and recording progress on the recommendations, at least on an annual basis.

Conclusion

name of author(s) of report
date

(Footer: file reference where the report is saved)

4. School Quality Review

1 Introduction

- 1.1 School Quality Review (SQR) is designed to test and improve the effectiveness of the internal processes carried out by Schools. SQR draws on the outcomes/outputs from other University and School processes (eg Annual Review and Comprehensive Programme Review) but does not seek to duplicate these processes.
- 1.2 SQR takes place on a six-year cycle. The full schedule, as approved by the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC), is given on page 26. Amendments to the schedule may be approved by the UQAEC.

2 Scope

- 2.1 The focus of SQR will normally be the whole academic School, rather than the College or a Department or other constituent unit. However, in some Colleges, SQR may cover more than one School at a time, given the size and activity of some Schools. In the College of Medical and Dental Sciences, where some programmes are delivered on a cross-School basis, the SQR may consider the processes supporting a programme or group of programmes. This also applies to any programme which is not delivered by an academic School.
- 2.2 Processes relating to all taught and research programmes offered by the School, including placements, Joint Honours and collaborative provision, are reviewed as part of SQR.
- 2.3 Checks on College-level processes will normally take the form of a Specific Check (see page 64 for further information). Exceptionally, and subject to approval by the UQAEC, a College Quality Review may be undertaken where this is considered helpful (e.g. in planning a restructure) or necessary (e.g. if problems have been identified via other processes such as complaints, appeals, statistical analysis, student feedback etc.).

3 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 SQR is:
 - **Systems-based.** SQR is not concerned directly with the content, delivery or assessment of provision, which is considered separately through Annual Programme and Module Review and Comprehensive Programme Review. SQR focuses instead on the effectiveness of systems in place within the School to assure and enhance the quality of provision, the standards of awards, and the student learning experience.
 - Concerned with the **enhancement and development of systems**, as well as **quality assurance**. While SQR is designed to test quality systems, it is also intended to provide a forum for Schools to explore their systems more discursively with the visiting team.
 - Designed to be a **collaborative exercise**, involving staff internal and external to the School and College, and based on the School's own self-evaluation.

4 Inputs

The School Evaluation of Quality Processes (SEQP)

- 4.1 The SEQP is the central document for SQR, prepared by the School in advance. Guidance for Schools on the composition of the SEQP is provided on page 27. Further support is available

from the Academic Quality Unit (AQU), and Directors of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (DQAEs) may also wish to be involved in commenting upon drafts of the SEQP.

4.2 In summary, the SEQP should evaluate the processes in each of the following areas for assuring and enhancing quality and standards for all programmes, considering both their current effectiveness and future development:

- Student admission, progression, support and guidance
- Teaching, learning, curricula and assessment
- Doctoral research supervision and training
- Collaborative arrangements
- Learning resources
- Management of quality assurance and enhancement processes

Supporting documentation

4.3 SQR is also informed by a comprehensive range of supporting documentation and data which provides context and allows the review team to test and verify the statements made by the School in its SEQP. The following list sets out the core documentation which should be considered in each SQR. It is divided into two parts; the first section contains those items which should normally be provided by the School; the second section contains those items which will be provided by the AQU, or other University offices.

| School SQR contact to provide: | |
|--|---|
| What | Details |
| SEQP | |
| Comprehensive Programme Review Reports | <i>The most recent report for each programmes / group of programmes.</i> |
| SSC Minutes | <i>Minutes of SSC meetings in the last academic session (for all SSCs in the School, e.g. UG, PGT, DR)</i> |
| Sample of programme / module questionnaires | <i>Blank copies of programme and module evaluation questionnaires UG and PGT. If available, summary reports of the results.</i> |
| Feedback on Doctoral Researcher Supervision | <i>Blank copies of any questionnaires issued to Doctoral Researchers regarding supervision. (Also, PRES results may be available)</i> |
| Doctoral Research Progress Review forms | <i>Copy of any documentation surrounding the progress review process for Doctoral Researchers.</i> |
| Doctoral Research Annual Review forms | <i>(Once the new process has been introduced in 2011/12)</i> |
| Student Handbooks | <i>Copies of all current handbooks (or web links), including handbooks / guidance on dissertation / year abroad / placements etc.</i> |
| Staff Handbook | <i>If one exists</i> |
| Information on staff induction / development | |

| | |
|--|--|
| School / College Learning and Teaching Strategy (if applicable) and any enhancement strategy | |
| Diagram of School committee structure, with details of membership and terms of reference | |
| Diagram of School management structure | |
| List of staff in the School, indicating which hold key positions | |

| AQU to provide: | |
|--|--|
| What | Details |
| Previous SQR report/s | |
| Annual Review: School Summary Report for 2009/10 <i>(Note: the SQR review team may request further annual review documentation e.g. programme review or module review forms, or committee minutes, if it is considered necessary)</i> | <i>UG and PGT, if available.</i> <i>If annual review reports / summaries from previous years are available, they should also be provided.</i> |
| BIQAES statistical data set | http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/aqu/biqaes/index.html |
| BOXI reports on programme performance in 2009/10 (as issued for annual review) | |
| Student numbers (total population) by programme (FTEs and headcount) | <i>UG, PGT and DR</i> |
| Data on applications by programme | <i>UG, PGT and DR</i> |
| Reports from Spec Checks | |
| SSC Annual Summary Reports | <i>For the last 6 academic sessions.</i> |
| Summaries of External Examiners' reports (full reports and School responses available on request) | <i>For the last 6 academic sessions.</i> |
| NSS / BSS results (including School response) | <i>For the latest academic session.</i> |
| School-based information from annual reports on complaints, appeals, conduct and fitness to practise. | |
| Reports from PSRB visits / accreditation | <i>The most recent report for each accredited programme / group of programmes</i> |
| Collaborative Programmes Officers' reports | <i>If there is any collaborative provision in the School, for the last three years (or six years, if there have been major changes to provision in the period)</i> |

- 4.4 Schools may indicate web-based sources of information, rather than supplying hard copies of the relevant material. Arrangements may need to be made for access to Birmingham-only material by the external member of the team.
- 4.5 In addition to the items listed above, review teams may seek further supporting information where they feel this is needed to pursue a particular line of enquiry, or obtain examples of good practice.

5 Format of the Review

- 5.1 The exact format of an SQR will depend upon the size and structure of the School, but will normally follow the pattern below.
 - (a) The School prepares its SEQP, in discussion with the AQU, and provides some supporting documentation (see the list on page 21 and 22). These will normally be submitted to the AQU either in early September (if the SQR is taking place in the first semester) or in early November (if the SQR is taking place in the second semester).
 - (b) The SEQP is forwarded to the Director of the Graduate School for information and comment on the section on Doctoral Research Supervision and Training.
 - (c) The members of the visiting team hold a preliminary meeting, at which the SEQP is discussed. This identifies areas of particular concern or interest, priorities for discussion with the School, and any further information required in advance.
 - (d) The team prepares an agenda for the first of two visits to the School. An indicative schedule for the visits to the School is provided on page 34.
 - (e) The first visit to the School takes place. The team will meet with selected staff and students from the School and explore matters arising from the self-evaluation, and agree an agenda for the subsequent visit.
 - (f) The second visit to the School takes the form of a half-day follow-up meeting between the visiting team and key School staff. This meeting will normally seek to discuss the development and enhancement of quality systems in the School, and may include further discussion on issues of interest or concern identified during the first visit.
 - (g) The team compiles a report of the SQR, combining an assessment of quality systems in place within the School, including commendations for examples of good practice or innovation and recommendations for improvement.

6 Staff involved in the Review

6.1 The visiting team will normally comprise:

- Either the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality), one of his Deputies, or a DQAE, who will Chair the review
- A member of academic staff from a related subject area (i.e. from the same College as the School undergoing review)
- A member of academic staff from an unrelated subject area (i.e. from a different College from the School undergoing review)
- An external member (from another HE institution or from a related profession), nominated by the School and approved by the Chair
- Either the Vice-President (Education and Access) or another Sabbatical Officer from the Guild of Students, not formerly a member of the School
- A member of staff from Academic Services, who will act as Secretary to the team

Additionally, a member of the Centre for Learning and Academic Development (CLAD) may be invited by the Chair to take part in relevant sections of the review.

6.2 Key members of the School involved in the review will normally be:

- Head of School and/or Deputy
- Head of Education
- Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement
- Director of Research and Knowledge Transfer and/or other staff responsible for doctoral research students
- Director of Admissions (or equivalent role)
- Head of Student Development and Support and/or Welfare Tutor
- Director of UG/PG Studies (or equivalent role)
- Operations Manager (Quality)
- Administrative and technical staff
- Representative students
- College staff may also be involved, such as the Director of Education, Director of Research and Knowledge Transfer, and DQAE.

7 Outputs - SQR Report and Follow-Up Action

7.1 Following the SQR visits, the Secretary is responsible for drafting a report, outlining the collective views of the team on the key findings of the review, covering:

- The level of self-evaluation in the SEQP
- The extent to which the evaluation is supported by the evidence available to the team
- Features of strength and good practice
- Weaknesses identified and recommendations to the School
- Any recommendations to be made to the wider University
- The team's judgement of the effectiveness of the School's overall approach to the management of quality systems

7.2 The report will be drafted by the Secretary and approved by the team as soon as possible after the completion of the review, and then sent to the School to comment on any factual errors contained in the report. The School is not entitled to contest the findings of review. The

Secretary will arrange for any corrections to be approved by the Chair before circulation of the finalised report to the School and College.

- 7.3 After the report has been finalised, the School is asked to prepare an action plan detailing how the recommendations contained in the report will be addressed. The School will then submit the action plan, together with the report, for approval at the next meeting of the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC). The CQAEC may request that the School revise the action plan, if appropriate, and will approve the action plan for submission to the UQAEC where the recommendations made through SQR will then be followed up.
- 7.4 If issues relating to Corporate Services provision are raised during the SQR, the Secretary will discuss these with the relevant Corporate Service before drafting the report. Where possible, and in conjunction with the Secretary and/or Chair of the SQR as appropriate, the School and the Corporate Service should discuss the issues so that any actions can be agreed and implemented without delay, and can be reflected in the final report.
- 7.5 If the final report contains a recommendation for action by an office within Corporate Services, the Secretary will liaise with relevant colleagues to prepare an action plan detailing how the recommendation will be addressed. The action plan will be submitted to the CQAEC for information and to the UQAEC for approval, alongside the School's action plan.
- 7.6 12 months after the SQR, the School is asked to present a progress report to the CQAEC and to the UQAEC. The Secretary will arrange for a progress report in relation to any recommendations to Corporate Services.

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

School Quality Review Cycle
2010/11 – 2015/16

| Academic Session | Semester 1* | Semester 2** |
|------------------|--|--|
| 2010/11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Chemistry • School of Languages, Cultures, Art History and Music • PG Cert Learning & Teaching in HE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Biosciences • School of English, Drama and American & Canadian Studies • School of Mathematics • Medicine (MBChB) |
| 2011/12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences • School of Physics and Astronomy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Government and Society • School of Metallurgy and Materials • School of Health and Population Sciences |
| 2012/13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Philosophy, Theology and Religion • School of Sport and Exercise Sciences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Civil Engineering • School of Electronic, Electrical and Computer Engineering • School of Social Policy |
| 2013/14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Chemical Engineering • School of Dentistry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham Business School • School of Mechanical Engineering |
| 2014/15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Skills Award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Computer Science • Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity • Medicine (BMedSc) [TBC] |
| 2015/16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of History and Cultures • School of Psychology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Education • Birmingham Law School • Medicine (PGT) [TBC] |

* Semester 1 review visits will normally occur during November

** Semester 2 review visits will normally occur during March

Writing the School Evaluation of Quality Processes (SEQP)

Notes for Key Staff in Schools

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Guide is intended for those staff in Schools charged with the preparation of the SEQP for School Quality Review (SQR). It seeks to provide practical guidance, and should be read in conjunction with the section of the BIQAES Guidance on SQR.
- 1.2 The production of the SEQP is the key task for the School ahead of its SQR visits and is an integral part of the process. The final document will also be central to the rest of the review, and is therefore a critical component.
- 1.3 The preparation of the SEQP should take place in the term preceding the one in which the review is taking place. Key staff will be prompted by the Academic Quality Unit (AQU) to start working on the SEQP, and be briefed at an early stage. Copies of past SEQPs are also available from the AQU as exemplars. The AQU will advise Schools of the deadline for submission of the SEQP, which will normally be expected for early September (if the SQR is taking place in the first semester) or early November (if the SQR is taking place in the second semester).
- 1.4 As SQR is normally a School-level process, this guidance refers to Schools rather than Colleges. However, it is recognised that Colleges are likely to oversee and input into the preparation of the SEQP. Schools may need to refer to College-level mechanisms in the SEQP where appropriate.
- 1.5 The School should nominate 3 candidates for the external member of the review panel¹². The nominations will be scrutinised by the Chair of the review panel and an invitation issued to the preferred candidate.

2 Principles

- 2.1 In writing their SEQPs, Schools should consider the principles which underpin SQR (see the main SQR guidance on pages 20-25).
- 2.2 SQR will work most effectively where Schools are prepared, in their SEQPs, to reflect openly on the strengths and weaknesses of their systems. Experience has shown that a transparent evaluation of processes and systems will generate a more productive and discursive visit.
- 2.3 Schools may also wish to consider, in preparing their self-evaluation, its possible use within their internal quality systems; for example, as a reference point, or as a 'living' document to be revisited and updated as a record of progress and change or a 'state of play' report.

¹² The candidates should not be a current or recent (past 3 years) external examiner.

3 Scope

- 3.1 As SQR is conducted primarily at the level of the School, the SEQP should focus on quality systems across the School, except where there are different arrangements in any of its constituent units or where College-level processes are relevant.
- 3.2 The SEQP should consider systems for supporting and monitoring all types of student and provision, including postgraduate taught and doctoral research students, part-time, international, and distance-learning students, and collaborative and Joint Honours provision.
- 3.3 As per paragraph 3.1 on page 20 above, Schools should not cover in their SEQP matters of programme content, delivery or assessment already considered through Annual Module and Programme Review, and Comprehensive Programme Review (CPR). SQR should, however, evaluate the effectiveness of these as assurance and enhancement processes.

4 Inputs

- 4.1 Both the SEQP prepared by the School, and the SQR process as a whole, should be informed by the body of supporting documentation and data detailed on pages 21 and 22.
- 4.2 In particular, it is important that the SEQP is informed by the BIQAES statistical datasets. The SEQP should describe how the School uses the datasets to evaluate its provision and summarise the key findings and actions which have resulted.
- 4.3 Schools are free to re-use any appropriate material prepared for external reviews (e.g. accreditation) which have taken place in the twelve months prior to the SQR. There is no need, however, for Schools to evidence the effectiveness of their systems by providing vast quantities of documentation over and above that detailed on pages 21 and 22.

5 Structure

- 5.1 The SEQP should be split into the following six sections:
 - **Student Admission, Progression and Support and Guidance**
 - **Teaching, Learning, Curricula and Assessment**
 - **Doctoral Research Supervision and Training**
 - **Collaborative Arrangements**
 - **Learning Resources**
 - **Management of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Processes**
- 5.2 Each section should:
 - **(Briefly) describe the systems in place within the School**, by way of context for the subsequent evaluation
 - **Evaluate the effectiveness of these systems**, indicating both the strengths and weaknesses of the systems currently in place
 - **Consider the future development of processes in this area**. Schools should seek to incorporate a developmental dimension into each section of their documents, whether by identifying explicit actions for implementation, or areas where alternative approaches may need to be explored.
- 5.3 Schools may wish to use the three headings above in each section of their SEQP, or may prefer to integrate the three areas above in their discussion under the six SEQP headings.

5.4 The length of the SEQP may vary according to the complexity of the School's provision, but should ideally be in the region of 12-15 pages, excluding any appendices.

5.5 Additional questions are provided below. These are not intended to be treated as a checklist, but as a prompt that may help with the writing of each section of the document.

Student Admission, Progression, Support and Guidance

This section should cover the effectiveness of the School's processes for recruiting, admitting, inducting and supporting all taught students, eg

- *Admission and induction*

(This should include a summary of the entry profiles (age, gender, ethnicity, disability) for taught programmes in the School in the past five years, and a commentary on any trends shown by these profiles.)¹³

- How do these statistics impact on the School's approaches to teaching, learning and assessment?
- How successful are the School's recruitment procedures in matching the entry profile to key/preferred entrant skills?
- How successful has the School been in recruiting and retaining students from non-traditional backgrounds and from ethnic minorities?
- How will future environmental changes (e.g. upwards A level grade trends; national markets) impact upon the School's admissions strategy/procedures?
- How effective is the provision for inducting entrants – in particular those with disabilities or special learning needs? Do the School's induction processes reflect the University's Induction Checklist and Guidelines?
- How well does the School support new PGT students, at the start of their postgraduate career?

- *Progression*

(This section should include a short summary and commentary on progression rates in the School for the past five years, and any trends in relation to the separate groups of undergraduates or postgraduate students on taught programmes)¹⁴

- To what extent are students encouraged or required to keep personal profiles of progress and achievement? How effective are these in helping students to articulate their progress, and to identify skills or knowledge gaps?
- By what means does the School encourage and facilitate timely career research and planning, particularly in the early years of the programme?
- How does the School ensure that information on plagiarism, complaints and appeals is available to students and understood by them?
- How effective, equitable, and clear are the School mitigations procedures?

- *Student support (academic and welfare) arrangements*

^{13&4} The data informing this section can be extracted from the BIQAES Statistical Data Set provided by the Planning Office.

- How effective are the procedures for providing students in the School with helpful information on their academic progress? The School may wish to comment on the implementation of these procedures in respect of regularity and formality, and on effectiveness of feedback to and from students. How effective are the procedures for providing students in the School with personal or pastoral support?
- How 'inclusive' are the School's programme planning/development processes? i.e. are the needs of all students, to include those with specific needs/disabilities, taken into consideration when designing and planning the curriculum? Is accessibility considered at all stages (for example physical access and access to learning materials for visually impaired students)?
- Does the School have in place a robust system for sharing information across the School to ensure awareness of students with specific needs/disabilities?
- Does the School have systems in place to monitor the implementation of 'reasonable adjustments' for students with specific needs/disabilities – i.e. to ensure that the adjustments are adhered to by all relevant staff?
- In the light of the above, which of the School's processes relating to student support and progression might benefit from further development, or be made more robust? How might this process of enhancement be begun?
- Which of the School's systems do you feel represent particularly good practice?

Teaching, Learning, Curricula and Assessment

This section should cover the effectiveness of the School's procedures for reviewing curricula and learning opportunities for students on undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes and for research students, eg:

How effective have Annual Review and CPR been in ensuring that students:

- experience an appropriate mix of learning opportunities?
- have an appropriate and balanced workload?
- develop appropriate transferable skills?
- become active participants in the learning process?

How does the School judge that the Annual Review and CPR processes have been effective in ensuring that programmes:

- employ appropriate and balanced delivery and assessment methods?
- are academically coherent, current, and in line with employer expectations?
- capitalise on the research strengths of the School?
- continue to be viable?
- fulfil the requirements of Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), where relevant?
- draw appropriately on subject benchmark statements?

The School should provide particular examples of adjustments made through Annual Review and CPR, or areas of strength or weakness revealed as a result of review:

- How does the School review and assure the maintenance of academic standards, with reference to the External Examiner system and other mechanisms?
- In view of the Birmingham Graduate initiative, how does the School ensure that the personal development of students is a key learning outcome of all its programmes?

- What is the School's approach to research-informed teaching and enquiry-based learning?
- What other mechanisms exist within the School for the review and approval of programme content and delivery? How effective are these in testing the School's provision?
- Does the School have a formal process for monitoring and reviewing its Learning and Teaching Strategy? How has this strategy informed decisions regarding the review or development of provision?
- In the light of the above, which parts of the School's process for monitoring and reviewing its provision might be further developed?
- Are there features which it would consider particularly good practice?

Doctoral Research Supervision

This section should cover the effectiveness of the School's processes for recruitment, induction and the support of doctoral researchers and for the induction and support of doctoral research supervisors.

*Teaching (ie research methods etc) and assessment of doctoral researchers should be covered in the section on **Teaching, Learning, Curricula and Assessment** above*

- *Induction*

(This should include a summary of the doctoral researcher profiles (ethnicity, gender, age, disability) for the programmes in the School in the past five years, and a commentary on any trends shown by these profiles.)¹⁵

- How effective are the School's mechanisms for supporting international and disabled doctoral researchers?
- What systems are in place to support doctoral researchers who enter during the year, rather than at the start of the session, and how effective are they? Do the School's induction systems reflect the University's Induction Checklist and Guidelines?
- How does the School ensure that information on plagiarism is properly understood by overseas students in particular?

- *Student support (academic and welfare) arrangements*

- How effectively does the School manage the reporting and monitoring process for doctoral researchers? How well are the particular needs of part-time and external doctoral researchers identified and provided for?
- How effective is the School support for doctoral researchers who are involved with demonstrating, tutoring or other similar input to taught programmes?
- When did the School last review its doctoral research processes? What changed as a consequence of the review?
- What good practices were identified and how (and where) were they shared?

¹⁵ The data informing this section can be extracted from the BIQAES Statistical Data Set provided by the Planning Office.

Collaborative Arrangements

- If provision in the School is delivered through collaborative arrangements or at a distance, are there aspects of the above that present particular challenges? How does the School know that these are being managed effectively?
- Does the provision of appropriate resources present a particular challenge? The School may wish to comment on any particular successes or failures in meeting such challenges.

Learning Resources

This section should look at the School's use of resources, including staff, to support the learning of students and to maintain or improve the quality of the environment in which teaching and learning take place, eg:

- How well is the School able to prepare students for their effective use of learning resources, including library collections, IT packages and independent learning resources?
- How effective are the working of processes or Committees concerned with the oversight and development of resources?
- How effective are the School's processes for inducting, monitoring and supporting new staff, including teaching by professional/industrial partners and part-time staff?
- To what extent is learning and teaching in the School constrained by the availability of resources and support (IT, library, staff development) provided at institutional level?
- Which areas of the School's resource provision and management might benefit from further development?
- Are there features which the School would consider particularly good practice?

Management of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Processes

This section should include:

- A diagram indicating the staff (offices) and committees responsible for key quality processes, and the routes through which the processes (and outcomes) are monitored, reported and followed up.
- A brief commentary on any recent changes to committee structures or quality management responsibilities, with a rationale, and an assessment of the effectiveness of the current structure.
- An indication of the range of information (qualitative as well as quantitative) available across the School and how it is used in the management of quality assurance and to support enhancement

This section also considers the effectiveness of the School's procedures for maintaining and enhancing quality, and the security of academic standards in respect of academic awards, eg

- How effective are the School's procedures for soliciting and responding to student feedback? What evidence does the School have that students see their Staff Student Committee (SSC) as a genuine forum for dialogue and change?

- How effective are the School's procedures for handling informal complaints from students and for monitoring the type and frequency of complaints?
- Does the School have a clear and effective process for addressing any wider issues arising from complaints and communicating to students any subsequent changes to provision or procedures?
- What evidence does the School have that its procedure for considering and responding to External Examiner comments and PSRB reports is effective?
- Does the School regularly monitor the effectiveness of doctoral research supervision and the outcome of PhD and MPhil examinations, and with what result?
- Is peer observation of teaching carried out on a regular basis in Schools? What impact has this had?
- Is the School satisfied that the outputs from the systems above (External Examiner/ PSRB/ Programme Review reports; SSC minutes) consistently identify other systems/processes in the School (discussed in previous sections) as particular strengths or weaknesses?
- Which areas of the School's quality assurance and enhancement systems might benefit from further development, or be made more robust? Which does the School consider constitute especially good practice?
- How effective has the School been in disseminating good practice identified in external reports, and in addressing matters of concern?
- This section should also include an account of other means used in the past twelve months to facilitate quality enhancement across the School.

Sample Schedules for SQR School Visits

Visit 1

09.00 – 09.30 Visiting team convenes in School over coffee

09.30 – 10.00 Briefing with Senior Management (e.g. Head of School (HoS), Head of Quality Assurance & Enhancement (HQAE), Head of Education (HoE), Operations Manager (Quality)) Brief tour of School (optional)

10.00 – 11.00 **Session 1:** Meeting with staff responsible for quality assurance and enhancement (eg *Quality Committee members; to include Head of School*)

11.00 – 11.15 Team discussion

11.15 – 12.15 **Session 2:** Meeting with staff responsible for teaching, learning, curricula and assessment.
(eg *HQAE, HoE, Head of Student Development and Support, Programme Directors or Managers*)

12.15 – 12.30 Team discussion / break

12.30 – 13.15 Lunch with a representative group of students

13.15 – 13.30 Team discussion

13.30 – 14.30 **Session 3:** Meeting with staff responsible for student admission, progression, support and guidance

14.30 – 14.45 Team discussion

14.45 – 15.15 **Session 4:** Meeting with staff responsible for learning resource systems (eg *technical and administrative staff*)

15.15 – 15.45 **Session 5:** Meeting with staff responsible for the management of Collaborative arrangements

15.45 – 16.15 Private meeting of the visiting team (to review the day, agree key conclusions, and identify areas for further discussion during the second visit)

16.15 – 16.30 Feedback to senior School and College staff (e.g. HoS, HQAE, HoE, Operations Manager, Director of Quality Assurance & Enhancement (DQAE), Director of Education (DoE))

Visit 2

Single meeting (2 to 3 hours' duration), working to an agenda agreed in advance by team and School.
Membership to include the internal members of the visiting team and key staff from the School.

School Quality Review

Notes for Chairs and Internal Team Members

1 Introduction

- 1.1 These notes are designed to provide specific guidance on the role of SQR Chairs and internal team members. They have been prepared as a supplement to the core BIQAES guidance, not as a substitute for it, and should also be read in conjunction with the main guidance.
- 1.2 Notes for Schools, Chairs, Secretaries and internal and external team members have been provided within BIQAES to increase the transparency of the process, and to enable a broader understanding of the objectives of review, and the roles of the visiting team.

2 The School Evaluation of Quality Processes (SEQP)

- 2.1 The SEQP will normally be forwarded to the Chair and internal team members, with supporting information (see the list of supporting documentation on pages 21 and 22), either early in September (if the SQR is taking place in the first semester) or in November (if the SQR is taking place in the second semester). When reading the document, team members are asked to bear in mind the following key principles. The SEQP (and SQR) should:
 - Focus on quality processes and systems (not the content or delivery of provision)
 - Consider the future enhancement of systems, as well as their current effectiveness
 - Cover all areas of the School's provision, including systems for supporting its postgraduate students (postgraduate taught (PGT) and doctoral researchers (DR)), and processes for assuring the quality of joint honours and collaborative provision
- 2.2 Instructions given to Schools for the composition of the SEQP can be found on page 27.

3 The appointment of the external member of the team

- 3.1 The School should provide the Secretary with three nominations for the appointment of the external member of the team, together with a brief curriculum vitae of the candidates.
- 3.2 The Secretary will forward the details of the candidates to the Chair, who is responsible for approving the nomination of the external team member.
- 3.3 The Secretary, on behalf of the Chair, will write to the chosen candidate to invite him/her to be the external member of the team.

4 The preparatory meeting of the internal team

- 4.1 The Chair should ensure that team members are clear about the format and purpose of the two School visits:

Visit 1 should take the form of a series of meetings with students and staff, and should have both a quality assurance and quality enhancement function. It should:

- Test the effectiveness of the systems in place within the School, and the statements made in the SEQP ('constructive challenge')

- Explore some of the issues and areas of good practice discussed in the self-evaluation
- Provide further information about quality assurance and enhancement processes in the School

Visit 2 should take the form of a single, extended meeting between the team and key School staff, and should be a developmental discussion. It should:

- Explore a small number of areas in greater detail
- Focus on quality enhancement
- Operate as a dialogue between the team and School

4.2 The preparatory meeting of the visiting team is primarily in preparation for the first School visit (the findings of this first visit will normally govern the agenda for the second), and should be used to:

- Identify key issues arising out of the SEQP and the supporting documentation, drawing on comments made in advance by the external member of the team
- Draw up a provisional timetable for the visit to the School
- Confirm any further information required in advance of the first review visit

Discussion of the SEQP

4.3 The SEQP is the central document for an SQR visit, and should be the primary focus for discussion at the preparatory meeting. The Secretary will normally provide a list of generic questions which may help teams interrogate the SEQP, but this is not intended to limit the questions the team will direct to the School in the course of the visit itself.

4.4 The critical job for the SQR team is to conduct a review which tests the effectiveness of systems and supports the development of processes in the School in the light of the SEQP submitted and in the context of the School's organisation, history and size.

In its discussion of the SEQP, the team should:

(a) Identify areas which it would wish to discuss with the School during the first visit.

These areas would normally include:

- Areas of good practice which could usefully be further explored
- Processes which do not appear to be working as they should, or where robust procedures have not yet been fully developed
- Any areas where the School has indicated that it would value discussion with the team
- Systems which the team would expect the School to discuss, but on which the SEQP is brief or silent

(b) Consider the most effective way of approaching this discussion.

Where Schools have provided a genuine self-evaluation, the visit can explore identified issues in a discursive fashion and discuss identified solutions and the future enhancement of School systems. Where there appears to be a lack of critical appraisal of School weaknesses, however, the visit may need to focus more on audit than enhancement.

Additional information

4.5 In the process of discussing the SEQP, the team may identify areas in which it would like further information in advance of the first visit. Where this is the case, the Secretary will request the relevant documentation for circulation to team members in advance of the first SQR visit. Such

requests should, however, be kept to a minimum: teams should not request comprehensive paperwork for systems which the team is persuaded are working as they should.

4.6 Schools may find it helpful to indicate web-based sources of information for SQR teams, especially those provided for students. Arrangements may need to be made for access for Birmingham-only material by the external member of the team.

Timetable

4.7 Once the team has identified its priorities for the first School visit, it should draft a schedule for this session. A timetable template is provided as a guide (page 34), but teams should feel free to modify this as appropriate. The final schedule should reflect the team's discussion of the SEQP, rather than conforming to any predetermined 'norm'.

4.8 The timetable should, however, make provision for:

- Discussion with key staff involved in the oversight of quality systems, and of teaching and learning in the School
- A meeting with a representative selection of students from the School
- Private meetings of the visiting team, to review the progress of the visit, and to identify issues for further discussion during the subsequent visit
- A brief closing session to provide initial feedback to senior School and College staff

4.9 The provisional timetable drawn up by the team will be discussed by the Secretary with the School, and a final version circulated to members in advance of the review.

General

4.10 The Chair may also wish at the preparatory meeting to identify a 'lead' from the team for each of the sessions in the School. The Secretary will not normally lead an SQR session. The Guild representative and external member may each lead a session, at the discretion of the Chair.

4.11 The external member of the visiting team will not attend the preparatory meeting, but will have received the SEQP and supporting documentation, and is normally expected to send comments electronically. Any additional paperwork will be forwarded by the Secretary following the preparatory meeting, and the Chair may also suggest additional information to be provided to the external member in advance of the first School visit.

4.12 Where Chairs have not previously led an SQR visit, a briefing meeting will be provided in advance of the preparatory meeting.

5 The first SQR visit

5.1 The guidance below assumes that the visit will follow the basic pattern of the timetable template attached. Teams may need to modify the pattern according to the timetables they have drawn up.

5.2 The first School visit will normally begin with a private meeting of the team. The Chair may find it helpful during this session to:

- Brief the external member on the outcomes of the preliminary meeting, and confirm his/her role during the course of the visit itself
- Confirm the key objectives for the visit, and the issues identified for particular discussion
- Discuss any issues arising from/resolved by any additional information requested by the team

Meetings with School staff

5.3 The opening meeting provides a valuable opportunity for the Chair to indicate the terms in which the team is approaching the visit, and what the review is seeking to achieve. It also provides an opportunity for the School to provide a brief overview of the School's background and strategy, its organisational structures, key roles and the context in which it works.

5.4 The content of subsequent sessions will vary from School to School, according to the issues identified by the team at its preparatory meeting. The Chair should however ensure that discussion:

- Focuses on quality processes and systems (not the content of provision)
- Covers all areas of the School's provision, including systems for supporting its postgraduate students (PGT and DR), and processes for assuring the quality of joint honours and collaborative provision
- Considers mechanisms for the future enhancement of systems, as well as their current effectiveness

Meeting with students

5.5 This meeting will normally be held at lunchtime in an informal environment within the School. The meeting should begin with the introduction of the team members by the Chair and a short statement explaining the purpose of the meeting and reassuring the students that individuals would not be identified in subsequent reports.

5.6 Team members (including the Secretary, if needed) should be distributed as needed to speak with students, who should represent a range of cohorts and programmes including research students. Conversation should primarily be shaped by discussion at the earlier sessions with staff, and by matters arising from the SEQP.

5.7 As a matter of general principle, discussion should seek:

- To explore the student experience of teaching and learning in the School
- To draw out positive, as well as negative, perceptions
- To explore specific areas raised by the visit

5.8 The meeting with students is an important part of an SQR visit, but should not be unduly privileged in the team's final assessment of the systems in place within the School. Any comments made by the students should be tested against other evidence, whether in the form of documentation, or discussions with School staff.

Private team meeting

5.9 The final private team meeting should be used to agree the findings of the visit. The template provided to Secretaries for the compilation of the SQR report is available on page 49.

5.10 Chairs should ensure that each of the five key areas covered in the SEQP are discussed at the conclusion of the review. Teams should consider in each case:

- The quality of the evaluation in the SEQP
- The extent to which this evaluation is supported by the evidence available to the team
- Features of strength
- Areas of weakness
- The extent to which the team would endorse action proposed in the SEQP or at the review to build on strengths or address weaknesses

- Specific recommendations which it would wish to make to the School, a constituent Department (where relevant), or to the University, and specific items of good practice

5.11 The team should also consider the School's overall management of quality systems. This might include the extent to which processes are embedded in learning and teaching practice and the level of engagement across the School with quality systems and matters. Teams should also consider whether systems are sufficiently flexible and dynamic to prompt and respond to the further enhancement and future development of provision.

5.12 The team should also use this session to identify a small number of areas for further discussion during the subsequent visit. These should include areas of good practice as well as concern, and should be suitable for a more sustained developmental discussion.

6 Between the two School visits

The Secretary will write to the School to confirm the areas to be discussed during the second visit. The School might be asked to indicate areas in which it would particularly welcome a further discussion. The Secretary will also ask the School to confirm the location of this meeting, to identify the members of staff to attend from the School, and to provide any additional information that the team wishes to see in advance.

7 The second visit to the School

7.1 The second visit to the School should take the form of a single, extended meeting between the internal members of the team and key staff from the School. The visit should focus on development and enhancement, and operate as an open dialogue with the School.

8 SQR Report and Follow-Up Action

8.1 The Secretary to the review team will draft the report, and should approach the Chair for comment and approval before forwarding the draft to the other members of the visiting team, including the external member, who will be asked to sign off the report to confirm its findings and conclusions.

8.2 The team should ensure that:

- The report accurately and collectively reflects the key findings and conclusions of the review
- The recommendations are clear and sufficiently contextualised for the School (and/or University) to identify the action needed to address the team's concerns

8.3 Once the report has been agreed by the team, it will be sent to the School for the correction of errors of fact. The final document will then be forwarded by the School, together with an action plan detailing how the recommendations contained in the report will be addressed, to the next meetings of the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC) and of the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC) for approval.

8.4 If issues relating to Corporate Services provision are raised during the SQR, the Secretary will discuss these with the relevant Corporate Service before drafting the report. Where possible, and in conjunction with the Secretary and/or Chair of the SQR as appropriate, the School and the Corporate Service should discuss the issues so that any actions can be agreed and implemented without delay, and can be reflected in the final report.

8.5 If the final report contains a recommendation for action by an office within Corporate Services, the Secretary will liaise with relevant colleagues to prepare an action plan detailing how the recommendation will be addressed. The action plan will be submitted to the CQAEC for information and to the UQAEC for approval, alongside the School's action plan.

8.6 12 months after the SQR, the School is asked to present a progress report to the CQAEC and to the UQAEC. The Secretary will arrange for a progress report in relation to any recommendations to Corporate Services.

School Quality Review

Notes for External Team Members

1 Introduction

- 1.1 These notes are designed to provide specific guidance on the role of the external member in the process of SQR. They have been prepared as a supplement to the core BIQAES guidance, not as a substitute for it, and should also be read in conjunction with the main guidance.
- 1.2 Notes for Schools, Chairs, Secretaries, and internal and external team members have been published within BIQAES to increase the transparency of the process, and to enable a broader understanding of the objectives of review, and the roles of the visiting team.

2 SQR and the role of the external member

- 2.1 SQR is a six-yearly review designed to test and improve the effectiveness of the internal processes carried out by Schools. An external advisor from a similar discipline at another institution or from industry is invited to take part in this process both to monitor the integrity of the review, and to provide a broader perspective on quality management within the subject area.
- 2.2 SQR involves the submission of a self-evaluation (School Evaluation of Quality Processes (SEQP) by the School, two review visits, and the compilation of a report. The visits to the School at the centre of the process will normally be scheduled a few weeks apart, and have the following formats and functions:

Visit 1 should take the form of a series of meetings with students and staff from the School, and has both a quality assurance and quality enhancement function. It should:

- Test the effectiveness of systems in place within the School, and the statements made in the SEQP ('constructive challenge')
- Explore some of the issues and areas of good practice discussed in the self-evaluation
- Provide further information about quality assurance and enhancement processes in the School

Visit 2 should take the form of a single, extended meeting between the team and key School staff, and should be a developmental discussion. It should:

- Explore a small number of areas in greater detail
- Focus on quality enhancement
- Operate as a dialogue between the team and School

- 2.3 The external member of the team will normally be asked to read and comment on the SEQP, to attend the first of the two School visits, to confirm the agenda for the second, and to consider the final report. The external member will not normally be expected to attend the second visit to the School.

3 The School Evaluation of Quality Processes (SEQP)

- 3.1 The central document for the SQR process is the SEQP, prepared by the School in advance. This will normally be forwarded to team members, with supporting documentation, either early in September (if the SQR is taking place in the first semester) or in November (if the review is taking place in the second semester).

3.2 When reading the SEQP, team members are asked to bear in mind the following key principles provided to the School regarding the basis of SQR, and the scope of the self-evaluation:

The SEQP (and SQR) should:

- Focus on quality processes and systems (not the content or delivery of provision)
- Consider the future enhancement of systems, as well as their current effectiveness
- Cover all areas of the School's provision, including systems for supporting its postgraduate students (postgraduate taught (PGT) and doctoral researcher (DR)), and processes for assuring the quality of joint honours and collaborative provision

3.3 Instructions given to Schools for the composition of the SEQP can be found on page 27. Any queries relating to the SEQP or supporting documentation should be addressed in the first instance to the SQR Secretary in the Academic Quality Unit (AQU).

4 The preparatory meeting of the internal team

4.1 The Secretary to the visiting team will set up a preliminary meeting for all internal members of the team to discuss the SEQP (normally 3-4 weeks in advance of the first of the two School visits). This will be used to identify issues arising out of the SEQP, draw up a provisional timetable for the first visit to the School, and to confirm any further information required in advance of the first review visit.

4.2 The external member of the visiting team will not normally attend the preparatory meeting, but will be invited to send any comments electronically in advance.

4.3 Following the preparatory meeting, the Secretary to the team will inform the external of the key points of discussion and the timetable for the visit, and forward any additional documentation requested from the School in advance.

5 The first SQR visit

5.1 The first session will normally begin with a private meeting of the team. The Chair will use this session to brief the external member on the outcomes of the preliminary meeting, and confirm his/her role during the course of the visit itself. There will also be an opportunity for the external to raise any areas of particular interest or concern, and to clarify any matters in advance of the meetings with the School.

5.2 The first team meeting will also be used to confirm the key objectives for the visit, and the issues identified for particular discussion, and to discuss any issues arising from or resolved by any additional paperwork requested by the team.

Meetings with School staff

5.3 The content of these sessions will vary considerably from School to School, according to the issues identified by the team at its preparatory meeting. Discussion should, however, focus on quality systems, cover all areas of the School's provision, and consider good practice and quality enhancement, as well as areas of concern.

5.4 The team may at the preparatory meeting have identified a 'lead' from the team for each of the sessions in the School. The external member may be invited to lead a particular session, especially where their disciplinary expertise may be of assistance (e.g. in relation to learning resources). The external member should feel free to comment at each of the meetings according to his/her particular perspective and expertise.

Meeting with students

5.5 This meeting will normally be held at lunchtime in an informal environment within the School. Team members (including the Secretary, if needed) should be distributed as needed to speak with students, who should represent a range of cohorts and programmes. Conversation should primarily be shaped by discussion at the earlier sessions with staff, and by matters arising from the SEQP.

5.6 As a matter of general principle, discussion should seek:

- To explore the student experience of teaching and learning in the School
- To draw out positive, as well as negative, perceptions
- To explore specific areas raised by the visit

5.7 The meeting with students is an important part of an SQR visit, but should not be unduly privileged in the team's final assessment of the systems in place within the School.

Private team meeting

5.8 The final private team meeting should be used to agree the findings of the visit. The template provided to Secretaries for the compilation of the SQR report is available on page 49.

5.9 Teams should discuss each of the five key areas covered in the SEQP at the conclusion of the review, considering in each case:

- The quality of the evaluation in the SEQP
- The extent to which this evaluation is supported by the evidence available to the team
- Features of strength
- Areas of weakness
- The extent to which the team would endorse action proposed in the SEQP or at the review to build on strengths or address weaknesses
- Specific recommendations which it would wish to make to the School, a constituent Department (where relevant), or to the University, and specific items of good practice

5.10 The team should also consider the School's overall management of quality systems. This might include the extent to which processes are embedded in learning and teaching practice and the level of engagement across the School with quality systems and matters. Teams should also consider whether systems are sufficiently flexible and dynamic to prompt and respond to the further enhancement and future development of provision.

5.11 This session should also be used to identify a small number of areas for further discussion during the subsequent visit. These should include areas of good practice as well as concern, and should be suitable for a more sustained developmental discussion. The external will be involved in this discussion, although s/he will not normally attend the subsequent visit itself.

6 SQR Report and Follow-Up Action

6.1 Following the second visit to the School, the Secretary to the review team will draft a report, and forward this to the members of the visiting team, including the external. The external will be asked to confirm that report accurately reflects the key findings and conclusions of the first part of the review. Any comments which dissent from the key findings and/or conclusions should be referred to the Chair for consideration. The report should represent the view of the majority.

6.2 The report will be sent to the School for the correction of errors of fact. The final document will then be forwarded by the School, together with an action plan detailing how the recommendations contained in the report will be addressed, to the next meetings of the College

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC) and of the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC) for approval.

- 6.3 If issues relating to Corporate Services provision are raised during the SQR, the Secretary will discuss these with the relevant Corporate Service before drafting the report. Where possible, and in conjunction with the Secretary and/or Chair of the SQR as appropriate, the School and the Corporate Service should discuss the issues so that any actions can be agreed and implemented without delay, and can be reflected in the final report.
- 6.4 If the final report contains a recommendation to an office within Corporate Service, the Secretary will liaise with relevant colleagues to prepare an action plan detailing how the recommendation will be addressed. The action plan will be submitted to the CQAEC for information and to the UQAEC for approval, alongside the School's action plan.
- 6.5 12 months after the SQR, the School is asked to present a progress report to the CQAEC and to the UQAEC. The Secretary will arrange for a progress report in relation to any recommendations to Corporate Services.

7 Further Information

Any queries concerning the role of the external member of the team should be directed in the first instance to the Academic Quality Unit, telephone 0121 414 6381.

School Quality Review

Notes for Secretaries

1 Preparation for the SQR visit

- 1.1 The Secretary will offer to arrange a meeting with the School to explain the SQR procedures and answer any questions on the process and on the School Evaluation of Quality Processes (SEQP), which is the central document for the SQR process and is prepared by Schools in advance.
- 1.2 The Secretary will ask the School to provide three nominations for the appointment of the external member of the team on the form provided. The nominations will be forwarded to the Chair, who will decide on the preferred candidate. The Secretary, on behalf of the Chair, will write to the chosen candidate to invite him/her to act as external member of the review team.
- 1.3 The SEQP will normally be submitted to the Secretary, with supporting information¹⁶, either early in September (if the SQR is taking place in the first semester) or in November (if the SQR is taking place in the second semester). It will be forwarded to team members approximately four weeks prior to the preliminary visit.
- 1.4 In advance of receiving the SEQP, the Secretary should:
 - Arrange the dates for the first visit and the half-day follow-up visit, in discussion with the School and with the review team.
 - Set up a preparatory meeting for all internal team members. This should normally be scheduled 2-3 weeks in advance of the first SQR visit.
 - Advise the School of the supporting documentation they need to provide and obtain the supporting documentation to be sourced from Corporate Services (see the list of supporting documentation on page 21 and 22).
- 1.5 Upon receipt of the SEQP and supporting documentation provided by the School, the Secretary should:
 - Read the paperwork submitted by the School, request clarifications, if needed, and check that all the supporting documentation to be supplied by the School has been provided.
 - Prepare a list of questions or issues arising from the SEQP and other documentation and, with the Chair's approval, circulate the list to the team in advance of the preparatory meeting
- 1.6 The external member of the team will not attend the preparatory meeting, but will be invited to send comments on the SEQP to the Secretary. These will be forwarded to the internal members of the team in advance of the preparatory meeting.
- 1.7 Where Chairs have not previously led an SQR visit, the Academic Quality Unit (AQU) will arrange a briefing meeting, which the Secretary should also attend.

2 The preparatory meeting of the internal team

- 2.1 The main objectives of the preliminary meeting are to:
 - Identify key issues arising out of the SEQP, drawing on comments made in advance by the external member (it is good practice for the Secretary to review the SEQP in advance and prepare a list of suggested issues for discussion at the preliminary meeting)

¹⁶ The list of supporting documents used as an input into the SQR is provided at pages 21 and 22 of the BIQAES Guidance.

- Draw up a provisional timetable for the first visit to the School (example provided on page 34)
- Confirm any further information required in advance of the first review visit.

2.2 The Secretary to an SQR is not expected to be an expert on School systems or quality issues, but most Chairs will welcome input into the general discussion at the preparatory meeting. Secretaries will also need to:

- Keep a careful record of additional paperwork requested by the team, and of the personnel it hopes to meet from the School
- Intervene (if needed) to keep the meeting on track. (See 2.1 above and 2.3 below)
- Advise the team on any matters relating to the administrative process, or make a note of any queries requiring clarification

2.3 Discussion at the preparatory meeting should focus on:

- Systems for assuring and enhancing quality, rather than the content or delivery of School provision. The latter is covered by Annual Review and Comprehensive Programme Review (CPR)
- The SEQP and the issues it raises (rather than the timetable template and sheet of generic suggested questions)

It should also cover:

- The future development of systems (quality enhancement), as well as gaps or inadequacies in current procedures (quality assurance)
- Processes relating to all types of students and provision, including doctoral researchers and collaborative programmes

3 Liaison with School staff

3.1 Each School subject to SQR is asked to nominate a 'contact' member of staff, who co-ordinates the administrative side of the process within the School. Once the preparatory meeting has taken place, the Secretary will need to meet with this contact to:

- Discuss any additional documentation requested by the team
- Finalise the timetable for the first visit (in the light of the teaching commitments of key staff)
- Confirm arrangements for meeting with students during the visit
- Establish which room(s) will be used for the review
- Confirm that the School will provide tea and coffee according to the timetable agreed

3.2 The meeting with students is normally scheduled for lunchtime during the first visit, and most Schools are happy to arrange a lunch at which the team can chat to students informally. If the School is unhappy about the associated cost, however, the team may need to agree a similar meeting on slightly different terms.

3.3 Following the meeting with the School, the Secretary should:

- Circulate any additional documentation to the internal members of the team
- Confirm with the team the final timetable for the first visit, and the location of the first team meeting
- Confirm these details with the external member, who will attend the first visit to the School

4 The first SQR visit

- 4.1 On the day of the first visit, the Secretary will need to:
 - Keep a record of discussion, in preparation for the final report
 - Keep the Chair on track or to time
 - Advise on any issues to which an Academic Services perspective is relevant
 - (In some reviews) Talk to a group of students during the lunchtime session (sample questions provided), and report key issues back to the rest of the visiting team
- Most Chairs will also welcome input into the general discussion.
- 4.2 The findings of the review should be discussed at the final private team meeting and will form the basis of the key recommendations in the final report.
- 4.3 The team should also use this session to identify a small number of areas for further discussion the following week (including areas of good practice, as well as areas of concern). **The second visit is intended as a developmental (quality enhancement) discussion**, and topics should be identified with this in mind.

5 Between the two visits

Following the first visit to the School, the Secretary should:

- Write to the School to confirm the subjects for discussion during the second half-day visit. (Where appropriate, the School might be asked to indicate areas in which it would particularly welcome further discussion.)
- Liaise with the School to confirm which staff will attend, and the location of the meeting
- Gather and circulate any additional information sought by the review team in advance

6 The second visit to the School

The key responsibility of the Secretary during the second visit to the School is to keep a record of discussion, and in particular of action agreed by the team and School. The Secretary should also be prepared to respond to questions on any areas relating to Academic Services provision or the SQR process.

7 The SQR report and follow-up action

- 7.1 Following the SQR visits, the Secretary is responsible for drafting and agreeing a report, outlining the key findings of the review. A template for preparing an SQR report is available on page 49.
- 7.2 The Secretary should:
 - Prepare a draft report of the review
 - Send a copy of this report to the Chair of the review, for comment and approval
 - Confirm the content with other team members, including the external. The external should be asked to confirm his/her approval of the key findings and conclusions recorded in the report. Any comments which dissent from the key findings and/or conclusions should be referred to the Chair for consideration. The report should represent the view of the majority.
 - Send the amended version, once agreed by the team, to the staff contact in the School. (The School should normally receive the report within 6-8 weeks of the SQR visit). The School is

not permitted to contest the findings of review, but should be asked to comment on any factual errors contained in the report

- Ask the School to provide an action plan detailing how the recommendations contained in the report will be addressed, for submission, together with the report, to the next meeting of the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC).
- Obtain the final action plan approved by the CQAEC for circulation to the next meeting of the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC), where the recommendations made through SQR will then be followed up.

7.3 If issues relating to Corporate Services provision are raised during the SQR, the Secretary should discuss these with the relevant Corporate Service before drafting the report. Where possible, and in conjunction with the Secretary and/or Chair of the SQR as appropriate, the School and the Corporate Service should discuss the issues so that any actions can be agreed and implemented without delay, and can be reflected in the final report.

7.4 If the final report contains a recommendation for action by an office within Corporate Service, the Secretary should liaise with relevant colleagues to prepare an action plan detailing how the recommendation will be addressed. The action plan will be submitted to the CQAEC for information and to the UQAEC for approval, alongside the School's action plan.

7.3 12 months after the SQR, the School is asked to present a progress report to the CQAEC and to the UQAEC. The Secretary will arrange for a progress report in relation to any recommendations to Corporate Services.

School Quality Review

Report Template

Presentation and format

- First page: University marque. Font: Arial 16, bold.
- Subsequent pages: Font: Arial 11 – Main headings in bold and underlined; sub-headings on a separate line to the following text, in italics (not to be numbered).
Numbering for each main section: 1,2,3, etc.
Numbering for paragraphs within each section: 2.1, 2.2 etc.

1 Introduction and context:

Brief contextual information (size of School; period since last internal/external review; recent structural change (where relevant))

2 Outline of the visit

- (a) Membership of the visiting team.
- (b) List of information supplied to the team before and during the visit (in an appendix).
- (c) Staff/student groups met by the team.
- (d) Outline of the second visit (Membership of the meeting; key areas identified for discussion (agenda)).

3 Findings

The team's view of each of the key areas covered in the SEQP and discussed during the main visit and the follow-up:

- (a) Student Admission, Progression, Support and Guidance
- (b) Teaching, Learning, Curricula and Assessment
- (c) Doctoral Research Supervision and Training
- (d) Collaborative Arrangements
- (e) Learning Resources
- (f) Management of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Processes

Under each heading, the team should consider:

- The extent of the evaluation in the SEQP
- The extent to which the evaluation is supported by the evidence available to the team
- Features of strength
- Weaknesses, distinguishing between those recognised in the SEQP, and those that did not emerge until the review
- The team's endorsement, or otherwise, of action proposed in the SEQP to build on strengths or to address weaknesses

Each section should incorporate commendations and recommendations, to the School, a constituent Department (where relevant), or to the University, and with a note of particular instances of good practice. These will also be reproduced at the end of the report.

The team should also consider the School's overall management of quality systems.
This might include:

- The extent to which processes are embedded in learning and teaching practice
- The level of engagement across the School with quality systems and matters

- Whether systems are sufficiently flexible and dynamic to prompt and respond to the further enhancement and future development of provision.

4 Conclusion

- A record of any action (with timescales where appropriate) agreed with the School at the meeting, including action by the University. This should also note areas of good practice identified within the School, and fora in which this might be disseminated.
- Conclusions
- Commendations
- Recommendations
- 'Academic Quality Unit'

Month –Year

Review of Collaborative Provision Arrangements

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document provides a framework for Collaborative Provision Reviews. Normally the review will comprise the submission of a self-evaluation report and a site visit. However, because of the differing nature of collaborative provision, the review procedure may be amended accordingly. In some cases the review may be paper-based or a hybrid or another format. The University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee, on the recommendation of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality), will make the final decision as to the format of each review.
- 1.2 The Collaborative Provision Manager will be pleased to provide assistance at any stage of the Review process. Please contact Margaret Cannadine (m.e.cannadine@bham.ac.uk; telephone: 44891).

2 Timing of Review

- 2.1 All validated and joint programmes, together with other collaborative arrangements, are the subject of time-delimited legal agreements, normally with a review some 12-18 months before the expiry of the agreement. These programmes are also subject to Annual Programme Review by Schools.
- 2.2 The Collaborative Provision Manager will advise Colleges and Schools when reviews are due to take place.

3 Purpose of the Review

- 3.1 The Review is for the University to:
 - monitor the efficacy of the arrangements set out in the legal agreement;
 - review a range of documentation, including Annual Programme Review data, to ensure academic quality and standards are maintained and enhanced;
 - consider the strategic direction of the arrangement and the programme(s) involved;
 - determine, in the light of the above, whether or not the arrangement should be renewed for a further period, and, if so, on what basis.

4 Financial Arrangements

- 4.1 Any costs incurred in the review process, including a fee and reasonable expenses for the external member, together with the re-accreditation or re-validation fee, where appropriate, will be borne by:
 - a. the collaborative organisation for accreditation/validation arrangements;
 - b. the University School or College for other collaborative arrangements.

5 Review Process

- 5.1 The stages and more detailed information about each stage in the Site Visit and Paper-Based format of Collaborative Provision Reviews are set out below. Unless otherwise specified, the activity in each stage of the different review formats is the same.

| | Site Visit | Paper-Based |
|-----|--|--|
| 1. | Briefing Meeting | Briefing Meeting |
| 2. | Composition of Review Panel | Composition of Review Panel |
| 3. | Documentation | Documentation |
| 4. | Pre-Meeting | Chair Meeting |
| 5. | Site Visit | Panel Meeting |
| 6a. | Final Report: Content | Final Report: Content |
| 6b. | Final Report: Preparation and Submission | Final Report: Preparation and Submission |

Note: the stages may be slightly amended where a hybrid or other format of review is approved.

Stage 1: Briefing Meeting

A briefing meeting between the “home” School, collaborative organisation and the Secretary to the Review Panel (“the Secretary”) should be held in order to brief them about the purpose of the review, consider the operation of these procedures, timescales, and any related matters. This will provide an opportunity to clarify any points of information, especially relating to the documentation to be produced.

The Secretary should arrange the meeting.

Note: The term “School” will be used throughout this document. Depending on a School’s structure, it may be more appropriate, in some cases, for these tasks to be undertaken by the relevant Department.

Stage 2: Composition of Review Panel

The Review Panel shall normally include:

- a. A Chair: Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (DPVC) or College Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement
- b. An external member from another institution, professional body or industry, within the UK. This should not be the current or recent (last three years) external examiner for the programme. The Chair of the Review Panel, through the Secretary, will approve the nominee. The Secretary will liaise with the external member concerning all arrangements for the Review.
- c. A School Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement from another College
- d. The School Director of Education
- e. A representative of the Director of Academic Services will act as Secretary to the Review Panel. The Collaborative Provision Manager or another member of the Academic Policy and Quality Sub-Division of Academic and Student Administration may attend to provide advice to the Review Panel.

Stage 3: Documentation

The documentation that will be considered by the Review Panel should be prepared by the collaborative organisation, with assistance, where appropriate, from the School. The Secretary will then distribute it to the members of the Review Panel.

The Review documentation should :

- be mostly evaluative not descriptive, constructively self-critical and reflective;
- provide an overview/perspective on the period of the current legal agreement covering the arrangement. This might be viewed as equivalent to an annual report, but over a longer time span.

In order to support collaborative organisations in the preparation of the documentation, self-evaluation prompts have been devised, attached at Appendix A. Collaborative organisations should provide a narrative using the prompts as headings to responses.

Information about documentation to be included is set out after each Section heading. Much of this material should already be available and can be submitted as appendices. The exact length and nature of the review document may vary according to the type of collaboration under review.

“Documentation” may include web-based resources as well as printed material, as long as it is easily accessible to members of the Review Panel.

Stage 4: Site Visit: Pre-Meeting

The Secretary should review the documentation and provide a draft list of issues for discussion at the Pre-Meeting.

The external member will not attend the Pre-Meeting, but will be asked by the Secretary to provide any written comments for the meeting.

The Secretary should arrange for the University members of the Review Panel, including the Secretary, to meet to consider the documentation from the collaborative organisation and the written comments from the external member in order to:

- identify additional/particular/supplementary information required (if any);
- determine the final format/programme of the site visit, such as identifying particular groups and individuals to meet, resources to see, etc;
- consider the main issues for discussion/investigation and the kinds of questions that the Review Panel might ask;
- feedback comments to the collaborative organisation at this stage (if any).

Stage 4: Paper-Based: Chair Meeting

The Secretary should review the documentation and provide a draft list of issues for discussion with the Chair of the Review Panel.

The Secretary will ask all Review Panel members to provide any written comments for the meeting.

The meeting between the Chair and the Secretary will consider the documentation from the collaborative organisation and the written comments from Review Panel members in order to:

- identify additional/particular/supplementary information required (if any);
- consider the main issues for discussion/investigation by the Review Panel;
- feedback comments to the collaborative organisation at this stage (if any).

Stage 5: Site Visit

A review, which includes a site visit to the collaborative organisation, will be organised by the Secretary. The visit enables face-to-face meetings with key personnel and current students, together with a tour of the collaborative organisation's premises and resources available to the students.

The format of a site visit to a collaborative organisation overseas may need to be modified in order to be logically feasible, particularly where the collaborative organisation is based outside Europe.

The purpose of the site visit is to review the operation of the collaborative arrangement including programme(s), and the student arrangements and experience rather than resolve any points relating to the details of the financial and administrative arrangements, which are handled separately.

A draft programme might comprise:

- a. a short meeting of the Review Panel in private to discuss the programme for the day in more detail (at least half an hour);
- b. an initial meeting with the head of the organisation or other appropriate person, eg Head of School or equivalent;
- c. a meeting with the key programme personnel (one hour) responsible for learning and teaching and student support, including the Collaborative Programmes Officer;
- d. a tour/review of premises which may include teaching rooms, library provision, IT resources, social spaces (one hour);
- e. a meeting with students (half an hour or longer, if over lunch);
- f. a brief meeting with support and/or technical staff;
- g. feedback of 'outline' findings to the organisation and programme team.

Sufficient short breaks should be built into the day to allow the Review Panel to review each meeting before proceeding to the next meeting, and to agree on the key findings prior to the feedback meeting and departure. At least 30 minutes should be provided for the Review Panel before the feedback meeting.

An example of a Site Visit Programme is available at Appendix B for information.

Stage 5: Paper-Based Review Panel Meeting

The Secretary will arrange a meeting for all members of the Review Panel to consider the documentation together with the issues raised at the meeting between the Chair and the Secretary, and any other matters relevant to the Review.

Stage 6a: Content of the Report of the Review Panel

The report will normally cover the following topics:

- a. Background: any particular context/constraints within which the collaborative organisation operates. This should also include the name of the University School and list the programmes involved..
- b. The review format
- c. The Review Panel membership
- d. A list of issues discussed, for example:

- philosophy of organisation
- progress following any previous reviews
- follow-up to any QAA visit or other inspection by a professional body
- entry to the programme and admissions strategy
- student numbers
- resources and teaching space
- assessment
- quality assurance
- staffing/staff development
- future developments
- student support systems
- students' comments/issues/perceptions

e. Identification of areas for commendation or particular strengths or good practice.

f. Matters requiring further consideration that are not part of any conditions for renewal of the agreement, but which will need to be followed up if the agreement is renewed. This might include any weaknesses of the quality of the provision and whether it is meeting acceptable academic standards for the award.

g. A clear recommendation on whether or not the arrangement should be renewed, for what period of time, and whether or not the renewal is subject to any conditions.

Note: If it is recommended that the arrangement should not be renewed, an individual(s) should be identified who will manage the transition to ensure commitments to the existing students are fulfilled.

Stage 6b: Preparation and Submission of the Report of the Review Panel

The written report should be prepared by the Secretary and agreed by the Review Panel.

The Secretary will send the report to the collaborative organisation for the correction of any factual errors only and, if it wishes, to submit any comments to the Review Panel.

The final report, recommendations, and any comments made by the collaborative organisation will be submitted to:

- a. the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee for consideration, and to monitor quality and standards at a local level;
- b. the College Board to consider and endorse the recommendations;
- c. the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee to give or withhold its approval for the renewal of the arrangement, and to monitor quality and standards.

The Collaborative Provision Manager will send, to the collaborative organisation, a copy of the report, together with any comments from the various University committees and notification concerning the completion of the follow up template.

6 Legal Agreement

- 6.1 If the arrangement is to be renewed, the Collaborative Provision Manager will oversee the drawing up of the new legal agreement.

- 6.2 The College and School will have opportunities to comment on the draft agreement before submission to the University's Legal Services for approval. The draft legal agreement must **not** be made available outside the University until approved by Legal Services. The collaborative organisation will have an opportunity to comment on the draft agreement before proceeding to final signature.
- 6.3 The Collaborative Provision Manager will arrange for the agreement to be signed by the Provost and Vice-Principal of the University and the designated signatory of the collaborative organisation. The Provost and Vice-Principal is the University's designated signatory for such agreements, which must **not** be signed by Heads of Colleges, Schools or Departments or any other member of the University.
- 6.4 One original signed copy will be retained by the Collaborative Provision Manager (on behalf of the University); the other by the collaborative organisation. A copy will be forwarded to the relevant College, School, Legal Services, Finance Office or other offices, where appropriate.

7 Follow Up to Review

- 7.1 Nine months after the review, the Collaborative Programmes Officer (CPO) (or equivalent), in conjunction with the collaborative organisation, should prepare the follow up template report (provided by the Collaborative Provision Manager). The follow up report should be submitted as follows:
 - by the CPO (or equivalent) to the School Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (School HQAE) to be signed off for onward transmission and sponsoring through the relevant School Committee;
 - by the School HQAE, together with any comments, to the College Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (College DQAE) to be signed off for onward transmission and sponsoring through the College Board;
 - by the College DQAE, together with all comments, to the Collaborative Provision Manager for submission to the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee for consideration and approval.

(Note: Even though the follow up reports are sponsored by different officers through the School/College Committees, it is the responsibility of the CPO (or equivalent) to ensure that this is undertaken in a timely manner.)

**REVIEW OF COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENT WITH
[Insert Collaborative Organisation Name]**

Self-Evaluation Prompts

SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Completion of the Self-Evaluation (SE)

| | |
|-------|---|
| 1.1.1 | Name of person completing the SE and their relationship to the programme |
| 1.1.2 | How has the collaborative organisation been involved in the completion of the SE? |

1.2 UoB School and Agreement Details

Please append a copy of the Agreement, including any Schedules/Appendices (to be provided by Review Secretary)

| | |
|-------|--|
| 1.2.1 | College |
| 1.2.1 | School/Department |
| 1.2.1 | Award(s) and title of the programme(s) covered by the Agreement |
| 1.2.2 | Start and end date of the Agreement |
| 1.2.3 | Type of Collaborative Arrangement (see the Collaborative Provision Policy: http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/collab/ for further information) |
| 1.2.4 | If the programme(s) is accredited by a professional, statutory or regulatory body, please provide details. |

1.3 Key Programme Personnel

| | |
|-------|--|
| 1.3.1 | UoB Collaborative Programme Officer(s) (CPO) or other Academic Programme Leaders |
| 1.3.2 | Collaborative Organisation Programme Leader(s) |
| 1.3.3 | UoB Administrative Contact(s) |
| 1.3.4 | Collaborative Organisation Administrative Contact(s) |
| 1.3.5 | Other key staff (please specify roles and responsibilities) |

SECTION TWO: EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AGREEMENT

2.1 Purpose of the Agreement

| | |
|-------|---|
| 2.1.1 | Please briefly outline the original aims and context for the collaboration covered by the Agreement. For example, to provide specialised professional development or widen access. |
| 2.1.2 | How far has the arrangement succeeded in meeting these aims? |
| 2.1.3 | Do these aims remain relevant and/or achievable in the future? Please respond with reference to the strategic plans of the University/ College/School and of the collaborative organisation, plus any other relevant factors, e.g. funding changes. |

2.2 Operation of the Terms of the Agreement

Documentation to be appended:

- **Where a Collaborative Programmes Officer has been appointed, copies of each annual report since the start of the Agreement, together with any additional information showing how issues raised in the reports have been addressed.**
- **Copies of any recruitment/promotional literature used in relation to the programme(s).**
- **Data illustrating applications and admissions numbers (including the range of entry qualifications).**
- **Any available financial information to show whether costs have been covered.**

| | |
|-------|--|
| 2.2.1 | To what extent has the Agreement operated according to its terms? Please identify specific problems and how these have been resolved. |
| 2.2.2 | Where any issues remain unresolved, what are the reasons for this? For example, lack of clarity in the Agreement, a change in circumstances meaning some terms are no longer relevant, resource limitations or a need for guidance from the University. |
| 2.2.3 | Please identify any aspects of the Agreement where the terms have been met but improvements could be made. For example, access to additional University resources. |
| 2.2.4 | Has the student intake remained within the minimum and maximum limits specified in the Agreement, and been recruited according to the entry requirements stated in the programme specification? Is there a case for changing the minimum and/or maximum intake numbers if the Agreement is to be renewed? |
| 2.2.5 | Have the financial arrangements specified in the Agreement been sufficient to at least cover the costs of all parties? If costs have not been met, please identify the reason (e.g. reduced student intake) and whether any increase or decrease in fees is essential if the collaboration is to continue. |

SECTION THREE: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Documentation to be appended:

- A copy of the latest version of the programme specification(s) and details of any exemptions from University Regulations which have been approved by the University's Academic Policy and Regulations Committee.
- A copy of the student handbook or any other information for students relating to their studies.
- The terms of reference, membership and reporting line for the committee(s) with responsibility for programme management and development, together with copies of minutes of meetings for the period of the Agreement.

| | |
|-----|---|
| 3.1 | Briefly, please describe the process for managing changes to the programme at both module and programme level. Have these procedures consistently operated as described since the start of the Agreement? |
| 3.2 | What substantive changes have been made to the programme(s) since the start of the current Agreement? E.g., changes to the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment methods, entry requirements etc. How are details of changes communicated to staff and students once they have been approved? |
| 3.3 | What were the drivers behind any programme changes, and how is change and development stimulated in general? |
| 3.4 | Where programme management and development is the responsibility of a committee, what are the expected frequency of meetings and requirements for a quorum? Have these expectations always been met in practice? |
| 3.5 | If there is no formal committee, what alternative arrangements exist for managing the programme? How effective have these been? |
| 3.6 | If the programme does not have a Collaborative Programme Officer, what opportunities does the person overseeing the arrangement on behalf of the School have to monitor the provision, contribute to its development, meet with students and report matters to the School? |
| 3.7 | What is the mechanism for ensuring that the policy, procedures and Regulations which govern the collaborative programme(s) are aligned to the University's? How are changes within the University identified and embedded within the collaborative provision? Please illustrate with recent examples. |
| 3.8 | How has the programme(s) benefited from wider developments originating from within the School or University, e.g. School research activity or learning and teaching innovation? Has there been any benefit to the School's own provision as a result of the collaboration? |
| 3.9 | What further development of the programme(s) has been identified if the Agreement is to be renewed? |

SECTION FOUR: MONITORING OF ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY

4.1 Maintenance of Academic Standards

Documentation to be appended:

- **Data illustrating student retention, progression and final achievement since the start of the Agreement.**
- **Terms of reference, membership and reporting lines for the Board(s) of Examiners.**
- **A brief summary of any academic appeals submitted since the start of the Agreement.**
- **Copies of all External Examiner Reports with additional information to illustrate how any issues raised have been addressed.**

| | |
|-------|--|
| 4.1.1 | Generally, by what means is it established that the academic standards for the collaborative programme(s) are comparable with the academic standards of the programmes wholly delivered within the School? For example, with regard to the benchmarking of learning outcomes, development and application of assessment criteria and procedures for determining progression and award? |
| 4.1.2 | Do the student retention, progression and achievement data raise any concerns? If so, what action has been or is being taken to address these concerns? Is it possible to compare this data with students on any similar programmes wholly delivered within the School? If so, what does such a comparison reveal? |
| 4.1.3 | What have been the key issues raised by the External Examiner(s) since the start of the Agreement? If there have been concerns, how have these been addressed? |
| 4.1.4 | What positive aspects have been raised by the External Examiner? |
| 4.1.5 | Has the External Examiner participated in the University induction process? Has any additional information or support been required? |
| 4.1.6 | Have any issues been raised by the Board of Examiners? If so, how have these been addressed? |
| 4.1.7 | Has the CPO attended all the relevant Boards of Examiners, and met the External Examiner? Has the CPO seen the External Examiner's report, and been involved in formulating the response? |
| 4.1.6 | Where the collaborative organisation is responsible for the assessment of students and is not predominantly a HE institution, by what criteria are staff appointed to the role of internal examiner? How are staff in this role inducted and given ongoing support to ensure they carry out the role appropriately and in accordance with University policy and procedures? |

4.2. Monitoring and Enhancement of Quality

Documentation to be appended:

- Copies of any previous collaborative provision reviews showing how areas for further consideration have been followed up.
- Copies of the annual programme review reports for the programme(s) since the Agreement started and any available information showing how issues have been followed up.
- A copy of the last comprehensive programme review report and any available information to show how issues have been followed up.
- Any external quality monitoring reports and details of follow-up action. For example, professional body accreditation reports or QAA reports.
- A sample of any student evaluation questionnaire templates, available summary reports on questionnaire findings and the terms of reference, membership and reporting lines for any Staff/Student Committees, together with copies of minutes and follow up actions for the period of the Agreement.
- A brief summary of any formal student complaints submitted since the start of the Agreement.

| | |
|-------|---|
| 4.2.1 | Please highlight the key issues raised through annual or comprehensive programme review. Have any issues remained unresolved, if so, why? |
| 4.2.2 | If the collaborative provision has been subject to any external review (e.g. professional body accreditation), how was the University involved in the review? |
| 4.2.3 | Please provide details about the outcomes of the external review. How are any recommendations or identified issues being addressed and monitored? |
| 4.2.4 | When is the next external review expected to take place? |
| 4.2.5 | Has the CPO met the students to discuss their experiences of the programme? |
| 4.2.6 | Please highlight any concerns raised by students since the start of the Agreement. Have any issues remained unresolved, if so, why? |

SECTION FIVE: STAFFING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Documentation to be appended:

- **Details of any general criteria which govern staff appointment to the programme(s).**
- **A list of staff who currently contribute to the delivery of the programme(s), identifying their date of appointment, teaching and administrative responsibilities, whether they have been awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer or Recognised Supervisor of the University or a brief statement of experience and qualifications.**
- **Details of the teaching accommodation provided by the collaborative organisation for the delivery of the programme and any other learning resources facilities (e.g. library and computing facilities).**

| | |
|-----|---|
| 5.1 | What is the current level of academic staffing for the programme, including the staff/student ratio? Has this changed significantly since the start of the Agreement, if so, what has been the impact? |
| 5.2 | What opportunities are available for academic staff of the collaborative organisation for ongoing staff development? Is there a formal staff development policy in place? |
| 5.3 | How has the University/School contributed to the development of academic staff teaching on the programme? For example, has there been any peer observation of the collaborative organisation's academic staff by somebody from the University? |
| 5.4 | What are the collaborative organisation's procedures for peer review, and how is compliance evidenced? |
| 5.5 | On what basis are members of academic staff of the collaborative organisation considered eligible to be nominated for the award of the title of Recognised Lecturer or Recognised Supervisor? How have any staff who have been awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer or Recognised Supervisor benefited from it? |
| 5.6 | Have members of academic staff or students encountered any issues in accessing the University of Birmingham library (or other facilities, if applicable)? |
| 5.7 | When was the last time that a representative of the University visited the teaching accommodation and any other learning resources provided by the collaborative organisation? Please provide an evaluation of the facilities. |

SECTION SIX: SUMMARY

| | |
|-----|---|
| 6.1 | In light of the information provided, what do you consider are the strengths of the collaboration? |
| 6.2 | In light of the information provided, what do you consider are the areas where improvement/development would be required if the Agreement is to be renewed? |
| 6.3 | Are there any other comments, issues, information not raised in this Self-Evaluation that should be drawn to the University's attention? |

APPENDIX B

Review of Collaborative Arrangements

Sample of a Site Visit Programme

REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM AND NAME OF COLLABORATIVE ORGANISATION

VISIT OF REVIEW PANEL DATE

PROGRAMME

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 09.00am – 09.30 am | Review Panel Meets |
| 09.30 am – 10.00 am | Senior Management of Collaborative Organisation |
| 10.00 am – 10.55 am | Programme Management and Development |
| 10.55 am – 11.55 am | Monitoring of Academic Standards and Quality |
| 12 noon – 12.45 pm | Visit to Administrative Offices |
| 12.45 pm – 01.45 pm | Review Panel and Students |
| 01.45 pm – 02.15 pm | Learning Resources and Staffing (including Staff Development and Support) |
| 02.15 pm – 02.30 pm | Review Panel meets |
| 02.30 pm – 03.30 pm | Monitoring and Enhancement of Quality |
| 03.30 pm – 04.15 pm | Review Panel meet |
| 04.15 pm – 04.45 pm | Report Back of Initial Findings to Collaborative Organisation |

6. Specific Checks

1 Introduction

- 1.1 A Spec Check may take the form of a College-level investigation or, in the case of more serious issues, a University-level investigation.
- 1.2 A Spec Check may be instigated where issues are identified which need to be followed up within a single School or College (for example, a sharp increase in wastage rates, adverse student feedback, or a matter unresolved from a previous review).
- 1.3 Such issues may arise from information such as student surveys, External Examiner reports, student complaints or student grievances. They may be identified by the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC), the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality), the Academic Quality Unit, a Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (DQAE), or via another mechanism.
- 1.4 Spec Checks may also be carried out in areas which, over a period of time, have seen little focussed review activity.
- 1.5 The initiation of all Spec Checks should be notified to the UQAEC, or to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality) as its Chair.
- 1.6 The Academic Quality Unit (AQU) and the UQAEC will monitor progress against all recommendations or actions arising from a Spec Check.

2 College-level Spec Check

- 2.1 In a College-level Spec Check, the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC) will be responsible for conducting the check, with advice from the AQU as appropriate.
- 2.2 The College will explore the issues internally and discuss appropriate action to be taken. The College will prepare a report which will be reviewed and followed up by the CQAEC.
- 2.3 The College will report to the UQAEC the outcome of the check and any actions arising.

3 University-level Spec Check

- 3.1 In a University-level Spec Check, a Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality) or a DQAE will be responsible for conducting the check, with support from the AQU.
- 3.2 The Chair will explore the issues in conjunction with the School/College and discuss appropriate action to be taken. In most cases, this will involve a visit to the School/College.
- 3.3 The Chair of the Spec Check and the AQU will report to the CQAEC and the UQAEC the outcome of the Check and any actions arising.

7. Thematic Review

1 Introduction

- 1.1 As the name implies, Thematic Review is designed to identify and evaluate University-wide practice in relation to a particular theme. A Thematic Review may be prompted by common issues identified by the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC), the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality), the Academic Quality Unit (AQU), a College, or another mechanism. Alternatively, it may focus on an area where practice could usefully be shared across Schools and Colleges.

2 Scope, Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 Thematic Review is likely to be reserved for significant issues which are not addressed within other University processes. Past Thematic Reviews have included anonymous marking and peer observation of teaching. Where appropriate, an issue may be referred to other Corporate Services for investigation.
- 2.2 Thematic Review is normally a University-level review. Where a potential issue for Thematic Review is identified within a College, advice should be sought from the UQAEC or the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality) as its Chair before the review is initiated.
- 2.3 Thematic Review is designed to:
 - Facilitate discussion between Schools and Colleges on subjects of common concern
 - Disseminate good practice and identify and eliminate weaknesses
 - Clarify and/or articulate principles and policy
 - Determine action or support required at institutional level.
- 2.4 Thematic Review is therefore primarily concerned with the development and enhancement of practice in Schools and Colleges, but does also perform a role in assuring the quality of systems.

3 Process

- 3.1 A Thematic Review will normally be supported by the Academic Quality Unit and led by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Quality), one of his Deputies, or a Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (DQAE). The Review will explore relevant issues in dialogue with Schools and Colleges, and make recommendations on that basis to the UQAEC.
- 3.2 Where necessary, actions/recommendations will be referred to the appropriate University committee(s) and individuals for approval and implementation. Progress against actions/recommendations will be monitored by the AQU.