Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of Annual Monitoring

1. Introduction

1.1 Annual Monitoring is one of ICR’s key quality management and enhancement processes. It allows ICR to consider the effectiveness of its Taught Programmes in achieving their stated aims along with the success of students in attaining the intended learning outcomes. It provides an opportunity for self-evaluation, self-reflection and scrutiny at module and programme level. Annual Monitoring is carried out for all ICR taught programmes and their constituent modules.

2. Purpose of Annual Monitoring

2.1 The purpose of ICR’s Annual Monitoring process is to:

- provide a mechanism whereby Module Leaders and Course Directors can evaluate their modules and programmes and consider ways in which they can enhance their provision; in particular to:
  - ensure a programme specification remains current, valid and in line with appropriate external reference points
  - evaluate the extent to which learning outcomes are being attained by students
  - evaluate the continuing effectiveness of both the curriculum and assessments in relation to the intended learning outcomes
  - consider any recommendations for change
- reinforce academic ownership of individual programmes and modules;
- provide for consistency in quality monitoring processes across ICR programmes and to identify and act upon any consistent themes which emerge.

3. Principles of Annual Monitoring

3.1 The essential principles of Annual Monitoring are as follows:
• Annual Monitoring is a crucial source of evidence that ICR's internal quality management and enhancement processes are robust and effective;
  • Annual Monitoring serves as a genuine aid to enhancing the quality of programme provision by:
    o (i) enabling reflection on issues arising in relation to the quality of student work, pace and content and appropriateness of teaching methods,
    o (ii) enabling feedback from students and external examiners to be discussed and considered at module, programme and institutional levels and
    o (iii) by emphasising remedial action taken (or to be taken) on issues arising;
  • Annual Monitoring should be conducted in a consistent and systematic fashion through:
    o (i) clear, published Guidelines for the conduct of annual monitoring,
    o (ii) the use of an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) template, the minimum/core reporting requirements of which are agreed by Academic Board, but which programmes may build upon to reflect the particular nature or requirements of their constituent disciplines and
    o (iii) the provision of statistical data to inform the process.

3.2 Annual Monitoring is not intended as a forum for addressing extremely serious problems; it is assumed that, once identified, these will have been acted upon promptly by Course Directors / Academic Dean / Registrar.

4. Responsibility for Annual Monitoring and Reporting

4.1 Academic Board has ultimate oversight of Annual Monitoring and Reporting. Academic Board monitors the conduct of the Annual Monitoring process through the minutes of TCC. However, anything which could affect the aims or objectives of the course as a whole requires the approval of Academic Board and the Chair of TCC is required to submit a report to Academic Board proposing any such changes.

TCC is responsible for the review and development of ICR teaching through the Annual Monitoring of taught programmes through:

• (i) receipt of a comprehensive AMR as detailed under section 5
• (ii) considering any generic quality management and enhancement issues or themes arising from the AMR
• (iii) reporting any proposed changes which will affect the overall aims and objectives of a course to Academic Board.

Course Managers have administrative responsibility for co-ordinating and supporting the Annual Monitoring process for their course.

4.2 The basic reporting structure of Annual Monitoring is as follows:

Every year, individual Module Leaders will produce a report on each module for which they are responsible, which they then forward to the relevant Course Director(s). The reports will be considered in a Module meeting attended by Module Leaders and the relevant Course Director (NB. Where the module leader is a Course Director a second Course Director should attend) and the Course Manager will be in attendance. Where modules are offered in more than one programme, the Module Leader's report will be sent to the Course Director(s) of all programmes where the module is offered. For the content of this and all other reports see section 6 below.
Each Course Director will then produce a summary report commenting on the information contained in the individual Module Leader’s reports. These reports along with the Module Leader reports and progression data will form the basis of the AMR to be considered by TCC. Where any changes could affect the aims and objectives of the course as a whole the Chair of TCC is required to submit a report for approval to Academic Board.

5. The Annual Monitoring Report

5.1 The Annual Monitoring process involves the preparation of reports at both the Module Leader and Course Director level, which along with progression data, will be combined into a single Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

5.2 Core requirements for the AMR are agreed and reviewed by the Taught Courses Committee (TCC) and Academic Board. There are a set of minimum criteria which all Taught Programmes should adhere to. If templates are to be supplemented or built upon, it should be on an institutional basis and not on a course basis so that valid comparisons can be made between Taught Programmes and changes should be approved by Academic Board. However, in addition to the information requested in the templates the Course Directors can provide additional information if they wish to reflect the particular nature or requirements of their constituent disciplines.

5.3 Each AMR should include:

- a body of statistical information on the academic results and attendance rates which enable the Module Leaders and Course Director(s) both to measure student performance and to compare with previous years;
- brief reports from each Module Leader and summary reports by Course Directors;
- a summary of issues that have been raised by students and indicate how these have been dealt with;
- a summary of comments from the external examiners and actions already agreed by the Academic Board where appropriate, thereby ensuring that the views of the course's external examiners are both noted and addressed* and a summary of any additional non-student related actions following examination boards;
- a summary of any changes which have already been approved via the Module Modification process.

Full details are provided below.

Module Leader report

These should contain module statistics, normally MCQ results as these will be available at the time of the report, and attendance statistics, provided by the Course Team, and a commentary (as appropriate) on:

(i) quality of student work, pace, and content;

(ii) appropriateness of teaching methods and action(s) taken to resolve any problems;

(iii) learning resources problems which have affected the provision of module quality (e.g. quality of lecture or tutorial rooms, Library or IT facilities) and action taken or planned;

(iv) issues raised by External or Visiting Examiners and action taken or planned (where possible, this will be provided by the Course Team);
(v) issues raised by students via questionnaires, feedback on VLE, staff-student committee, etc. and action taken or planned (the Course Team will provide a breakdown of student feedback along with a summary of key areas to address)

Course Director report

These should contain an analysis of module outcomes provided by the course team and a comment as appropriate on:

(i) content of Module Leaders' reports in respect of (i) - (v) above;

(ii) action planned in respect of the above commenting on:

- The impact of any changes on both current and prospective students
- Any resource issues, either academic or administrative
- Risks associated with any changes
- Compliance with the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Any changes required to the Programme Specification

(iii) progression and achievement data.

Progression Data

Progression data should be provided by the Registry for inclusion in the report.

Examination Board

This section should summarise any general points raised by External Examiners which are not already covered by either the Module Leader or Course Director reports. In addition it should include a summary of any general (non-student related) action points resulting from Examination Board meetings.

* Full External Examiner reports will be considered twice per year by TCC and Academic Board (normally January and July).

Changes Approved

This section should provide a summary of any changes already approved via the Module Modification process.

6. Chair of Taught Courses Committee overview

6.1 The Chair of the Taught Courses Committee is required to submit a report to Academic Board where any changes are proposed which could affect the aims or objectives of the course as a whole. This will usually be no more than one to two sides of A4, containing:

(ix) commentary on the changes proposed;
(x) the impact of any changes on both current and prospective students

(xi) Any resource issues, either academic or administrative

(xii) Risks associated with any changes

(xiii) Compliance with the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education

7. Timing and Process

7.1 The AMR should be made available to Module Leaders and student representatives on a secure part of the Virtual Learning Environment in advance of its consideration by the Spring Term meeting of TCC and Academic Board, where required. A virtual forum will be set up for Module Leaders and student representatives to discuss the report.

7.2 The AMR should be submitted to the Spring Term meeting of TCC which usually takes place in March. Where changes are proposed TCC should consider:

- The impact of any changes on both current and prospective students
- Any resource issues, either academic or administrative
- Risks associated with any changes
- How the changes comply with the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Any changes required to the Programme Specification

If any changes proposed could affect the aims or objectives of the course as a whole the Chair of TCC is required to submit a summary report to Academic Board for approval.

7.3 Proposed changes will be reported to Academic Board as appropriate in April.

7.4 Following consideration by TCC and Academic Board, where required, be made available to all students enrolled on taught programmes as well as to staff and external examiners.

8. Module Modification

Module modification forms can be submitted and approved by TCC / Academic Board outside of the AME process in order to allow changes to be made for the start of the next academic year.

9. Publication of Annual Monitoring Reports

The final AMR will be available on the Virtual Learning Environment.

10. Further Details of the Annual Monitoring Process

For further details of the Annual Monitoring process, please contact The Head of Registry Operations.
## Appendix A

### Date

**At the end of each module**

- **January**: AMR made available on the VLE for Module Leaders.

- **February**: Virtual Forum with Module Leaders and Student Representatives

- **March**: AMR considered at TCC

### Action

- Module report form sent to Module Leaders with data as appropriate, meetings arranged with Module Leaders and the relevant Course Director (nb. Where the module leader is a Course Director a second Course Director should attend) the meeting will be attended by the Course Manager
- Course Directors provided with completed Module Leader report forms and progression data for preparation of the Course Directors' reports

### People

- Course Team
- Module Leaders
- Course Directors
- Module Leaders
- Student Representatives
- TCC
Appendix B - Module Leader Report Form

Download this form

Appendix C - MSc Course Directors' Report Form

Download this form