

2021-22

De Montfort University

Periodic Review

Guidance for Student Panel Members

On behalf of the Department of Academic Quality (DAQ) and De Montfort Students' Union (DSU) we would like to thank you for agreeing to be a Student Panel Member for a Periodic Review. This important role provides an opportunity for you to gain an insight into a course other than your own; it also helps to make sure that students are at the heart of decisions and that the student experience continues to be enhanced as well as providing a developmental opportunity.

What is a Periodic Review?

Each new course/programme has to go through a demanding validation process before it becomes part of the DMU list of courses. Following validation, each course goes through a Periodic Review to ensure that quality and standards are maintained, that the course is still relevant and the student experience still meets or exceeds expectations.

Aims and Purpose of Periodic Review

Periodic Review gives course teams the opportunity to reflect on successes and areas of difficulty for the courses over recent years; and to look forward to ways of enhancing them for the future. As part of the Periodic Review process the course teams, student groups and review panels will consider:

- Student feedback.
- The student experience: student support, attention to issues raised by students, handbooks etc.
- The relevance and currency of the curriculum in the light of changing needs & maximising student employability.
- The appropriateness of the intended learning outcomes & how well those intentions are met.
- The quality of the teaching and learning opportunities.
- The levels and methods of assessment and how much they contribute to the intended learning outcomes.
- Resources: both physical (rooms, equipment) and human (staff, support).
- The management of the programmes.
- Progression, retention and achievement information.
- How the programmes under review fit with other programmes on offer & with the overall faculty strategy.
- Future development.

In general, teams consider what has worked well and how good ideas and practices can be shared; and what has not worked so well, why, and how it can be improved.

Process of Review

Course and faculty teams prepare for the review by reflecting on the curriculum, resources and delivery and will consider evidence available to them such as student feedback, statistical data, self-evaluation and external examiners reports. The result of this is the production of a subject-evaluation document (SED), along with a number of supporting materials.

The information in the SED will be typically include:

- Executive summary.
- The scope of the review.

- Faculty strategy.
- Characteristics and learning outcomes as specified in the templates.
- Curricula and assessment.

- Student entry, progression and employability.
- Quality of learning opportunities.
- The resource context.
- Programme management and quality assurance.
- The development of the subject.
- Issues for discussion with the review panel.

The evidence given in the SED and the supporting documentation is considered by a panel made up of independent external and internal representatives.

The panel constitution will normally be:

- **Chair** – a senior academic (Dean, Head of Department) from a faculty other than that in which the courses under review sit.
- **External peers** – there will usually be at least one external panel member, normally from a senior academic post, although externals may also be drawn from industry or professional bodies as appropriate.
- **Faculty member** not associated with the design, delivery or assessment of the courses to be reviewed.
- **Member of a different faculty** – who does not have a close relationship with the courses under review.
- **DSU elected Faculty Student representative** not associated with the courses under review.
- **Servicing officer** – a member of the Department of Academic Quality.

In addition, the Head of Department of Academic Quality has the right to attend all periodic review events.

The documentation is circulated to the review panel prior to the review event. Panel members are asked to review the documentation and, bearing in mind the aims and purpose of Periodic Review, feedback their comments to the review servicing officer, identifying points on which they would like additional clarification and areas that they would wish to pursue further with the course/faculty team.

Minor issues may be resolved by the provision of additional documentation or a brief explanation. Otherwise panel members' comments are collated into an agenda of topics for discussion on the day of the review event. The review event provides the opportunity for the panel to discuss specific points with the course/faculty team.

The periodic review guide contains a flowchart of the periodic review process which you may find useful to refer to in order to see the process a whole.

The review event

The day begins with introductions and a private meeting of the panel members to agree priorities for discussion. Throughout the day the panel meets with a number of different groups including senior staff, course team(s) and students. The panel is also given a tour of resources and will have access to additional documentation, course materials and, where appropriate, student work. The event will conclude with feedback from the panel on strengths and exemplary / good practice, as well as an enhancement plan for the team to take forward. Following the review a report will be drafted for the approval of the chair and the panel before circulation to the course/faculty team. The report is also presented to the university's Academic Quality Committee for monitoring.

A typical review event would run as follows (all agendas are bespoke as a risk based approach to review is taken):

8.30am	Arrival, with tea and coffee available for the panel
8.45am	Private meeting of the review panel
9.30am	Meeting with senior staff team (including the Dean, Head of School or Department and faculty Head of Quality, Subject Leader)
10.15am	Tour of resources/ student work if appropriate
10.45am	Private meeting of the review panel
11.00am	Meeting with staff team representatives (Tea and coffee available)
1.00pm	Review panel meets the student representatives over lunch
2.00pm	Private meeting of the review panel
3.00pm	<i>Additional meeting with staff team if deemed necessary: timings may then change.</i>
3.00pm	Private meeting to draw conclusions
4.00pm	Brief report back to team of key outcomes

Role and Responsibilities of Student panel members

As a student panel member you are a full member of the panel. You will be expected to be fully participative, actively contributing to the discussions and the decision making process. Your views will be equal to those of any other panel member.

You will be expected to:

- Acknowledge receipt of the SED and supporting documentation.
The documentation in total may, at first glance, appear vast and overwhelming; do not be put off by this. The main focus is the SED and the student commentary; the other documents will contain supportive evidence which you may wish to refer to as you read. Seek guidance from the Servicing Officer if you have any concerns about the documentation or your role in the review; feel free to ask as many questions as you need, we want to ensure that you feel supported in this important role.
- Spend some time reading through the SED and commentary, making notes of key points as you read. Highlight points of good practice and areas on which you would like further clarification. These will form the feedback you submit to the Servicing Officer.

Do not worry that you are not an expert in the subject matter or in educational quality standards; those are the areas of expertise for which the other members of the panel have been appointed. You are on the panel to offer the student viewpoint, the other panel members will be happy to help if you have questions about some of the more complex issues. Whilst your own experiences are of value, it is more important to consider the general student experience of the courses under review in the light of the processes and practices as described in the SED. It is important that any issues you raise are based on the evidence received and not on your own experience as a student at DMU.

You will be asked to consider if, in your view:

- the course described would appeal to students;
- the methods of learning and assessment described would be accessible to part time as well as full time students, to students with disabilities, and to those of differing ability, culture and gender;
- the levels of support provided would meet student needs and expectations;
- the course team has proved responsive to issues raised by students;
- future plans as described in the SED will address identified problems and will genuinely enhance the student experience;
- student satisfaction is monitored and student drop out or slow progress is addressed effectively;

And you will need to:

- Provide comments on the documentation within the specified deadlines.

- Attend for the full review event.
- Ensure that you get opportunity to review the final report and approve or suggest amendments as necessary within the specified timescales.

Timescales

Once you have been confirmed as a panel member you will receive the documentation. This will give you plenty of time to read through and ask for any clarification you need from for example the Servicing Officer in DAQ. You will:

- receive the documentation, along with a comments form;
- be given a deadline by which any initial comments on the documentation should be submitted to the Servicing Officer;
- receive a summary of the outcomes within one week of the review event;
- receive a Chair approved draft of the final report within two weeks of the review event, with the expectation that you will confirm approval or return comments within two weeks.

Benefits

Sitting on the review panel will count towards your Faculty Representative accreditation and be included on your Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) transcript. You will gain experience of being an integral part of the review process, making change happen and ensuring that students' views are accounted for in the process.

For further information, clarification or queries please don't hesitate to contact:

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