

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) Management Policy



1. Purpose

- 1.1 Professional, Statutory, Regulatory and Professional Bodies (PSRBs; the 'accrediting body') approve, prescribe, accredit, recognise or endorse named awards in particular areas of study ('accredited provision'). They constitute a wide range of organisations from professional, membership and employer bodies, to regulators with statutory authority over a particular profession.
- 1.2 The involvement of and engagement with PSRBs provides external assurance in the setting and maintenance of academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience; and supports the University's objectives around graduate employability and skills development.
- 1.3 PSRBs normally accredit a particular course for a specific period of time, after which there will be a period of re-accreditation or review. Accreditation may take the form of self-assessment/confirmation that the provision continues to meet the required standards, desk-based reviews, inspections and visits.
- 1.4 This policy outlines the expectations of PSRB management in respect of programme approval, review, modification, awarding, accreditation/re-accreditation, reporting and risk management.

2. Principles

- 2.1 The University manages relationships with PSRBs under the following principles. This policy aims to ensure that:
 - a. Effective and positive relationships with PSRBs are established and maintained to enhance the quality of provision, student experience and student outcomes.
 - b. Prospective and current students rights and data rights are protected by providing clear information to them about the accreditation arrangements for their programmes of study, and any implications for their studies; and information about students on accredited programmes is shared securely and in line with policy.
 - c. Institutional oversight and reporting mechanisms oversee and mitigate any risks arising from accreditation arrangements.
 - d. Internal processes, regulations and frameworks are applied consistently and proportionately with respect to the requirements from PSRBs; reducing unnecessary duplication where provision is subject to multiple regulators.
 - e. There are clear roles and responsibilities with respect to PSRB management.

3. Governance and Reporting

- 3.1 The majority of accredited provision can be effectively overseen through the existing quality assurance and academic governance frameworks. These frameworks have been designed to ensure compliance is reported and monitored.
- 3.2 Expertise in the requirements of particular PSRBs is usually held by subject academics. Therefore the role of those outside of the discipline area is to provide guidance and oversight of preparedness, compliance and follow up activity.
- 3.3 The Head of School is responsible for ensuring alignment and compliance with aspects of PSRB standards that are within the School's remit or operation.
- 3.4 Where aspects of alignment and compliance for accredited provision span multiple Schools or professional services teams (as is normally the case with statutorily regulated programmes), the PVC Academic Planning is responsible for ensuring compliance with these aspects of the accreditation standards; and for overall risk ownership for statutorily regulated provision.
- 3.5 Where accreditation issues exceed the boundaries of any single academic school or have significant institutional impact (e.g. on resources, student consumer rights or student recruitment) then the PVC Academic Planning as senior risk owner will consult with appropriate senior colleagues and act as the final authority on the matter.
- 3.6 For some statutory regulators (for example, Ofsted); the nature of the statutory requirements may require adapted School approaches to oversight, monitoring, course review, and action planning. In this instance the Head of Academic Governance and Quality will agree revised approaches to management and reporting with the Head of School and the PVC Academic Planning.
- 3.7 School Based PSRB Contact
 - 3.7.1 Each course that holds accreditation from a PSRB should have a listed School Based PSRB Contact. This Contact is to be recorded on the Central Register of PSRB Provision and their role is as follows:
 - a. To be the key contact between the University and the PSRB, responding to formal communication and acting as the lead for submissions. Where institutional level contacts are required by PSRBs, the PVC Academic Planning will assign this accordingly.

- b. To propose accurate wording for Definitive Programme Documents, and course webpages about PSRB accreditation; and ensure this is kept up to date should PSRB requirements or accreditation status change.
- c. To work with the Academic Governance and Quality Team to seek any required exemptions from academic policies, regulations and frameworks for accredited provision.
- d. To confirm with the accrediting partner which sites and educational partners are covered by accreditation, ensure that DPDs and the Central PSRB Register record this accordingly, and liaise with the Link Tutor about accreditation standards and review processes as required.
- e. To enter the accredited provision onto the Central PSRB Register at the point of accreditation and keep it up to date.
- f. To notify the Head of Academic Governance and Quality where accreditation standards require reports to be made publicly available, or where the accrediting body otherwise puts these in the public domain
- g. To monitor changes in PSRB standards and facilitate relevant amendments to courses through the Modifications, or Programme Design and Approval Procedure.
- h. To inform the relevant accrediting bodies of any programme modifications as required.
- i. To liaise with the Head of Academic Governance and Quality about any PSRB standards that impact on University wide quality assurance processes. This may include, for example, a certain requirement, frequency or standard for internal programme review.
- j. To work with the Head of School to ensure that staff teaching on accredited programmes are aware of set PSRB standards and regulations as required, and the implications this has for students. This includes ensuring that teaching staff who are supporting students' learning are aware of where exemptions to University frameworks are applied.
- k. To work with the Head of School to ensure that ongoing or emerging risks associated with PSRB provision are accurately recorded on the School Risk Register.
- l. To work with the Head of School to ensure that any resourcing requirements set by PSRBs (e.g around staffing levels or competence) are in place and monitored.
- m. To oversee the progress of actions and meeting of conditions set by PSRBs, reporting back to the PSRB and to the School Quality Management Committee as required.
- n. To notify the Head of Academic Governance and Quality about upcoming accreditation and re-accreditation exercises; to lead any working groups for the purposes of preparing submissions; and to facilitate the administration team's storage of accreditation evidence, preparation of visit logistics and panel briefings.

- o. To be the Contract Manager in respect of any formal agreement with the PSRB, liaising with the Legal and Compliance team and relevant operational colleagues as necessary (including Head of Marketing and Communications).
- p. To work with the Information Compliance Manager to ensure that data subject rights are protected.

3.8 Definitive Programme Documents

3.8.1 Programme descriptors within Definitive Programme Documents (DPDs) include the detail of professional body accreditations. Programme leaders and the relevant PSRB School Based Contact are responsible for proposing the wording in the relevant section and the Academic Governance and Quality team are responsible for approving the wording at the point of both programme approval and accreditation.

3.8.2 Information on DPDs should include:

- a. The full name of the accrediting body
- b. The nature of the accreditation (for example, this may be that the programme is professionally recognised by that body and/or allows students to be exempted from professional examinations; or provides a professional status or title to graduates)
- c. Detail of any exemptions from academic frameworks and regulations
- d. Details of any PSRB set admission requirement, student performance thresholds or other conditions that must be met for either admission, accreditation or further registration processes (for example, if students need to achieve a certain classification of award)
- e. Where DPDs covered franchised provision, list the sites/educational delivery partners that are covered by the accreditation arrangements.

3.8.3 This ensures that prospective and current students are fully aware of the nature of accreditation on their programme of study, and any additional related requirements around professional registration with that body following graduation.

3.8.4 DPD wording must be clear and unambiguous to students if accreditation approvals are pending but not yet granted.

3.9 Central PSRB Register

3.9.1 The Academic Governance and Quality Team oversees the effective recording of incoming, current and outgoing accredited provision through a Central PSRB Register. The relevant PSRB School based contact is responsible for ensuring that their entry is accurate and up to date.

3.9.2 The PSRB Register records:

- a. The full award title, or module title if accreditation or exemption is at module level only
- b. Delivery organisations covered by the accreditation
- c. The name of the accrediting body
- d. Date of the latest confirmed approval of accreditation
- e. Date of any renewal of accreditation
- f. Method of accreditation renewal (e.g self certification, continual approval with notification/by exemption reporting, inspection and review)
- g. Detail of the accreditation (e.g exemption, accreditation/recognition of programme, ability to apply for entry to a professional body or for professional status; use of a protected title or entry into a certified profession). Any PSRB set standard for admission, degree classification or pass rates should also be listed.
- h. Internal review requirements set by the PSRB (specific standards for internal programme review, annually/periodically, including frequency, content and purpose)
- i. Name of School Based PSRB Contact
- j. PSRB Website reference - a link showing the relevant listing on the PSRB website of the accredited programmes and/or recent visit reports/conditions
- k. Details of any ongoing actions, recommendations or conditions as a result of accreditation visits, reviews, or changes to the accreditation standards
- l. Latest date of update to the Register

3.10 School Quality Management Committees

3.10.1 School Quality Management Committees are responsible for reviewing their School sections of the Central PSRB Register, discussing any changes, recording the preparations for upcoming accreditations/reaccreditation, and reporting progress against action plans and conditions from PSRBs.

3.10.2 The School Based PSRB Lead should report any risks relating to PSRB provision to the SQMC and the Head of School, ensuring these are recorded on the School and/or Strategic Risk Register if required.

4. Quality Assurance

4.1 Programme Design and Approval

4.1.1 Programme design for a new course that is in the process of seeking, or plans in the future to seek accreditation by a PSRB should be planned and deliberate in its alignment with the relevant PSRB requirements and standards;

irrespective of the timeframe for submission to the PSRB for recognition. This ensures that the frequency and significance of future programme modifications and programme redesigns are minimised for students; and accreditation seeking processes are simplified.

- 4.1.2 Documentation for programmes submitted for initial approval through the Programme Design and Approval procedure should list the accreditation intentions on the Business Case, be mapped against the requirements of the relevant PSRB, and provide a supporting narrative in the Academic Approval Report about the mapping, engagement with the PSRB and expected process and timeframes for the accreditation submission and approval processes. The Academic Approval Report should confirm whether the programme can be delivered in advance of accreditation being confirmed. Where accreditation is required before the programme can be delivered (normally the case for statutory bodies), Curriculum Approval Panel approval of the programme will be listed as 'Conditional' until this has been received.
- 4.1.3 If the Proposer for the new programme is different from the intended or actual School Based PSRB Contact, the School Based PSRB Contact should work with the Proposer to design the programme and conduct their duties as required under section 3a of this Policy.
- 4.1.4 Wording appearing on DPDs and course pages about the nature of accredited provision should be proposed by School Based PSRB Contacts, and approved by the Academic Governance and Quality Team and Head of Marketing and Communications to ensure that it complies with both parties requirements for use of logos, names and trademarks.

4.2 Programme Modification and Review

- 4.2.1 When programme or module level modifications are proposed, Proposers are prompted to confirm that the amendments are not contrary to any standards set by the accrediting body. Modification rationales should confirm where changes at module or programme level have been driven by amendments to accreditation standards. If the School Based PSRB Contact is different to the relevant module/programme leaders, they should work together to submit modifications.
- 4.2.2 School Based PSRB Contacts are responsible for informing and/or seeking approval from the relevant accrediting body about any programme or module modifications. Where separate approval of programme modifications is required from an accrediting body before implementation, this must be noted in the Programme Modification submission and SQMC/Curriculum Approval Panel approval of the Modification will be listed as 'Conditional' until this has been received.

4.2.3 Whilst the cycles and timelines for programme modification and review of accredited provision should follow the normal timelines for non-accredited provision, PSRB standards may change and require programme amendment or redesign outside of normal timelines. In this instance, the Head of Academic Governance and Quality will provide support to School based PSRB Contacts and Heads of Schools to risk-assess the implications of this and consider whether exceptional modifications can be submitted.

4.2.4 The completion of the Programme Review Process, either through a Local Enhancement Reflection (LER) or Active Monitoring Plan (AMP), provides the tool by which course teams for accredited programmes can record and monitor the achievement of actions/conditions set by the accrediting body. LERs and AMPs include a PSRB Action Plan for this purpose. Programme Review also requires course teams to confirm ongoing alignment with PSRB requirements, review any changes implemented as a result of standard changes and set objectives for upcoming changes.

4.3 Admission and Transfer

4.3.1 Any PSRB specific entry requirements for admission to accredited programmes should be listed on the DPD, course pages, and Central PSRB Register. Students joining accredited programmes under the Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy; or transferring to or from accredited programmes under the Transfers Policy will be informed at the point of approval of any implications for, or conditions relating to the accredited status of their programme.

5. Accreditation and Re-accreditation

5.1 Preparation Activity

5.1.1 Preparation for initial and reaccreditation activity is the responsibility of the School, led by the School Based PSRB Contact.

5.1.2 The Head of Academic Governance and Quality must be informed of activities relating to initial and re-accreditation activity and will:

- Provide support and oversight as to School management of accreditation processes, including risk management.
- Attend preparation and visit meetings as required
- Advise on membership, remit, frequency of meeting and organisation of working groups and task and finish groups, in alignment with accrediting body requirements and level of risk.

5.1.3 Depending on the nature of accreditation and re-accreditation requirements, working groups (for ongoing detailed monitoring) or task and finish groups (for

upcoming accreditation visits) can provide structured forums for overseeing preparations for accreditation and re-accreditation activity.

5.1.4 The School Based PSRB Contact is responsible for coordinating, in conjunction with the Head of School and PVC Academic Planning, the administrative support required for accreditation and re-accreditation processes. This includes servicing of working groups, task and finish groups, and preparation for mock reviews.

5.1.5 Where accrediting bodies require formal agreements/contracts to be entered into; or where student data is required to be shared with accrediting bodies, School Based PSRB Contacts must contact the Legal team as required, as well as other operational stakeholders, including Head of Marketing and Communications and Information Compliance Manager.

5.2 Submissions, Visits and Inspections

5.2.1 The School Based PSRB Contact is normally responsible for liaising with the accrediting body in respect of accreditation and re-accreditation, coordinating visits, internal staff briefings, evidence gathering and submission narratives.

5.2.2 Formal self evaluation and submission documentation should be reviewed by relevant stakeholders and approved by the Head of School and PVC Academic Planning before being submitted to accrediting bodies. All returns of statistical data should only be prepared by the Data and Insights Service.

5.2.3 Where formal visits, inspections and/or meetings are required as part of accreditation or re-accreditation process, the Head of School and School Based PSRB Contact, with the support of the Head of Academic Governance and Quality, will identify staff and student attendees, deliver pre-visit/meeting briefings and debriefings, and conduct any mock review activities.

5.3 Removal of Accreditation or Discontinuation of Accredited Provision

5.3.1 In the event that a PSRB removes accreditation, the Head of School should inform the Head of Academic Governance and Quality at the earliest opportunity.

5.3.2 In the event that the University decides to cease offering accredited provision (either by closure of the entire programme or removal of accreditation compliance only); the relevant discontinuation processes will be enacted.

5.3.3 The Head of Academic Governance and Quality will work with the Head of School to identify the key internal stakeholders and draw up an associated action plan for accreditation removal or discontinuation to include:

- a. Clarification on which applicants, offer holders and current students are impacted, and agree required actions and communications.
- b. Amendment of DPDs, course webpages and the Central PSRB webpages
- c. Management and response to formal communications from the PSRB and notification to any other regulatory bodies as required
- d. Facilitation of quality assurance processes for programme suspension/discontinuation; review and/or redesign and reapproval as required
- e. Notifications to staff, external examiners and educational partners of the decision, implications and any required actions.

Document Details

Responsible Office: Academic Governance and Quality

Responsible Officer: Head of Academic Governance and Quality

Approving Authority: Academic Board

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Related Policies and Procedures:

Programme Design and Approval Procedure;

Modifications Procedure;

Programme Review Procedure;

Suspensions and Discontinuation Procedure

Supersedes: n/a

Next review due: April 2028