

Guidance for the Continuous Monitoring of undergraduate and postgraduate taught students

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 To consider the student experience of taught students, referencing key student voice satisfaction indicators such as the National Student Survey (NSS), feedback from Staff Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs), Student Outcomes survey statistics and the results of Unit Surveys.

1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 To provide general guidance on the continuous monitoring process and the production of programme-level as well as School, Faculty and University level documentation.
- 1.2.2 To set out the requirements at Faculty and University level relating to the annual academic assurance cycle.

1.3 Applicability

1.3.1 This guidance applies to the continuous monitoring of undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes of study and credit and non-credit bearing short course provision.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Key terms

- 2.1.1 **Continuous monitoring:** a process of reflection on the previous academic year and action planning for the coming academic year. It ensures that the standard of programmes is being maintained and drives the improvement of the student experience.
- 2.1.2 **Periodic review:** a review of portfolio of programmes, normally at School level, that assesses its health and facilitates planning for future provision. Reviews are held periodically every five or six years (every five years in the case of collaborative provision that is undergoing periodic review immediately before the associated institutional review).
- 2.1.3 **Annual academic assurance cycle:** the collection of quality assurance activities undertaken during the academic year that are reviewed at the annual Teaching, Learning and Students Deep Dive and Teaching and Learning Strategy Day.

2.2 Acronyms

- 2.2.1 APP: Access and Participation Plan
- 2.2.2 **AQSC TLS**: Academic Quality and Standards Committee for Teaching, Learning and Students
- 2.2.3 NSS: National Student Survey
- 2.2.4 SEAPs: Student Experience Action Plans
- 2.2.5 SSLCs: Staff Student Liaison Committees
- 2.2.6 **TLSG:** Teaching and Learning Strategy Group

3.0 General Guidance

3.1 Continuous monitoring overview

- 3.1.1 Continuous monitoring must be driven by the staff delivering a programme or group of cognate programmes. Collaborative programmes such as 'flying faculty' must be included in the review process. Validated programmes conduct their own continuous monitoring which is reported through the relevant School committee.
- 3.1.2 The University's approach to continuous monitoring is based on a "conversational, not confrontational" approach, i.e. honest evaluations on the effectiveness of programmes (see <u>Appendix A</u> for suggested issues to be considered) based on evidence (see <u>Appendix B</u> for sources of evidence) of what has worked well and what has worked less well These are recorded in the Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP), including:
 - a) particular achievements and good practice, for example:
 - i. feedback, assessment and personalised learning.
 - ii. feedback to and from students.
 - iii. support for learning and improving the learning environment.
 - iv. curriculum and teaching organisation.
 - v. staff development.
 - vi. student engagement, including student representation structures.
 - vii. Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) and peer mentoring, including consideration of the completed benchmarking proformas and summaries of good practice, challenges and areas for development submitted by the schemes' coordination teams.
 - b) any issues beyond the control of the programme team that have affected their work.
 - c) aspects that need to be addressed in the short term and recorded in the action plan.
 - d) current or possible future developments within the academic or professional community and the market environment. These developments should be recorded in the action plan and may include responses to student outcomes statistics, and/or steps taken to implement and embed the Student Charter.
- 3.1.3 Although this evaluation will occur naturally throughout the academic year, programme teams will find it beneficial to undertake an evaluative overview at the end of the year and to plan actions for the forthcoming academic year.
- 3.1.4 Schools will consider outcomes from the continuous monitoring process to ensure programmes remain current and valid in light of developing knowledge in the discipline and its application in practice. They will ensure that appropriate actions are taken to remedy any identified shortcomings.
- 3.1.5 Faculties will ensure Schools undertake continuous monitoring processes to assure the University that the student experience is being considered appropriately and that students are engaged in the process.

3.1.6 Annual returns to professional and statutory regulatory bodies may be used in place of all or part of relevant continuous monitoring forms. Schools should discuss individual cases with their Faculty Teaching and Learning Office. However, all School-level continuous monitoring returns must include a SEAP.

3.2 Periodic review

- 3.2.1 Periodic review assesses the continuing validity and relevance of programme aims and intended learning outcomes, the quality of the student experience and a School's management of its programmes (or discipline areas).
- 3.2.2 Periodic reviews are developmental and based on a dialogue between peers including at least one external subject specialist and one student. It should be forward-looking but also consider the current situation and any relevant previous issues.
- 3.2.3 Periodic review is undertaken by the Faculty who produce a report for consideration by the School, Faculty and Vice-President for Teaching, Learning and Students. A synopsis of the findings from these reports that are relevant at institutional level is considered as part of the annual academic assurance cycle.

3.3 Annual academic assurance cycle

- 3.3.1 An opportunity to consider the completeness and effectiveness of the institution's quality assurance processes at the Teaching, Learning and Students Deep Dive and Teaching and Learning Strategy Day. A report on the findings, institutional action plan, and future priorities are submitted to the autumn Senate meeting.
- 3.3.2 Documentation to be reviewed could include the following:
 - a) Programme-level and School-level SEAPs.
 - b) Periodic review reports.
 - c) External Examiner reports.
 - d) Teaching and Learning data dashboard including scorecard metrics, student number planning targets, student outcomes metrics, access and participation awarding gaps (APP), and student satisfaction (NSS).

3.4 Continuous monitoring outputs

- 3.4.1 The Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP) is the main output of continuous monitoring activities. A template is provided in <u>Appendix C</u>. The SEAP should reflect the partnership between academic staff, PS staff and students in delivering an excellent student experience, and the plans to improve student experience in the future.
- 3.4.2 The programme-level output from continuous monitoring will be determined by each School but must include an action plan indicating the actions to be taken, by whom, and in what timescale. This may take the form of a SEAP or may be, for example, the minutes of a specific programme committee meeting or a pro forma.

Guidance must be provided by the School for any programme-level outputs not using the SEAP template provided. All action plans must be monitored by the Programme Committee throughout the year.

- 3.4.3 The School-level output from continuous monitoring will be determined by each Faculty, and may be, for example, the minutes of a committee meeting or a pro forma. However, all School-level returns must include a SEAP. School SEAPs must be passed to the Faculty and monitored by the School throughout the year.
- 3.4.4 The Faculty must certify compliance with key quality assurance procedures by completing the Faculty Quality Assurance checklist provided in <u>Appendix D</u>. Faculty-level SEAPs are not required.

3.5 School role and responsibilities

- 3.5.1 Continuous monitoring outputs should be considered by the appropriate Schoollevel committee. The School-level discussion should include a summary of areas of good practice that have been identified, areas for improvement that are of particular note or that are common across programmes, and an outline of action required by the School (or Faculty and/or University as appropriate) in the form of a SEAP.
- 3.5.2 It is good practice, where resources permit, to have internal involvement and scrutiny by peers from the Faculty as part of this process. This could be, for example:
 - a) by attendance at the School meeting (members of the Faculty committee which oversees continuous monitoring, but who are not members of the School in question, could attend the School meeting in order to discuss the output of continuous monitoring with colleagues).
 - b) by scrutinising documentation (members of the Faculty committee could scrutinise key documents produced as the output of continuous monitoring and feed back to the School).
 - c) a formal Faculty-led Annual Review of Schools.

3.6 Faculty role and responsibilities

- 3.6.1 The Faculty annual evaluation occurs on a continuous cycle throughout the year, with discussion taking place through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees. Discussions cover three main areas:
 - a) issues arising, and actions being taken forward from School SEAPs, continuous monitoring discussions and periodic review events. Faculty-wide issues or those that concern a number of Schools within a Faculty. Trends, issues, innovations and key changes that have had a significant impact and either require discussion and/or may be of interest to others.
 - b) a reflection on the completeness and effectiveness of policies, procedures and structures to support teaching and learning.

- c) a quality assurance checklist (see <u>Appendix D</u>) that their Quality Framework responsibilities have been completed and are sustainable into the forthcoming academic year, and that confirms how students have contributed to, and been made aware of, the SEAP.
- 3.6.2 Each Faculty should produce a summary report based on the themes and issues identified in their annual evaluation. This should cover undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes, including collaborative provision and credit and/or non-credit bearing short course provision This summary report should be submitted as part of the annual academic assurance cycle for consideration along with the School SEAPs.

3.7 University role and responsibilities

- 3.7.1 The University annual evaluation occurs on a continuous cycle throughout the year, with discussion taking place at the Teaching and Learning Strategy Group (TLSG), the Teaching, Learning and Students Deep Dive, Teaching and Learning Strategy Day, Academic Quality and Standards Committee for Teaching, Learning and Students (AQSC TLS), and Senate. Key documents considered include:
 - a. an annual evaluation report prepared by Teaching and Learning Delivery (TLD) for AQSC TLS and Senate (see <u>Appendix E</u>).
 - b. summary reports from faculties (see 4.6).
 - c. School-level SEAPs (see 4.5).
 - d. other thematic discussion items as appropriate.
- 3.7.2 The objectives of the University annual evaluation are:
 - a. to ensure the completeness and effectiveness, and where necessary the further development of, policies, procedures and structures to support teaching and learning.
 - b. to ensure the full and effective implementation of procedures for:
 - i. programme approval and amendment.
 - ii. continuous monitoring.
 - iii. periodic review.
 - iv. collaborative review.
 - v. external examining.
 - c. to build on the outcomes of policies and procedures to support teaching and learning in order to further develop approaches to enhancing the quality of provision.
 - d. to seek assurances from faculties that quality assurance processes and assessment practices have taken place, in accordance with the Assessment Framework and the Quality Framework.
- 3.7.3 Annual themes are used to structure the review process and institutional issues are fed up through programmes, Schools and Faculties using the continuous monitoring process, for consideration at the appropriate level.

3.7.4 The culmination of the University annual evaluation is the annual evaluation report prepared for AQSC TLS and Senate (see 4.7.1a). This report records examples of innovative practice and sets agreed actions in an institutional level action plan. The implementation of the institutional level actions is monitored by TLSG.

3.8 Continuous monitoring timeline

- 3.8.1 Outcomes from continuous monitoring should feed into the continuous planning and accountability meetings with Schools and Faculties that take place in the autumn. The following timescale for continuous monitoring and production of SEAPs is suggested, but not prescribed:
 - a) June (end of second semester): Programme committees or equivalent meet to consider the output of continuous monitoring throughout the academic year (see areas of discussion in <u>Appendix A</u> and evidence sources listed in <u>Appendix B</u>). Minutes of the meeting or evidence of the continuous monitoring process, plus action plans, should be produced and considered by a School-level committee by approximately the end of June.
 - b) **September:** Faculty committees meet to consider the output from the School level monitoring activities, including the SEAPs (see template in <u>Appendix C</u>).
 - c) **September:** School level SEAPs and completed Faculty quality assurance checklists (see <u>Appendix D</u>) are submitted by Faculties to the TLD.
 - d) **September:** Faculties consider key targets and data as part of the TLS Deep Dive that highlight trends or matters of institutional interest both retrospective and forward-looking.
 - e) **October:** TLD produce the University annual evaluation report based on all continuous monitoring activities from the previous academic year (see report template in <u>Appendix E</u>). A report and institutional action plan is produced for implementation during the following year.

4.0 Monitoring Compliance

Adherence against this document is expected and should be monitored as part of a wider quality assurance process which supports the Annual Academic Assurance Process including, Schools, Faculties, Teaching and Learning Strategy Group, the Academic Quality Sub-Committee for Teaching, Learning and Students, and Senate.

5.0 Supporting documents and sources of support

5.1 Further information about periodic review including the process, timelines and forms is available in the *Guidance for the Periodic Review of Taught Provision*.

6.0 Appendices

Appendix A: Continuous monitoring issues to be considered

These issues should be considered by programme teams/Schools as part of the continuous monitoring process:

Issue	Description
Outstanding actions from last SEAP	Consideration of the SEAP or action plan compiled as part of the previous year's continuous monitoring procedure.
Continuous monitoring and quality procedures	 Comments on whether all necessary continuous monitoring has taken place for all programmes within the School, as per the requirements of the <u>University's Quality Framework</u>. Comments on whether there are appropriate internal procedures in place within the School to ensure the function of the University's Quality Framework and the maintenance of quality and standards and to ensure compliance with the <u>University's Assessment Framework</u> and the principles and policies within that. Schools are asked to reflect on their <u>risk registers</u> as part of the continuous monitoring process.
Curriculum development and learning support	An evaluation of the continuing effectiveness and currency of the curriculum and of assessment in relation to the intended learning outcomes of the programme. This will include the provision of learning support and learning resources. This should also include support provided by eLearning teams and other PS staff.
Comments from External Examiners	Including commendations and issues recommending further action (at School or University level). Programme teams should include any actions in the continuous monitoring action plan. If the External Examiner's annual report is not available at the time continuous monitoring is being considered, then oral comments made by External Examiners at Examination Board meetings should be referred to. Comments regarding whether all External Examiners have received a response to their reports and whether they have been appropriately acted upon, where relevant, as specified in the University's <u>Guidance on External Examiner Procedures</u> . Comments regarding whether all final Examination Boards are being conducted anonymously.
Consideration of External Examiners' reports by SSLCs	External Examiners' reports should be shared with student representatives at Staff Student Liaison Committees - SSLCs (or other appropriate forum), along with information about any actions carried out by the programme team/School in response to External Examiners' comments. Details of how the programme is managing this process should be collected and reviewed by Faculties as part of the continuous monitoring process.
Student engagement and feedback	Responding to comments made by students throughout the year. This should include School responses and actions taken following feedback from the National Student Survey, unit surveys, staff student liaison committee minutes and issues raised by student representatives on School committees.
Programme information	Comments about how information is given to students about their programme (e.g. handbooks and web information, including the HEFCE KIS data) and how the programme team (including PS staff) ensures this is kept

lssue	Description
given to	up to date and accurately describes University, Faculty and School policies
students	and procedures.
Student Charter	Comment on the progress made with the implementation of the Student
	Charter by programme teams, including reference to feedback from staff and students.
Recruitment,	Comments on recruitment, retention, and progression achievement by
retention, and	students and any particular trends noted during the year.
progression	
Manchester	Review the operation of Welcome Week and the Manchester Induction
Induction	Framework, including the support and contribution of PS staff.
Framework and	
Welcome Week	
Personalised	Comment on the implementation of the Policy on Personalised Learning for
learning and	Students on Taught Programmes and the Policy on Advising Taught Students,
Academic	referencing as appropriate the underpinning Guidance and Toolkit, and the
Advising	role of the School/ Programme PS staff in the continual improvement of the
	student experience.
PASS/ Peer	Comment on any actions required in the subsequent academic year, including
Mentoring	consideration of:
	• whether schemes meet minimum requirements, and if not why not;
	 how peer support supports/enhances the student experience;
	how peer support can be developed further.
Instilling	Comment on the progress being made instilling in graduates the attributes
graduate	set out in the Manchester Matrix, as follows:
attributes (as set	Critical thinking, conceptual reasoning and analytical skills
out in the	Mastery of a discipline
Manchester	Broaden intellectual and cultural interests Dreparation for professional and vacational work
<u>Matrix</u>)	 Preparation for professional and vocational work Challenge and equip students to confront percend values and make
	 Challenge and equip students to confront personal values and make ethical judgments
	 Prepare graduates for citizenship and leadership in diverse, global
	environments
	 Develop advanced skills of written and verbal communications
	 Promote equality and diversity
Employability	Student outcomes information on student employment from the <u>Careers</u>
	<u>Service</u> . For further information, speak to your Faculty contact or <u>e-mail</u>
	Careers. In addition, some useful prompts for discussion could include:
	• Consider the percentage of graduates going into positive destinations i.e.
	graduate-level work and/or further study.
	• Consider the appropriateness of the curriculum in terms of developing the
	skills, knowledge and personal attributes needed to boost student
	employability, with reference to feedback from graduate recruiters.
	• Do students understand how their degree programme has been designed
	to develop their employability?
	How are Academic Advisers and other staff supported to provide an
	appropriate level of careers support to students including being able to
	signpost students to appropriate University resources, such as the Careers
	Service and the Study Abroad Office?

lssue	Description
	 How are the Employability resources in the <u>Advising Toolkit</u> used? Does the programme encourage students to seek appropriate work experience, including internships and volunteering and how are students encouraged to undertake co-curricular activity to help develop their employability? How are students encouraged to take ownership for developing their employability throughout all stages of their experience from recruitment to graduation? How does the programme get the maximum benefit from its relationship with the Careers Service and from other colleagues across Faculties and Schools to support the employability of its students? How does the School demonstrate that it gets the maximum benefit from feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including employers and alumni, to support the employability of its students?
Innovations and good practice	Innovations, improvements and good practice in teaching and learning practice, which could be disseminated as appropriate. This should include initiatives to improve the efficiency of student related administrative processes led by PS staff or in partnership between academic and PS programme teams.
Distance/blende d learning	Comment on the programme's use of distance learning and blended learning material and how this relates to the learning outcomes of the programme.
Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies	Accreditation reports and visits received during the year – commendations and areas requiring action.
Collaborative activity	Comments about whether all collaborative activity is approved, monitored, reviewed and supported appropriately, as per the <u>Guidance and Procedures</u> for the <u>Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision</u> .
Staff development	 Any staff development needs, including PS staff. Peer review - consider how effective this has been throughout the year and whether it has identified programme or School-level themes or requirements.
Support needs	Any support needs identified, e.g. IT, Library or Estates support.
Other feedback	Any input from employers or authoritative sources from within the discipline, e.g. from industrial advisory panels, and any input gained from alumni.

Appendix B: Continuous monitoring evidence sources

These sources of evidence may inform the continuous monitoring exercise and, where appropriate, when it is made available.

Month	Activity/Source	Provided by	Relates to
Jan	Unit Survey data	TLD	Student satisfaction and engagement, responding to feedback
Mar	Recruitment and admissions data (may include entry qualifications, tariff score reports)	Planning Office	Intake quality, recruitment, attainment, WP
May	Non-continuation reports	Planning Office	Retention, student satisfaction and engagement
Jun	Unit Survey data	TLD	Student satisfaction and engagement, responding to feedback
Jul	National Student Survey (NSS) data	TLD	Student satisfaction and engagement, responding to feedback
Aug	Student Outcomes data	Careers	Employability
Oct	Student Experience Action Plans (SEAPs)	Schools	All T&L activity at all levels
Oct	Collaborative Academic Adviser Reports	Schools	T&L activity at partner institutions
Dec	HESA return	Planning Office	Recruitment

Other activities or information (continuous or potentially made available at any time)

Activity/Source	Provided by	Relates to
Staff Student Liaison Groups minutes / actions, including comments on IT / Library / Estates facilities and services	Schools	All T&L activity at all levels
School T&L Committee minutes / actions, including comments on IT / Library / Estates facilities and services	Schools	All T&L activity at all levels
Programme committee minutes/actions, including comments on IT / Library / Estates facilities and services	Schools	All T&L activity at all levels
Periodic Review reports and action plans	Schools	All T&L activity at all levels
Partner Periodic Review / Institutional Review reports and action plans	Schools	T&L activity at partner institutions
League Tables	Planning Office	Information, advice and guidance to students, published information

Activity/Source	Provided by	Relates to
Programme/course unit proposals, amendments and withdrawals	Schools	Curriculum/portfolio development and review, student satisfaction and engagement
External Examiners' reports and responses, Examination Board minutes	Schools	All T&L activity at all levels
Implementation plans for policies, procedures and guidance	TLD	Implementation of policies and their impact
Output from formal/informal appeals, complaints and academic malpractice cases at School and Faculty levels	Schools/Fa culties	All T&L activity at all levels including implementation of policy and practice
Output from the peer review of teaching	Schools	Programme or School-level themes or requirements

Appendix C: Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP) template

The SEAP template can be downloaded from

https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=57533 and must be completed by each School in the prescribed format (see illustration below).

м	ANCHESTER									
The U	niversity of Manchester									
		STUDENT EXPERIENCE	ACTION PLAN 2023/24							
	School									
	Contact name									
	Contact Email									
	Date and method of	of distribution to staff								
	Date and method of	of distribution to students								
No.	Is this item carried	Item	Priority	Impact - hov	v will	Ownership - oversight i.e.	Key Drivers for	Accountability Measures	RAG	Identified
	over from a		Action(s)/Target(s)	this enhance	e the	who is responsble for	Identifying	and Milestones, and who is	(R/A/G)	Actions/Resources/
	previous year?			experiences	of our	seeing the action through	Action/Target	responsible for delivering		Support to mitigate
	Y/N			students		to completion?		each one?		risk?
Instit	tutional Theme 1: A	ssessment and Feedback	PLEASE ADD A MINIMUM	of ONE ACTIC	ON PER	THEME for at least this sess	ion 2023/24			
1.1									R	
1.2									G	
1.3									Δ	
1.5									~	
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	tutional Theme 2: 5	ense of Belonging and Lea	rning Community PLEAS	SE ADD A <u>MINII</u>	MUM 0	f ONE ACTION PER THEME f	or at least this se	sion 2023/24		
2.1									R	
2.2									G	
2.2									G	
2.3									۵	
2.5										
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	tutional Theme 3: W	ven-Being and Mental Hea	ITTN PLEASE ADD A MINI	NUM OF ONE A	ACTION	PER THEME for at least this	session 2023/24			
3.1									ĸ	
1										

Appendix D: Faculty Quality Assurance checklist

The QA Checklist sets out a series of prompts to structure the Faculty Evaluation agenda, which can be incorporated within the usual business.

Faculty		Year	
	ntinuous monitoring take place fo , as per the requirements of the U		
Yes	Comments:		
on the 5 or 6	cessary periodic review of progra 5-yearly cycle, take place for ever guidance on periodic reviews?		
Yes	Comments:		
	atisfied that all necessary internal e function of the University's Qua standards?		
Yes	Comments:		
	nools within your Faculty conside pecified in the Guidance on Extern		
Yes	Comments:		
5. Were all fi	nal Examination Boards conducte	ed anonymou	ısly?
Yes	Comments:		
	borative activity approved, monit y, as per the Guidance and Proce e Provision?		
Yes No	Comments:		
7. Was the st action plans	tudent voice sought and incorpo ?	rated into SE	APs and programme-level
Yes No	Comments:		
Web based o	Faculty and its Schools provided documents and other advice and ion of the University's Quality Fra	guidance to	
Yes No	Comments:		

Appendix E: University report for Senate

The University report is produced by the Head of TLD and outlines:

- any specific issues arising from the operation of the procedures for programme approval, continuous monitoring, periodic review, institutional approval, collaborative review, and External Examiners (e.g. suggestions for the further development of the procedures).
- any issues of concern relating to quality and standards as discussed by the Teaching and Learning Strategy Group (TLSG).
- any issues that the Teaching and Learning Student Implementation Group (TLSiG) wishes to bring to the attention of the TLSG.
- any issues ongoing from institutional reviews.
- developments as a result of, including ongoing or outstanding issues from, the previous meeting's action plan.

The University report has the following appendices:

Appendix 1: New Programme Approvals and Programme Amendments from the previous academic year

Appendix 2: Periodic reviews that took place during the previous academic year: list and main themes

Appendix 3: New partnerships approved via Institutional Approval during the previous academic year

Appendix 4: Partnerships reviewed via Collaborative Review during the previous academic year

Appendix 5: New policies approved by the Teaching and Learning Strategy Group during the previous academic year

Appendix 6: Issues arising from External Examiner reports for undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision (based on reports received in the previous academic year)

Appendix 7: Draft Action plan for the following academic year.

Document control box	
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Ordinances, General	
Regulations	
Related Policies:	TLD Teaching and Learning policies and Assessment policies
	and procedures
Related Procedures and	TLD Teaching and Learning procedures and guidance
Guidance:	
Policy owner:	Janine Holdway, Head of Teaching and Learning Delivery
Lead contact:	Sarah Williams, Teaching and Learning Manager (Programme
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