



## Course and Unit Monitoring Policy and Procedure

### Purpose

This document sets out the AECC University College policy for the monitoring of units and courses, including responsibilities and documentation requirements for the annual reporting process. This policy covers all undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses.

This policy has been drawn up after due consideration of the UK Quality Code, taking into account the associated QAA Advice and Guidance (particularly that relating to Monitoring and Evaluation). It aligns with the UK Quality Code Expectations and core and common practices as below

### Standards:

- The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.
- The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.
- The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks.
- The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.
- Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.
- The provider reviews its core practices for standards regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.

### Quality:

- Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.
- From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.
- The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.
- The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.
- The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.
- The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.
- Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.
- The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.
- The provider's approach to managing quality takes account of external expertise.

- The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Although reported on an annual basis, monitoring is an ongoing process and is fundamental to continuous enhancement of the student experience across all taught provision. Ongoing monitoring will occur as and when staff receive student feedback and/or relevant data, committee meetings discuss course strengths, and issues, and so on. Monitoring information should be considered as soon as it becomes available through the year to allow timely management oversight and to ensure that appropriate and prompt action can be taken. The Course Action Plan (CAP) which accompanies the annual course monitoring reports should be used as a living document to record actions and changes as they occur, and deadlines for actions should be set so as to facilitate improvements/enhancements being made as quickly as possible for the benefit of students.
- 1.2 Annual monitoring reporting is a reflective process that provides an opportunity to:
  - analyse, reflect on and respond to core data on student outcomes (including student award data, to ensure the maintenance of standards over time), student feedback, External Examiner reports and any feedback from professional bodies (where applicable) over the preceding 12 months;
  - ensure that content is current and learning outcomes are being achieved;
  - identify strengths and good practice for wider dissemination, to facilitate enhancement of the student academic experience and outcomes;
  - identify any significant changes, trends or issues, developing appropriate actions to address issues raised;
  - develop action plans to enhance the course and the student experience more broadly;
  - monitor progress of previous actions and review the impact of actions undertaken to enhance the course;
  - confirm that core quality assurance activities relating to taught courses have been undertaken.
- 1.3 Through reports to Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC), Academic Board and the Board of Governors annual monitoring facilitates institutional oversight of the the management of quality and standards. It provides assurance to other external agencies, such as relevant Professional Statutory and Regulatory bodies that the University College is maintaining academic standards and has a clear policy and procedure for monitoring and enhancing student learning opportunities.

## 2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 ASQC is responsible for the overall effectiveness of the policy and procedure for oversight of the outcomes of annual monitoring of taught provision, and for oversight of the outcomes from the course annual monitoring reporting process, including reports and Course Action Plans (CAPs).
- 2.2 Registry are responsible for making monitoring data such as student progression/ performance statistics and student survey outcomes available to Unit and Course Leaders as appropriate, for consideration.
- 2.3 Unit Leaders are responsible for leading the review of their unit and preparing the Unit Monitoring Report using the template provided, and by the deadline set annually.
- 2.4 Course Leaders are responsible for leading the review with the Course Team and writing the course annual monitoring report and CAP using the templates provided, and by the deadline set annually.
- 2.5 Heads of School are responsible for reviewing reports provided for courses within their Schools, taking into account performance across the School as a whole and for signing-off the final version for institutional submission.

- 2.6 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (as Chair of ASQC) and the Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance) are responsible for managing the process, for providing the annual report and CAP templates, overseeing the Scrutiny process, producing the overview report for ASQC and drafting the institutional-level quality assurance report for Academic Board and the Board of Governors.
- 2.7 Academic Board approves new policies or amendments to existing policies relating to annual monitoring, after consideration by the Education Committee.
- 2.8 References in this policy to any University College role or office holder include his or her appointed nominee.
- 2.9 Advice regarding the operation of this policy and procedure may be sought from the Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance).

### **3. Timescales and templates**

- 3.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (as Chair of ASQC) and the Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance) will agree and circulate the templates to be used for the annual monitoring process in that academic year, and set the deadlines for reporting activity. The deadlines will be set to ensure that the relevant reports can be discussed at appropriate committee meetings.

### **4. Student voice**

- 4.1 When compiling annual monitoring reports course teams will review the various sources of student feedback considered throughout the year. This includes:
  - internal student survey (MUSE/USE/PES/PPES) results
  - results from the NSS
  - feedback from SU officers or year/course representatives.
  - discussions at Course Steering Committees.

Student representatives will also be present at committee meetings when the annual monitoring reports are discussed.

### **5. Unit monitoring**

- 5.1 Unit monitoring is a continuous process and any issues which arise during delivery should be dealt with as quickly as possible and reported in the annual monitoring form. In particular Unit Leaders must ensure that they reflect on and provide a response to students, via the VLE, following each MUSE or USE survey, so that students are made aware of actions taken in response to their feedback.
- 5.2 Annual unit monitoring reporting provides an opportunity for Unit Leaders to reflect on qualitative and quantitative data in order to:
  - maintain and enhance the quality of units
  - ensure that unit content is current and learning outcomes are being achieved
  - monitor student achievement
  - show we listen and respond to student feedback
  - identify and share good practice
  - feed in to the monitoring process/ enhancement initiatives at course and institutional level.
- 5.3 An annual unit monitoring report must be prepared for any unit which has students enrolled upon it. Reports must be compiled in line with the instructions provided on the template which is issued annually. Only one report should be submitted for each unit – if other academic staff involved in teaching on the unit prepare their own reflections the Unit leader must synthesise these into a single report.
- 5.4 Annual unit monitoring reports must be submitted to the Course Leader by the deadline set annually.

- 5.5 Any monitoring data which contains personal or confidential information must be anonymised, redacted or excluded.

## **6. Course monitoring**

- 6.1 Course monitoring is a continuous process and should take place as and when key elements of information become available, so that actions can be implemented before the next intake of students. Any issues which arise during delivery should be dealt with as quickly as possible and reported in the annual monitoring form. The monitoring of the course is concerned with the review of the ongoing effectiveness of student achievement, and the quality of the student learning experience, drawing on relevant statistical data and feedback. An annual course monitoring report must be prepared for each course or framework (cluster of courses).
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of the Course Leader to prepare the report, in consultation with relevant colleagues and student representatives, using the template provided.
- 6.3 Annual course monitoring reports should normally be discussed at the relevant Course Steering Committee before submission.

### **Course Action Plan (CAP)**

- 6.4 Each report must be accompanied by a CAP for the forthcoming academic year, including actions from the previous year's report that have not been completed.
- 6.5 The CAP should be used as a living document to record new actions and progress made as changes occur. It should be considered at every Course Steering Committee Group meeting, and amended after the meeting to add new actions, update progress or record completed activities.
- 6.6 Actions should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound) and should have a realistic deadline for completion.
- 6.7 CAPs should be submitted to ASQC for note, appended to the CSC minutes. This is to support ASQC's oversight of academic quality and standards across the institution.
- 6.8 When actions have been completed, their success in addressing the issue raised should be evaluated and the outcome recorded in the appropriate column on the CAP. Completed actions should be shaded out but should remain on the CAP until the evaluation responses have been added and considered. Thereafter completed actions should be removed so only the live, ongoing actions carry forward.

## **7. Scrutiny Process**

- 7.1 Annual course monitoring reports must be submitted to the Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance) by the deadline set annually.
- 7.2 For each annual course monitoring report the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (as Chair of ASQC) and the Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance) will appoint a Scrutineer (normally a Course Lead from another School) who will review the report to advise whether or not the report and CAP are an accurate reflection on, the monitoring data available at the time of submission and have appropriately identified good practice and actions to address any issues raised, or whether there any further points which might usefully be included.
- 7.3 Additional members of staff may be offered the opportunity to take part in the scrutiny process, in addition to the appointed scrutineer, for staff development purposes.
- 7.4 The Scrutineer will feed back to the Course Leader using the template provided. The Course Leader should reflect on the Scrutineer feedback and make amendments to the report as applicable, recording on the template where changes have been made in response to this feedback. The Course Leader will then submit the report to the Head of School.

- 7.5 The Head of School will review all reports for courses within their School, reflecting on the School context and considering whether there are overarching issues for the School which can be identified and should be reflected in all reports and action plans. The Head of School may request further information from the Course Leader and/or require amendments to the report as they consider appropriate.
- 7.6 The Head of School will sign off the report to confirm agreement that in their judgement the report is an accurate reflection on the monitoring data available at the time of submission, that issues for improvement/enhancement have been identified where necessary and addressed through SMART actions, and that good practice has been identified

## **8. ASQC Overview**

- 8.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (as Chair of ASQC) and the Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance) will review all reports received and prepare an annual monitoring overview report for consideration by ASQC normally at its November meeting, identifying overarching themes, trends and good practice across the institution, and any institutional level actions which may be required.
- 8.2 Individual reports will be made available to ASQC members with the agenda, for information. Members may ask questions about the detailed reports if they wish to do so, but the reports will not be formally presented to the committee.

## **9. Course delivered under educational partnerships**

- 9.1 The principles of this policy and procedures will apply to all taught courses delivered under an approved educational partnership. Any variations will be specified within the relevant contract or Operations Manual for the Partnership.

## **10. University College annual quality assurance and enhancement report**

- 10.1 The purpose of the annual quality assurance and enhancement report<sup>1</sup> is to provide evidence, data and commentary to the Academic Board and the Board of Governors so they may be assured that academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities are being appropriately set and maintained, that the University College's quality assurance processes are effective, and that we are responding appropriately to any issues arising from the outcomes of these processes, to enhance the student experience.
- 10.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (as Chair of ASQC) and the Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance) will prepare the University College's annual quality assurance and enhancement report and accompanying action plan for submission to Academic Board and the Board of Governors.
- 10.3 This annual report will be based on the outputs from annual course monitoring and associated committee discussions, as well as other key quality assurance and outcomes data (qualitative and quantitative) considered during the year.
- 10.4 Although a report is submitted annually, the accompanying action plan should be used as a living document to record actions and changes as they occur. The action plan should be considered at every ASQC meeting, and amended after the meeting to add new actions, update progress or record completed activities.

## **11. External examiners and external agencies**

- 11.1 The Course Leader should make the final version of the course annual monitoring report and CAP available to the relevant external examiners.
- 11.2 Course annual monitoring reports should be made available by the Course Leader to relevant PSRBs as required by each PSRB.

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<sup>1</sup> During the transition period it may be necessary for a Partner Quality Report, using the template provided by Bournemouth University, to be completed in addition to the annual quality assurance and enhancement report.

Version:	2.0
Approved by:	Academic Board
Originator / Author	Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance)
Owner	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance)
Reference source	Internally devised with influence from other HEIs UK Quality Code for Higher Education and relevant QAA Advice and guidance
Date approved	17 March 2021
Effective from	18 March 2021
Review date	Spring 2024
Target	All staff and students
Policy location	SIP, VLE , Latest policies web page
Impact equality assessment	No immediate impact, the reporting process itself provides the opportunity to consider equality and diversity issues affecting courses.