

Periodic Subject Review (PSR)

Information for Students

Background

The University has for many years had a system of periodic review of subjects conducted on a six-yearly cycle. This is one of the main quality processes the University has in place to assure itself, and the Scottish Funding Council, of the quality of the provision delivered by Subjects and Schools. The review's focus is on teaching, learning, assessment and feedback student support and the student experience. The review process is designed to be positive and constructive, supporting Subject(s) in the enhancement of their provision; it is not punitive.

The Review Process

The review is carried out by a Panel made up of a Vice Principal or the Clerk of Senate (who is the Convener), an external subject specialist¹, an Academic member of the University Court², an academic from a cognate School, normally within the same College, a representative from Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Services (LEADS), a student representative from out-with the School, normally from another College, and an administrator from Academic Services who is also the secretary to the Panel.

To familiarise themselves with the Subject's activities Panel members receive a Reflective Analysis (RA) and accompanying documentation in advance of the visit. This documentation is prepared by the Subject/School and involves consultation with students, perhaps at a staff: student liaison committee meeting or via Moodle, with a view to seeking feedback on whether it is a fair reflection of the subject(s) under review.

The Panel visits the Subject/School and meets with representative groups of students on taught programmes (undergraduate and postgraduate) and with groups of staff. The length of the visit and the number of meetings may vary but most visits are held one day. Normally visits are on campus, but for 2020-21 contingency arrangements will be made for reviews to be held online in case of the need to accommodate to current health and safety requirements.

After the visit, the Review Panel produces a report which highlights the strengths and achievements of the Subject(s) under review and includes a number of recommendations for changes which should be made - or at least considered - aimed at strengthening provision and thereby further enhancing the teaching provision. Some of these recommendations will be for action by the Subject/School; others will be for action by other bodies within the University such as the College, the Library, Estates or Human Resources.

The Academic Standards Committee (ASC) then endorses the report and requests that the Subject/School and other bodies named address the recommendations. They are asked to report back in six months on action taken. Once the report has been endorsed by ASC, the Head of Subject or School is asked to distribute it to all who met the Review Panel during the visit.

¹ The external subject specialist will normally be from another Higher Education institution in the UK. In some cases there may be more than one external subject specialist on the Panel, this will depend upon on the size of the subject and/or on the range of its provision.

² There are 5 academic members who sit on the University Court, the governing body of the University, they are confirmed by the Senate which has oversight of the academic provision in the University.

The views of students studying the Subject(s)

The views of students **are central** to the review process and there are a number of ways in which you can contribute.

- Meeting the Review Panel as part of the student group and giving feedback on your experience (see below for more information*).
- Giving information to your student representative on your experience studying the Subject advising on what you like and any areas where you have concerns or where your expectations were not met. This will allow your student representative to give feedback directly to the Student Panel member who will hold a focus group meeting with student representatives in advance of the review meeting; and also provide feedback to the School at Student:Staff Liaison Committee meetings.
- Completing course evaluation questionnaires and any other surveys offered to you.

*Students are strongly encouraged to join the meeting with the Review Panel and we very much hope that you will participate in this. The Panel wants to meet with groups that represent the student body within the Subject(s) and will be looking for a balanced view of the Subject(s) from meetings and other feedback mechanisms. The Panel hope that those they meet, will tell them about the strengths and achievements of the Subject/School and why it is a good place to work and study in, as well as areas that could be improved or enhanced.

Detailed below are some of the areas that the Review Panel is likely to explore with you:

- The effectiveness and quality of teaching
- Your opinion of the learning experience
- How you engage with the subject and other University activities
- Your awareness of the aims and intended learning outcomes of programmes and how they match with your expectations
- The quality and usefulness of course documents
- How you find staff in the Subject/School - friendly, approachable, supportive?
- Your opinion of the adequacy of information on assessment (criteria, methods, weightings, coursework deadlines, feedback opportunities, etc)
- The opportunities and mechanisms for providing feedback and how staff respond to the feedback you provide
- Your views on admission and induction procedures
- Your awareness or use of student support services
- Availability and quality of teaching space and learning resources (Library/IT etc)

The Panel will also provide you with an opportunity to raise and discuss other issues.

No members of staff from the Subject(s) are present during the meeting and no comments will be attributed to an individual.

Previous Reports can be found in the Senate Office web pages at:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/senateoffice/qea/periodicsubjectreview/reportsandresponseshistorical/#2010-11>

The meetings with students are normally held before meetings with Subject staff in order to allow students' views to be discussed with staff.

Class representatives will be invited to ask a number of students to attend the Review, but students are welcome to volunteer to meet with the Review Panel. We hope that students will find being part of the process interesting. Please contact your Subject/School administrator for further details and to register interest in attending.