

Student-Facing Professional Services Review Policy

POLICY DETAILS:

Date of approval	May 2024
Approving body	Academic Council
Supersedes	May 2021
Date of EIA	In Progress
Date of next review	<i>See departmental schedule</i>
Author	Academic Quality Office
Responsible Executive Group area	Registrar and Secretary
Related policies and documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-Evaluation Report pro forma
Benchmarking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education• University of Glasgow Quality Processes

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

STUDENT-FACING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REVIEW POLICY

1 Context, Aims and General Approach

1.1 Student-Facing Professional Services Review is one of the main ways in which GSA assures itself of the quality and provision delivered by its student-facing professional services. The following guidelines provide a framework for the review of student-facing professional services, as well as thematic review, where applicable. Please note that these guidelines relate specifically to student-facing professional services and thematic review only, and the primary mechanism for the periodic review of GSA's academic programmes - outwith the Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting (PMAR) process - remains the GSA Periodic Review and Revalidation process.

1.2 The aims of the student-facing professional services review are to:

- Provide staff of the student-facing professional service or thematic area with an opportunity to reflect on its operation, successes and challenges since the most recent review, where applicable
- Assess the quality of the provision, and how students are engaged with to monitor the quality of services
- Evaluate the extent to which the provision meets the needs of students
- Reflect on the student-facing professional service's approach to the enhancement of provision, including recent developments and future plans
- Evaluate and enhance links to other services and Schools
- Identify examples of good practice for commendation and dissemination
- Identify areas for enhancement, and monitor action taken in response

1.3 The identified aims align with the *Scottish Funding Council Guidance to Higher Education Institutions on Quality* which provides "All services contributing to the student experience should be reviewed as part of an institution's approach [...] SFC expects that institutions' approaches to the review of professional support services should be systematic, planned and timely, covering all non-academic services or departments that contribute to the overall student learning experience and considering their effectiveness and interactions with academic units. [...] Whatever the approach taken, the evidence should allow the institution to reflect on the contribution of support services to the 'quality culture' within the institution, the ways in which the services engage with students to monitor and improve the quality of services, and the ways in which the services promote high quality learning and continuous quality enhancement.

1.4 Student-facing professional service areas reviewed in line with this policy are detailed below. Thematic Review areas will be considered cyclically as part of the standard review of this policy and, following consultation with stakeholders, including the GSA Students' Association, may be revised. :

- Careers Service
- Technical Support
- Student Communications (thematic review covering student-facing central and School communications)
- Student Support and Development
- Library Services
- Archives and Collections
- Student-Facing IT (thematic review covering student-facing aspects of central, Library Services and School IT)

- 1.5 The Convenor of the Review Panel (see section 3.3) shall liaise with the department(s) under review to identify a Review Lead. The Review Lead will be responsible for the development of the Self-Evaluation Report (see section 4.1) and leading the department(s) through the review process. For the Careers Service, Technical Support, Student Support and Development, Library Services and Archives and Collections, the Review Lead shall normally be the Head of the department under review, and for Thematic Review, the Review Lead shall be proposed by the Convenor of the Review Panel. For the purposes of this policy, the person leading the review process will be referred to as the Review Lead throughout.
- 1.6 GSA demonstrates its commitment to diversity and promoting equality by ensuring that due regard is given to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in the implementation and application of this policy.

2 Frequency and Timing of Reviews

- 2.1 All student-facing professional services and thematic areas are reviewed on a cycle of no more than 6 years. A rolling review schedule is managed by the Academic Quality Office and is provided to Academic Council on a yearly basis for approval.
- 2.2 Reviews are typically held during periods when students are available to meet with the Review Panel. The Academic Quality Office will consult and liaise with the Review Lead to agree dates for the review event.
- 2.3 The Student-Facing Professional Services Review supplements and does not replace other GSA review activities, including Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting (PMAR) and internal audit (where applicable).

3 Review Panel

- 3.1 The Review Panel will normally comprise:
- The Deputy Director Academic or Deputy Director Research & Innovation (see section 3.3)
 - The Academic Registrar
 - An external specialist from another HE institution, normally in the UK, with expertise in the area under review
 - A representative from the University of Glasgow
 - A student representative (this is normally a sabbatical officer from the GSA Students' Association)
 - A Head of School or other senior member of academic staff
 - The Head of Department from another student-facing professional service area
- 3.2 A member of the Academic Quality Office shall act as Secretary to the Review Panel.
- 3.3 The Deputy Director Academic or Deputy Director Research & Innovation will be the Review Panel Convenor, with neither leading the review event when an area directly reporting to them is under review.
- 3.4 The Academic Quality Office shall propose Review Panel members to the Convenor, who is responsible for approving the Review Panel. All other members of the Review Panel have equal status and are expected to take part in all aspects of the review.
- 3.5 The Review Lead will be asked to suggest an external specialist for the consideration and approval of the Convenor of the Review Panel. Supporting background information must be provided with the nomination, particularly in relation to their current experience in the area under review. A statement should also be included indicating whether or not the person has had

any previous involvement with the GSA. Previous involvement will not normally exclude a person from acting as an external member (the information is requested mainly for the benefit of the Convenor and the other Panel members). Exceptions to this are: where the suggested person has been a member of staff or a student of GSA in the three years prior to the review.

- 3.6 The Convenor will be invited to approve the external specialist. External specialists will receive a fee of plus reimbursement of expenses.

4. Documentation for Review

Self-Evaluation Report

- 4.1 As part of the review process, the Review Lead shall submit a Self-Evaluation Report (SER). The SER provides staff of the student-facing professional service area with an opportunity to reflect on its operation, the student experience, successes and challenges since the most recent review.
- 4.2 The Review Lead shall lead on the development of the SER, which should be a collaborative evaluation, including input and reflection by staff (from the department(s) under review) and student users of the service.

Supporting Documentation

- 4.3 The following documentation should be provided (where applicable). It is recognised that not all of the documentation below would be applicable for thematic review. Review leads for thematic review will be advised on required documentation by the Academic Quality Office at the start of the review process.
- Details of the department(s) organisation, management, administration, and staff workload, e.g. organisational chart and workload model with FTE and staff responsibilities
 - Departmental Operational Plan(s)
 - Any departmental information provided for students for the current session, for example handbooks, leaflets, user information
 - Data relating to the student use of the service(s)
 - Details of departmental student surveys together with an analysis of the data
 - Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting reports since the last review
 - Internal Audit Review Reports
 - Summary reports of any equality impact assessments undertaken during the review period
 - The minutes of senior departmental meetings for the current and previous two sessions
- 4.4 The department(s) may also provide any other data or information it routinely collects which have been referred to in the SER. All documents cited in the SER must all be available to the Review Panel at the time of their visit. Requests for other documentation may be made in advance of, or on the day of the review, or post-review.
- 4.5 In addition to the documentation listed above, the total number of staff in the student-facing professional service area(s) - with data differentiated by full-time, part-time, grade and protected characteristic (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) - will be made available to the Review Panel. This information will be requested from the Human Resources department by the Academic Quality Office. (please note this is not applicable for thematic review).
- 4.6 The SER shall be submitted to the Senior Officer with responsibility for the area under review, for consideration and approval.
- 4.7 Following Senior Officer approval, the Review Lead shall submit the SER to each of the Boards of Studies and the Research Degrees Committee for review and comment in advance of submitting

the SER to the AQO

- 4.8 The Senior Officer-approved SER and supporting documentation shall be submitted to the Academic Quality Office at least four weeks in advance of the review date. The Academic Quality Office will forward the documentation to the Review Panel.

5 Engaging Students with the Review Process

- 5.1 Engagement with and the participation of students are vital components of the review process. Departments should inform students about the review at an early opportunity. Consideration should then be given to how and when feedback should be obtained to ensure that the student experience is evaluated and captured meaningfully in the completion of the SER.
- 5.2 To reach the wider student body, the department(s) should consider discussing the SER at Staff Student Consultative Committees (SSCCs) and Boards of Study, or establishing focus groups, and posting a draft of the SER on Canvas or the intranet so that all students have the opportunity to comment.
- 5.3 It is important for the department(s) to feedback to students after the review. As part of this, the Student Summary Report (see section 8.7) should be posted onto Canvas.
- 5.4 The department(s) will be asked to report on the steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review. This should be reported in the department(s) Action Plan (see sections 8.8 – 8.11).

6 Review of Documentation

- 6.1 Each Review Panel member scrutinises the SER and considers the extent to which the SER is reflective, evaluative, and constructively self-critical and discusses the student-facing professional service areas good practice and areas for enhancement. Review Panel members will also consider how staff and students have contributed to its development.
- 6.2 Review Panel members will provide a short summary of any topics for exploration or areas of concern to the Academic Quality Office prior to the event.
- 6.3 Using feedback provided by the Review Panel, the Convenor of the Panel shall provide the Review Lead with details of the main areas that the Panel wish to explore during their visit. This is normally provided one week prior to the review event. Where the Panel wishes clarification on minor points, it may make an explicit request for a response prior to the visit.

7 Panel Visit

- 7.1 Reviews will last up to two days to allow Review Panels time for reflection between meetings.
- 7.2 The normal pattern of the visit is:
 - Private meeting of the Review Panel to agree topics for exploration during the event
 - A meeting with the Review Lead (who may be accompanied by one or two members of senior staff who have delegated responsibility)
 - A meeting with student service users
 - A meeting with staff from the area(s) under review. For thematic review, this may be nominated representatives from each of the professional services departments who contributed to the development of the SER.
 - A private meeting of the Review Panel to consider and agree recommendations and

commendations

- A meeting with the Review Lead to discuss matters that have arisen during the course of the review and to highlight main areas likely to be included in the report. Issues highlighted in this meeting may be shared with colleagues immediately after the Panel visit

- 7.3 The meeting with students will be held before the meeting with staff in order to allow students' views to be discussed with staff.
- 7.4 The Review Lead shall liaise with the GSA Students' Association to invite students to meet with the Review Panel. Steps will be taken to ensure that the students who attend the meeting include representatives of as many different sections of the student body as possible (including undergraduate and postgraduate students at a variety of levels, international students, students in representative and non-representative roles and mature students).
- 7.5 The Review Panel may undertake a tour of the department(s) accommodation and facilities. This will be decided following consultation with the Review Lead, Convenor of the Review Panel and the Academic Quality Office.
- 7.6 The Academic Quality Office is responsible for the organisation of the review visit and for liaising between the Review Lead and Convenor over the timetable for the visit.

8 Review Report and Follow-up

- 8.1 The Review Panel will identify the key strengths and achievements of the department(s) along with conclusions and recommendations for enhancement.
- 8.2 The Review Report normally follows the structure of the SER and provides a commentary on the extent to which the Review Panel has been able to verify the department(s) evaluative statements.
- 8.3 The Academic Quality Office is responsible for the production of the Review Report in consultation with the Convenor of the panel and Review Panel members.
- 8.4 The final draft report will normally be made available to the Review Lead, for the correction of factual inaccuracies or misunderstandings, within six weeks of the Review visit. The department(s) will have two weeks to provide comments on factual accuracy. [The draft will be sent to the Review Lead to be discussed with colleagues but not to be widely circulated.] Any suggested changes to the draft report will be subject to the approval of the Convenor of the Review Panel.
- 8.5 The report is submitted to the Senior Leadership Group Planning Subgroup for approval, and Education Committee, Research Committee and Academic Council for noting. The Report is then forwarded to the department(s) for action. The Senior Leadership Group, Academic Council and the Board of Governors will be advised, as necessary, of recommendations that have more serious service or resource implications.
- 8.6 Should it prove necessary, the Review Panel may produce a confidential annex to the main report which is for internal use only by the Senior Officers. This annex is produced only if there is information that the Review Panel considers sensitive and inappropriate for the main report e.g. information relating to individuals or interpersonal relations, etc. It is anticipated that the need for a confidential annex will be exceptional.
- 8.7 The Academic Quality Office shall produce a Student-Facing Professional Services Review - Student Summary Report in addition to the full Review Report. The Student Summary Report is primarily for a student audience, and should be posted on the Intranet or Canvas.

- 8.8 The department(s) shall, normally within one month after the Senior Leadership Group and Academic Council consider the Review Report, provide a brief Action Plan to the Academic Quality Office detailing how any recommendations have been, or will be, met.
- 8.9 The updated Action Plans addressing the recommendations of the Review are submitted to each Education Committee, Research Committee and Academic Council meeting of the subsequent session, and the Senior Leadership Group Planning Subgroup which corresponds with the timing of the Academic Council meetings.
- 8.10 The Senior Leadership Group Planning Subgroup and Academic Council will review the Action Plans to ensure that the recommendations have been adequately addressed and reported, including evidence of dissemination of the information to students.
- 8.11 A Final Action Plan addressing the recommendations of the review will be submitted to the Senior Leadership Group Planning Subgroup for approval and Education Committee, Research Committee and Academic Council for note, approximately one year from the date that the Panel's Report was received by that Committee.
- 8.12 In addition to reporting to the Senior Leadership Group Planning Subgroup and Academic Council, department(s) should comment in the next set of Annual Programme Reports on the impact of the Periodic Review on provision.

9 External Access to Reports

- 9.1 Student-Facing Professional Service Review reports, recommendation responses and overview reports are made available to the QAA for annual engagement meetings and external review. An annual report is also made to the Scottish Funding Council on the progress with the schedule for and the outcomes of Periodic Reviews.

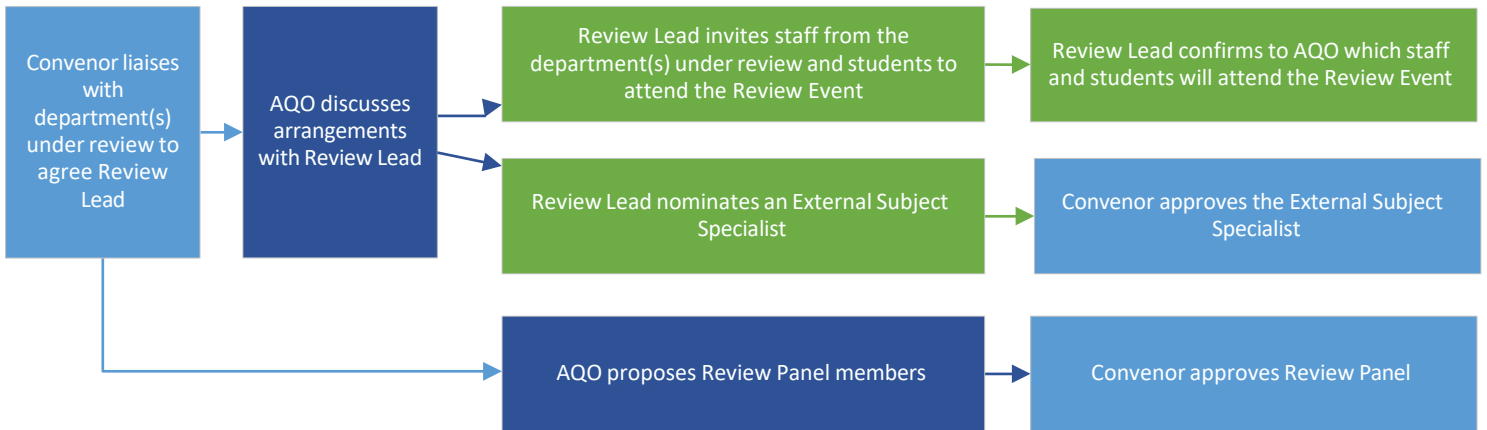
10 Summary of the Review Process

See appendix 1.

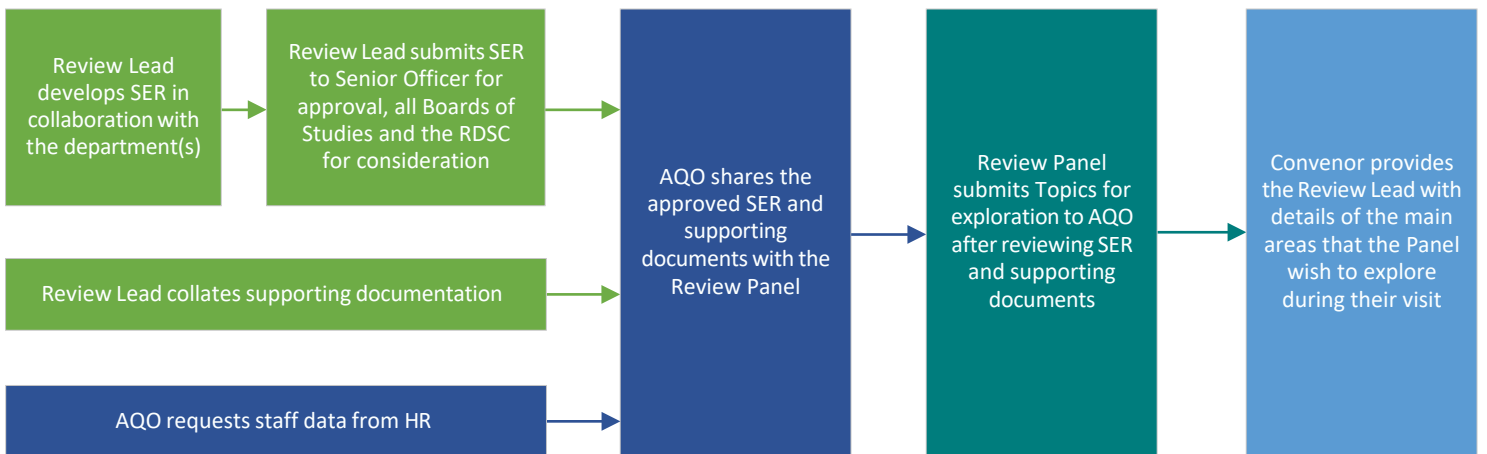
Associated Documentation: Student-Facing Professional Services Self-Evaluation Report *Pro forma*

Appendix 1: Student-Facing Professional Services Review Flowchart

Phase 1: Meeting Preparation



Phase 2: Document Preparation



Phase 3: Periodic Review Event



Phase 4: Reporting

