



UCL Academic Manual 2018-19

Chapter 9: Quality Review Framework

Section 2: Annual Student Experience Review (ASER)

2.1 Purpose of ASER

1. UCL's Annual Student Experience Review (ASER) draws together monitoring activities (data review, External Examiner Reports, student surveys, NSS Action Planning) that are extended throughout the year into an annual 'health check' exercise for undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate taught (PGT) provision. ASERs provide an opportunity to:
 - Monitor each Department's scrutiny of student datasets and subsequent action plans;
 - Reflect annually on risks and weaknesses, identifying action to be taken forward where necessary;
 - Review processes and engagement with University quality assurance and quality enhancement policies;
 - Discuss departmental and faculty engagement with key strategic education priorities;
 - Provide a formal opportunity for Education Committee to discuss student experience matters including the programme portfolio and the effectiveness of the response to student feedback;
 - Review academic partnership activity (including student exchanges/study abroad);
 - Review common themes emerging from External Examiner reports;
 - Providing an opportunity to identify good practice worthy of wider dissemination.
2. UCL recognises that the process of reviewing taught degree provision is iterative, and that much of this business takes place at different times and through a variety of mechanisms during the monitoring year. Responsibility for reviewing such provision is devolved to Departments and Faculties and, for this procedure to work, it is important that Departments and Faculties are able to identify concerns:
 - a) That apply to a particular programme;
 - b) That are common to a number of its programmes or disciplines and to take timely and appropriate action.

2.2 Publication and Circulation of ASER Data

1. Each year, Academic Services' Student Data Services Department will prepare datasets for each UCL Department containing information on:
 - Student Profile (Male, Female, Home, EU, Overseas, Ethnicity, WP)
 - Admissions
 - Progression (UG)
 - Average Student Achievement
 - Final Classification
 - Submission
 - Referral
 - Completion
2. These datasets will then be analysed by Student Data Services. Each year, the data will be additionally analysed in accordance with an agreed theme.
3. These measures will be used in conjunction with data from a number of other sources: Additional sources will include:
 - External Examiners' Reports
 - External survey results (NSS, PTES)
 - Feedback from internal surveys (e.g. SEQs)
 - Employability statistics (DHLE)*
4. Consideration of the analysed datasets will be the task of a Quality Review Sub-Committee of Education Committee. Once these have been considered, reports will be sent to Heads of Department, copied to Faculty Deans and Faculty Tutors. They will be expected to respond to and explain performance in any area highlighted by the analysis conducted by QRSC in an evaluative report and to write a Development and Enhancement Plan.
5. There will be two issues of data per academic session and two ASER Development and Enhancement Plans:
 - Undergraduate data sets will be available for information at the end of July (no action need be taken by modules, programmes or Departments at this point) and reports and Development and Enhancement Plan templates circulated to Departments and Faculties by early September.
 - Postgraduate data sets will be available at the end of November and reports and Development and Enhancement Plan templates circulated to Departments and Faculties by the end of January.
6. See [Annex 9.2.1 ASER Main Steps Undergraduate](#) and [Annex 9.2.2 ASER Main Steps Taught Postgraduate](#) for more details.

DHLE* Data

7. UCL acknowledges that time lapses in the production of each cohort of DLHE data means that cohorts will not correlate and cannot be compared (i.e. there will be no direct relationship between the DLHE data produced for evaluation in 2017 and the graduating cohort but Departments are expected nonetheless to evaluate their own performance in the DHLE survey and will have to work with the most recent complete dataset available.

2.3 The Role of the Quality Review Sub-Committee

1. As noted in [Section 2.2 Publication and Circulation of ASER Data](#), consideration of the datasets produced and analysed by Student Data Services will be undertaken by a Quality Review Sub-Committee (QRSC) of Education Committee (EdCom). The QRSC will be responsible for setting themes and identifying institutional risk areas for Departments to consider and respond to. These Reports and Development and Enhancement Plans produced by Departments and approved by Faculties will also be discussed by DTCs and SSCCs before being submitted to the Secretary of the QRSC for discussion by QRSC once completed. This discussion will focus on the Development and Enhancement Plans and the QRSC will be charged with approving

them and with checking with Faculties that all actions have been appropriately followed up. It will operate in a similar way to the IQR Panel, with faculty representatives invited to these meetings to discuss the Development and Enhancement Plans where the QRSC deems this necessary.

2.4 ASER Evaluative Reports and Development & Enhancement Plans

1. The QRSC will send digest of the ASER dataset to each Department, accompanied by templates for an Evaluative Report and Development and Enhancement Plan. This will be copied to Faculties, and will highlight issues raised (i.e. areas where performance has raised concerns or where there is good practice which could be useful for wider dissemination). This must be completed by each Department, discussed by the Departmental Teaching Committee (DTC) and Departmental Staff Student Consultative Committee (SSCC) and scrutinised and signed off by the Faculty Teaching Committee before being submitted to the Secretary of the Quality Review Sub-Committee of EdCom. See [Annex 9.2.1 ASER Main Steps Undergraduate](#) and [Annex 9.2.2 ASER Main Steps Taught Postgraduate](#) for timelines.
2. Actions detailed in the Development and Enhancement Plan should be precisely stated, ensuring that they are measurable and achievable. Where more than one person is listed against an action it should be clear who is the lead and is responsible for completion. The Development and Enhancement Plan should include the date on which it was subject to Faculty scrutiny (i.e. at which FTC meeting). The Development and Enhancement Plans will form the basis of discussion at the Quality Review Sub-Panel meeting. FTC minutes must clearly record discussion of the ASERs and any outcomes or actions resulting from this.

2.5 ASER and Dissemination of Good Practice

1. An important aim of ASER should be to promote enhancement and to disseminate good practice, not only within the Faculty, but also across UCL. It is therefore important that good practice is considered and recorded for all provision. This will then be referred to the Arena Centre for further development and dissemination.

2.6 Publication of ASER Reports

1. ASERs and their associated Development and Enhancement Plans, once approved by the QRSC, should be published on either departmental or faculty intranet sites, for viewing by UCL staff and students. They should also be made available to External Examiners.
2. Before publication, it is requested that colleagues exclude anything from their DEPs that could identify individuals. They are therefore asked not to name course tutors or individual students.

2.7 ASER and the National Student Survey

1. The NSS data (for UG students only) is available on or around 12 August each year. It is analysed by the Office of the Vice-Provost (Education & Student Affairs) and a digest of the data for each Department, will be sent to each Department (only those with UG students) as part of the ASER package of data and information. The NSS Digest will comprise:
 - Subject Overview of students satisfied (%)
 - Longitudinal Data
 - Main NSS Data
 - Competitor Institutions' Data
 - Student Comments

2.8 ASER and Student Evaluation Questionnaires

1. The proforma for Departments to summarise the information arising from consideration of SEQs has been designed to provide a clear overview of the main matters of interest arising from the analyses of the SEQs and any action taken. It can be found at [Annex 9.2.3 ASER Departmental SEQ Summary](#). The SEQ summary should inform the Department's Report and Development and Enhancement Plan.
2. The following points should be considered in completion of the proformas for departmental and faculty consideration of the SEQ data:
 - i. It is advisable that analysis of the SEQs is conducted by Departments and academic units in time for the beginning of the following academic session;
 - ii. The departmental proformas should be submitted, as part of the ASER Development and Enhancement Plan to the DTC and the SSCC and FTC.