

Quality Review Framework

Updated: June 2023

Main Steps of a Response to External Examiners' Reports

(Undergraduate, Initial Teacher Education and Postgraduate Taught Programmes)

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Guidance

Key:

APQS	Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team
ASR	Assessment and Student Records
BoE	Board of Examiners
BA	Board Administrators
CALT	Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
DC	Deputy Chair
DEC	Departmental Education Committee
EdCom	Education Committee
EE	External Examiners
FL	Faculty Leads
FT	Faculty Tutors
FEC	Faculty Education Committee
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
QSC	Quality and Standards Committee
SSPC	Student Staff Partnership Committees
SU	Students' Union, UCL
UG	Undergraduate
VP	Vice-Provost (Education and Student Experience)

Step	Action	Date	People/Body	Link	Notes
Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BoE take place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG / ITE: June – July PGT: October / November 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairs, DC of BoE and BAs ASR AS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Manual – see Chapters 4, Assessment Framework for Taught Programmes and 9, Quality Review Framework UCL Arena Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BAs to direct colleagues to guidance on BoE. Support is available through UCL Arena Centre.
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where practicable, an oral report is provided by the EE and an oral acknowledgement is given to the EE at BoE meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG / ITE: June – July PGT: October / November 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EE Chairs of BoE or DC 		
Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EE submits their reports from the BoE through Portico. The Faculty Lead, Chair, Deputy Chair and BAs, who will receive the report through Portico, should provide a full response to the entire report (including the quantitative questions) directly on Portico Please note that all responses are due within 4 weeks of receipt of the EE report. APQS will also receive these reports through Portico. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG / ITE: Date range: June - August PGT: Date range: October - December 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EE APQS Faculty Lead, Chair, DC and BAs of BoE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Manual – see External Examining Section in Chapter 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>EE should submit their report within four weeks of the BoE</i> Note that EE Reports contain graded recommendations as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential: Serious areas of concern which, in your <i>[EE]</i> opinion, place academic standards and/or the student learning experience at immediate risk and requires action before the start of the next academic year. Advisable: Areas of concern regarding threshold standards which, while currently being met, in your <i>[EE]</i> opinion, could be significantly improved.

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desirable: Areas where, in your [EE] opinion, there is potential for enhancement. • Where the responses to recommendations require approval by the QSC Chair (or nominee) following scrutiny by APQS, this will be confirmed to the Department.
Step 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APQS will review the report alongside the responses submitted by the Board and will inform the Chair, BAs, and relevant Faculty Colleagues of any enhancements to responses, some of which may require approval by the QSC Chair (or nominee). • Please note that Departments have two weeks to submit these additional responses onto Portico. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UG / ITE: Date range: June - September • PGT: Date range: October - December 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From APQS to Departments (with a copy to the FT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Manual – see External Examining Section in Chapter 9. • Academic Manual Chapter 9 Annexes - Template: Summary of Department Responses to EE Recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An academic responsible for the BoE, i.e. the Chair, DC or a nominee, (academic member), should be responsible for drafting the response. • If the Department disagrees with the EE's recommendation, the Department should make a case for this to be considered as part of their formal response. A template that Departments may use to initially record recommendations and responses can be found in the Annexes area of Chapter 9. The use of this template is optional, and is for use within the Department / Faculty only (it should not be sent to APQS). This template cannot be uploaded onto Portico, however responses can be copied and pasted onto Portico. • If the response provided requires enhancement, APQS will provide guidance to Departments / Faculty Tutors

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					to amend before it is submitted to the QSC Chair (or nominee).
Step 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments should submit directly on Portico their response to the entire report, emphasising the identified recommendations for approval by the QSC Chair (or nominee). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG / ITE: Date range*: June – September PGT: Date range*: October – December <p>*4 weeks from date EE report was received on Portico.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Manual -- see External Examining Section in Chapter 9 External Examining Webpage: Information for Board Teams: Annual Report and Responses FAQs section - Overview of External Examining Reporting Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The FT should be involved and consulted when the Department is drafting their response. If time permits, and it would be of benefit, the Department should involve staff and students when drafting the response. At this stage all recommendations should have been responded to and the full response provided on Portico.
Step 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APQS will approve and submit responses to identified recommendations to the QSC Chair / nominee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG / ITE: Date range*: June – September PGT: Date range*: October – December <p>*4 weeks from date EE report was received on Portico.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APQS to QSC Chair / nominee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Examining Webpage: Information for Board Teams: Annual Report and Responses FAQs section - Overview of External Examining Reporting Process 	

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Step 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The QSC Chair / nominee will give final approval of the responses to identified recommendations and will inform APQS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG / ITE: Date range: June - September PGT: Date range: October - December 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QSC Chair / nominee to APQS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Examining Webpage: Information for Board Teams: Annual Report and Responses FAQs section - Overview of External Examining Reporting Process 	
Step 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APQS will notify the Department of approval of the responses to identified recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG/ITE: Date range: June – September PGT: Date range: October – December 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APQS confirms with the Department FT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Manual Chapter 9 Annexes - Template: Summary of Department Responses to EE recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optionally, for internal use within the Department/ Faculty, Departments can record the approved response to identified recommendations on the template, Summary of Department Responses to EE Recommendations located in the Annexes area in Chapter 9 of the Academic Manual.
Step 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APQS will close down the report when Departments have responded to all of the recommendations/comments, and any recommendations that required QSC Chair (or nominee) approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG /ITE: Date range: June - September PGT: Date range: October - December 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Departments to EE FT APQS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Examining Webpage: Information for Board Teams: Annual Report and Responses FAQs section - Overview of External Examining Reporting Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At this stage all recommendations will have been responded to and the full response provided on Portico. When the report is closed, the EE will receive an email with a copy of the report and the responses.

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Step 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The themes and issues arising from EE Reports from the BoE should be discussed at relevant Department and Faculty meetings. These should also be shared and discussed with students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG / ITE: October – December PGT: February – April 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FT / Departments to FEC, DEC including SSPC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Manual Chapter 9 Annexes - Template: Summary of Department Responses to EE recommendations Academic Manual see Student Representation section in Chapter 9 for DEC; FEC and SSPC 	
Step 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following on from Steps 9 and 10 above, APQS will include themes in the Institutional Summary for the QSC meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG / ITE: October – December UG QSC meeting: November PGT: February – April PGT QSC meeting: April 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APQS to Secretary of QSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Examining Webpage: Information for Board Teams: Annual Report and Responses FAQs section - Overview of External Examining Reporting Process 	
Step 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The full EE report and Departmental response should be made available to students (via Portico and/or alternative methods). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UG / ITE: September - November PGT: January – March 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APQS Departments SU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Examining Webpage: Information for Board Teams: Annual Report and Responses FAQs section - Overview of External Examining Reporting Process SU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SU and Departments should brief students on this process.