

Education Quality Enhancement Cycle Policy

Purpose

1. This policy sits within the University of York's Education Evaluation and Review Framework. It establishes the approach and the requirements for the ongoing review and enhancement of the University's educational provision.
2. The policy is designed to align to the Office for Students (OfS) B Conditions of Registration relating to *Quality, reliable standards and positive outcomes for all students*, and is informed by the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code for Higher Education (2024), particularly Principle 5 *Monitoring, evaluating and enhancing provision*.

Scope

3. This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision leading to a University of York award.
4. Credit-bearing CPD modules are in scope of this policy.
5. This policy does not apply to taught modules undertaken exclusively by postgraduate research students.
6. Mechanisms for evaluating quality delivered by, and with, collaborative partners, including the Hull York Medical School, should align with this policy, but alternative approaches may be agreed that are appropriate to the local context and the form of collaborative provision.
7. This policy does not apply to the evaluation and review of collaborative partners themselves, for which the processes outlined in the [Quality Framework for University of York Collaborative Provision Educational Partnerships](#) will be followed and will involve the collaborative provision committee which sits under UEC.

Definitions

8. **Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH):** a national higher education subject classification system based upon three levels of granularity, where CAH1 is the least detailed and CAH3 the most detailed.
9. **OfS B Conditions of Registration:** a set of regulatory requirements relating to educational provision and the student learning experience that all registered higher education institutions in England must meet to ensure baseline quality and academic standards.
10. **OfS Benchmarking:** a term used by the OfS to describe the approach they use to make meaningful comparisons between the student experience offered by, and the outcomes achieved in, different higher education providers in England. It accounts for differences between student groups and providers by determining a sector average against a particular parameter and then adjusting (weighting) this average for each group based upon the characteristics of the students in that group or the provision being offered.
11. **Teaching Excellence Framework:** The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is a national scheme run by the OfS that assesses and rates higher education providers in England above a set of minimum requirements for quality and standards.

Exceptions

12. No exceptions to this policy are permitted.

Policy statement

The Role of the Education Quality and Enhancement Cycle

13. The Education Quality Enhancement Cycle (EQEC) operates in line with the principles defined in the Education Evaluation and Review Framework Policy.
14. The EQEC is a key mechanism by which schools/departments continuously review the quality of their education offering and the experience and outcomes of their students.
15. The EQEC provides regular assurance that school/department educational provision is aligned to both institutional priorities and key external benchmarks, most notably the OfS B Conditions of Registration:

B Condition 1: Academic Experience

B Condition 2: Resources, Support and Student Engagement

B Condition 3: Student Outcomes

B Condition 4: Assessment and Awards

B Condition 5: Sector Recognised Standards

Requirements

16. The EQEC will be conducted in line with a published schedule [Procedure section 47].
17. Schools/departments must nominate an EQEC lead who is responsible for coordinating preparations within their school/department. In most cases, the EQEC lead is likely to be the Chair of School/Department Education Committee/Board of Studies.
18. The EQEC is framed by a core set of quantitative and qualitative data that schools/departments must engage with [Procedure section 19]. This evidence is organised to inform understanding of performance against the OfS B Conditions of Registration. The evidence will, where possible, be provided by individual year across a four-year period, as well as cumulatively over that four-year period, to reflect the approach adopted by the Teaching Excellence Framework exercise, as it currently stands. Schools/departments are encouraged to review additional evidence where appropriate to gain greater insight into the quality of their educational offering and the experience of their students.
19. The core data used in the EQEC is updated at different points during the year [Procedure section 24]. Academic Quality and Development (AQD) will notify designated schools/department EQEC contacts when new evidence becomes available for review.
20. All educational provision within the scope of this policy must be reviewed by schools/departments during the EQEC; however, the nature of the evidence available may mean that the focus of review varies between the levels of the whole school/department, subject areas within the department, programmes, and modules [Procedure section 21].
21. On an annual basis, AQD will provide school/department EQEC contacts with a summary of where the evidence indicates key strengths and key areas requiring enhancement. It is expected that in undertaking the action planning component of the EQEC (Procedure section 37), schools/departments will particularly focus upon any areas identified as requiring enhancement.
22. On an annual basis, and for each major subject area within a school/department, AQD will use OfS Benchmark Data to determine indicative 'performance against expectation' ratings for B Conditions of Registration B1 to B4 [Procedure sections 30-33]. Where possible, two ratings will be provided:
 - a. A rating for the current EQEC year;
 - b. A cumulative rating for the last four years of data.

23. The ratings schools/departments can receive will be:
- Exceeding:** where key quantitative evidence suggests performance above expectations.
 - In-line:** where key quantitative evidence suggests performance aligned to expectations.
 - Requiring Enhancement:** where key quantitative evidence suggests performance below expectations.
 - Insufficient Evidence:** where key quantitative evidence for the relevant B Condition is not available.
24. In engaging with the EQEC process, schools/departments must undertake:
- An **Annual EQEC Submission** using a template to reflect upon the available evidence at a fixed point in time during the academic year. This point-in-time reflection will be structured around the OfS Conditions of Registration B1 to B5, and against the education priorities identified by University Education Committee (UEC) for each academic year. As well as reflecting upon the evidence that is part of the EQEC, the point-in-time reflections allows schools/departments to introduce other evidence they believe is meaningful and/or which provides important context, for example in relation to their EQEC rating [Procedure section 35].
 - Continuous Action Planning** using a template to document what actions are being taken as a result of an analysis of the EQEC evidence, what progress is being made in relation to those actions, and what the impact of those actions is on performance against the B Conditions of Registration. It is expected that the action planning component of EQEC will be undertaken on an ongoing basis, for example at the time of the Annual EQEC Submission, when schools/departments are notified of the release of key new evidence (such as National Student Survey results), and as-and-when appropriate in relation to the progress of actions already identified [Procedure section 38].
25. Associate Deans for Education and Students (EDs-ES) will provide support to their schools/departments within their faculties throughout the EQEC process.

Review and Reporting

26. ADs-ES will review the EQEC Annual Submissions and provide feedback to all schools/departments in their faculties.
27. ADs-ES will write an annual Faculty Summary EQEC Report for submission to AQD.
28. AQD will write an institutional report using the Faculty reports (and where necessary referring to school/department individual submissions and feedback), which will be considered by UEC. Any recommendations or actions arising from UEC consideration will be conveyed back to faculties and schools/departments.
29. Evidence from the EQEC reports will be used to inform the nature and focus of the five yearly school/department Strategic Curriculum Review process [\[LINK\]](#).

Responsibilities

30. UEC maintains overall responsibility for the EQEC process.
31. AQD are responsible for administering the EQEC process. This includes ensuring schools/departments are notified of EQEC evidence as and when it becomes available, ensuring schools/departments have access to relevant evidence, drafting annual summaries of evidence for each school/department, attributing ratings, receiving faculty reports and writing the institutional EQEC report for UEC.

32. ADs-ES will review drafts of annual summaries of evidence in advance of circulation and will meet with schools/departments periodically through the academic year to discuss and support the EQEC process. ADs-ES will also provide feedback to schools/departments on their EQEC Annual Submission, as well as writing the Faculty EQEC report.
33. Faculty Learning and Teaching Groups will provide a forum for ongoing EQEC discussion through the academic year.
34. Designated school/department EQEC contacts are responsible for leading on the EQEC process in the school/department through liaising with colleagues and student representatives, ensuring EQEC Annual Submissions are completed and submitted on time, and maintaining the EQEC action log.
35. School/department senior management teams are responsible for endorsing EQEC Annual Submissions and maintaining oversight of EQEC Action Planning.

Monitoring and review

36. UEC will monitor implementation of this policy via feedback from schools/departments and faculties and will recommend revisions as required.

Document control

Approval body:	University Education Committee
Policy Owner:	Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education and Students
Responsible Service:	Academic Quality and Development
Policy Manager:	Academic Quality and Development Policy Manager
External regulatory and/or legal requirement addressed:	This policy contributes to ensuring the University's compliance with the Office for Students Conditions of Registration B1 to B5.
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