Bangor University

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING: INTERNAL QUALITY AUDIT

GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC SCHOOLS

1.   PURPOSE
1.1   The purpose of a visit to a School is to examine that all relevant processes and mechanisms for quality and standards are in place, operating effectively and efficiently, with recommended enhancements to teaching and learning. Any collaborative provision a School is involved in will be included as part of the quality audit. Internal Quality Audits are part of the process the University uses to monitor and enhance the quality and standards of academic programmes. Normally a member of the University's Quality Assurance Task Group will observe the meeting of the School's Examination Board in the year prior to the audit and the School's courses will be re-validated in the year following the audit.

Although the audit will focus on activities at School level links to and the activities of relevant College level committees will also be explored.

1.2   Student representatives from the School should be encouraged to participate fully in the Schools preparations for the audit. Student representatives should also submit their own self-evaluation document. The Students' Union will help with this undertaking.

2.   PROCESS
2.1   An audit visit will typically last one full day and involves:
[a]   Inspection of a self-evaluation document, relevant committee minutes and all other documentation concerned with teaching and learning in a School.
[b]   Meeting(s) with Head of School and staff with responsibility for different aspects of teaching and learning (e.g. examinations, pastoral care, admissions).
[c]   Meeting(s) with student representatives, undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research.
[d]   Meeting(s) with other staff involved in quality assurance and/or teaching and learning (e.g. new staff members / administrators).
[e]   Meetings with any relevant College level staff e.g. College Directors of Teaching and Learning, Research, Director of Graduate School.

2.2   The audit team must normally include the Head of Quality Enhancement (or nominee chosen from the Audit Pool), a member of the Audit Pool or the Quality Assurance Task Group, the President of the Students' Union (or nominee), an External Assessor, and the Quality Assurance Manager.

2.2.1   External Assessor: Schools will be invited to nominate three professional colleagues from the United Kingdom who could act as an External Assessor for which a fee and expenses are paid. An External Assessor should not be a current or recent external examiner from within the School and should preferably have knowledge of quality assurance processes and procedures. The choice of external assessor will be made by the Chair and Secretary of the audit panel in consultation with the School.

3.   FOCUS
3.1   The focus of such a visit will relate to all programmes (from HE Cert to taught Masters, and Research). When an Audit team visits a School, the following items will be included in the review:

3.2   Undergraduate and Postgraduate Courses and Modules:
[a]   The standards of teaching and learning in modules.
[b]   Student Progression & Achievement.
[c]   Student Support & Guidelines in the School.
[d]   Student representation in the School.
[e]   Teaching & Learning Resources.

[f]   Progression between different levels of undergraduate courses (Level 4/5/6 & 7), and the relationship between undergraduate and postgraduate modules.

[g]   Holistic nature of the course (including Joint Honours).

[h]   Teaching and learning innovations e.g. VLE.

[i]   Student Handbooks, module handouts, assessment forms/checklists, safety handbook where applicable.

[j]   Any Franchised or Distance Learning Programmes.

[k]   Welsh Medium teaching (if applicable).

[l]   Placements (if applicable).

[m]   Support, training, supervision and monitoring of research students.

3.3   Feedback Systems

[a]   External Examiners' Reports

[b]   Feedback from Professional / Statutory Bodies (if applicable)

[c]   Student Module and Course Evaluations

[d]   QA2 forms or equivalent

[e]   Use and implementation of Annual Review and Development Plans (QA1s)

[f]   National Student Survey, PTES and PRES Results

3.4   Compliance

The audit panel will also ensure that Schools are complying with the University's Regulations and Codes of Practice as contained within the Quality Assurance Manual: www.bangor.ac.uk/regulations and implementing the University's Teaching and Learning Strategy and Internationalisation Strategy.

3.5   Staff Development and Training

The audit panel will discuss with Schools the following issues:

[a]   University and School Induction and training, and development for staff.

[b]   Peer Observation process

4.   <u>DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED</u>

4.1   SUPPLED BY THE SCHOOL

4.1.1   Self Evaluation of Quality and Standards of Teaching and Learning

In this section Schools are required to evaluate themselves against a set of statements, using the attached pro forma. The statements cover the following areas: academic programmes, teaching and learning, assessment and feedback, research students, student participation and experience, academic staff development, collaborative provision and external examiners. The pro forma is available electronically on the Quality & Standards web pages: www.bangor.ac.uk/quality/audits.php.en

It is suggested that a team of staff, perhaps the School Teaching and Learning Committee or a smaller group, meet to agree on the scores the School assigns itself against each statement. Scores should be from 1 to 4, as follows:

4 = the School meets the statement in full
3 = the School largely meets the statement
2 = the School partially meets the statement
1 = the School does not meet the statement.

The comments section should be used to indicate:

a)   Supporting evidence. This can include references to whole documents or sections of specific documents, reports, Minutes of committees or other information as appropriate. These need to be made available to the audit panel.

b) Action points for quality enhancement. This section can also be used to indicate the steps the School has identified that it needs to take to enhance quality and/or improve performance.

In addition, the School is asked to write a commentary (no more than 2 sides of A4) reflecting on the major strengths and challenges it has identified.

The scores and comments will be used as a basis for discussion during the audit.

4.1.2 In addition, the following documentation should also be supplied:
(a) Details of the composition and responsibilities of School and where relevant College level Committees involved in teaching and research.
(b) A chart or narrative identifying the reporting lines of these groups within the School and College.
(c) Minutes of the School's Teaching or Quality Committee, Board of Studies and Staff-Student Committee for the previous 3 years, & Scheme of Delegated Authority for the Board of Studies.
(d) The results of student evaluation of modules in the previous and current (where applicable) academic year.
(e) Tutor self-evaluation/modular reviews (QA2 forms) for the previous and current (where applicable) academic year.
(f) The most recent report of a professional body or external organisations (where relevant) on programmes offered by the School, and the School's response to any recommendations or conditions arising from the report.
(g) A copy of the School's Welcome Week programme.
(h) Minutes of any specific committees dealing with collaborative provision or other distributed learning.
(i) School Teaching & Learning strategy
(j) Online student handbooks for the current academic year.

The documentation to be distributed to the audit team should be submitted to the Quality Assurance Manager three weeks before the audit visit. Any additional supporting documentation should be made available on the day.

4.2 SUPPLIED BY THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT UNIT
[a] External Examiners Reports for the three previous academic years.
[b] Annual Review and Development Plans (QA1 forms) for all programmes included in the review for the previous three academic years.
[c] The previous Internal Quality Audit Report and Progress Report.
[d] Statistical data

5. <u>OUTCOMES OF THE VISIT</u>
5.1 The Quality Audit will result in a report which will highlight the strengths within an academic department. It will also list any action points for consideration by the School in relation to academic standards, quality of the learning opportunities and maintenance of quality and standards.

5.2 Issues for the University to consider will also be included in the report.

5.3 Both the School and the University will have 1 year to respond to the action points. Schools will be requested to provide an up-date to the University on the implementation of the action points. This report will be considered by the Quality Assurance Task Group. Where an issue raises specific cause for concern the School may be required to respond to this within a shorter period.

5.4   If, following the 12 month up-date, the Quality Assurance Task Group is not satisfied with progress or implementation of the action points, it can request:

A]   A visit to the School to discuss the action points in more detail by the Chair and Secretary of the Audit Panel.
B]   Request that a follow up internal audit be conducted within the School between 12 and 36 months.