



# **PROGRAMME LEADERS' HANDBOOK 2019-20**

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INTRODUCTION	
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# INTRODUCTION

to monitor the operation of the programme on an ongoing basis, and to coordinate its annual evaluation;

QMU requires all programmes to be formally validated before the programme can run or students can be recruited. It is the Programme Leader who guides the Team through the validation process, including planning and development, document preparation, the validation event and post-event processes. Additionally, all programmes are subject to periodic review and re-validation (normally every five years), for which the Programme Leader is expected to take the lead (See Section D).

### **3) Team**

The Programme Leader will have regular contact with the teaching Team, and will normally:

- convene Team meetings, including drafting of agendas;
- discuss with members of the teaching Team any programme-related issues or problems;
- ensure coordination of marking/assessment.

Some Programme Leaders endeavour to support the professional development of Team members, e.g. by acting as mentor or suggesting staff development opportunities.

The Overseas Module Co-ordinator's Handbook serves as a useful resource for Programme Teams: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/partnerships/useful-documents-and-quick-guides/>

Although it was written for collaborative partner staff, most of the content takes the form of generic information, which Programme Team members might find helpful as a point of reference.

### **4) Professional/industry links**

Liaison with professional bodies/industry partners and other professional groups and individuals is usually an important responsibility and may be a priority for the Programme Leader, whose links with professional bodies/industry partners are essential or strongly desirable. Where programmes are accredited by professional bodies, the Programme Leader must stay abreast of professional developments in standards, benchmarks and education-related policies so that the teaching Team is in a position to respond accordingly.

Other networks may prove useful to inform curriculum developments and innovation in learning and teaching. Liaising with teaching Teams from other universities and colleges or with practitioners in the workplace may lead to collaborations or exchange of ideas.

### **5) Monitoring**

All programmes are subject to regular monitoring as part of quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms within the University. This facilitates systematic scrutiny of the 'health and well-being' of the programme to inform action planning and enhancement activity. The primary tool for monitoring is the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR, See Section C), although Programme Committees also play an important role in tracking actions and student progress, deferrals and withdrawals. It

is the responsibility of the Programme Leader, or their delegate, to manage the tracking processes.

## **6) Ambassadorship**

The viability of a programme is dependent on healthy recruitment of students. Recruitment is dependent on a number of factors, such as publicity; schools liaison; recommendations; and reputation. Programme Leaders can be important ambassadors for the institution and their curriculum and should attend to these matters seriously. Opportunities for ambassadorship might occur during:

- Conferences;
- External meetings of committees, agencies, interest groups;
- Visits to or from other organisations.

## **7) Collaborations**

Many opportunities for new developments and innovations have arisen through collaborative arrangements between individuals, groups and organisations. Programme Leaders should be sensitive to and welcome discussions with staff of (potential) partner organisations and should engage in regular liaison with collaborative partners. Suggestions for new collaborations should be discussed with line managers before making any commitments. See the Collaborations Manual: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/partnerships/qmu-collaborations-manual/>

The Collaborations Officers based in the School Office have responsibility for liaising with collaborative partners (both UK and overseas) and supporting Academic Link People in relation to academic administration for collaborations. The role includes support for assessment arrangements, Boards of Examiners, and travel plans. The

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Admissions Office.

Potential applicants should be advised that they apply directly via UCAS for undergraduate study and can apply online directly to QMU for postgraduate study. Information on how to apply is available on the QMU website at: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/>

Generally postgraduate applicants will be required to supply a copy of their degree certificate and academic transcript, in support of their application, along with one/two letters of reference. If an applicant has finished their



Ice-breaker activities;  
Discussion of student expectations (e.g. 'Hopes and Fears').

For further ideas on how to implement an effective induction process, including longitudinal induction, see <http://intranet.qmu.ac.uk/sites/cap/LongInduct/default.aspx>  
Longitudinal induction refers to the process of extending 'induction' activities across the full academic year to reinforce and develop key messages and topics introduced during the first few weeks of the programme. The key to longitudinal induction is providing study support and advice at the time where it is most likely to be useful. This might be at the start of a new semester, to support the transition between years, or to help students prepare for the transition from campus based to placement learning. Longitudinal induction also helps students prepare for assessment. It presents an opportunity to revisit study skills techniques and remind students of the resources and services that they can access to develop their academic writing and other skills.

### **3) Delivery**

#### ***Teaching***

The Programme Leader should ensure all modules have a Module Co-ordinator whose responsibilities are to organise all teaching and assessment of the module. The section on Management of Programmes on the Quality website - <http://www.qmu.ac.uk/quality/pm/default.htm> - outlines the roles and duties of Module Co-ordinators.

If cover is necessary for specialist teaching or leave periods, requests for Visiting Lecturers may be negotiated with the appropriate line manager. The QMU Visiting Lecturers' Handbook is available from: <http://www.qmu.ac.uk/quality/pm/default.htm>

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also Timetable Co-ordinators. If this applies to you, you will have received separate guidance from the Space and Timetabling Team. The timetabling process for the next academic year starts in late January each year and Timetable Co-ordinators will typically contact Programme Leaders in February/March each year to gather and check timetable requirements

Full information on the PAT system is available at:  
<http://www.qmu.ac.uk/quality/pm/default.htm>

The School Office usually assigns PATs, based on parameters provided by Heads of Divisions. Allocations are then communicated to staff. Students can view the PAT they have been assigned via the Student Portal: QM:u

#### **4) Assessment**

##### ***Regulations***

QMU assessment regulations can be found here (under the Regulations tab):  
<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies->

### ***Extenuating circumstances and deferrals***

The Programme Leader works with the teaching Team to ensure students are well informed about regulations and processes associated with requests for extenuating circumstances and deferrals. These regulations and procedures are available on the Quality website at: <http://www.qmu.ac.uk/quality/pm/default.htm>

It is important to be aware that there are different processes for ECs and deferrals so it is important to know when each is appropriate. A deferral is applicable where a student discontinues study with the University for an extended period of time (i.e. into the next academic year). It can be applied for and approved on the basis of valid medical or personal reasons at the request of the student. Short breaks for medical or personal reasons of less than 4 weeks, which affect a student's ability to undertake assessments on time or their performance in assessment, should be applied for under extenuating circumstances. The student deferral procedure is available at <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/5591/qmu-student-deferral-procedure.pdf>

The Programme Leader signs off extenuating circumstances forms, notifies the School Office of the nature of the circumstance and the proposed date of submission. Similarly, the Programme Leader should authorise requests for deferral on the student deferral request form and outline any conditions for return to study e.g. to provide a fit to study note or to submit any outstanding assessments before return.

### **5) References**

An important service for students is to write or organise requests for letters of reference for students and graduates. Assistance can be sought from the School Office.

### **6) Other**

#### ***Cases of students with communicable diseases***

QMU has a Communicable Diseases Management Plan to deal with potential cases of: meningitis, pandemic influenza, legionnaires, mumps, whooping cough, and Ebola. The Plan can be found at: <http://intranet.qmu.ac.uk/Search.aspx?k=communicable%20diseases&s=All%20sources>

## **D Quality**

### **1) Good practice**

An important function of the Programme Leader's role is the promotion, engagement with and dissemination of good practice. This activity may be manifested through curriculum development, education research, internal and external presentations and/or publications, sharing information with colleagues and through Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs, see below). Programme Leaders should remain informed and should seek to support their Team to engage with sector-wide initiatives related to the Enhancement Themes coordinated by the QAA – <http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk>.

### **2) Student Experience Strategy**

QMU expects that all programmes will explicitly articulate with QMU's Student Experience Strategy (2015-20): <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/quality-enhancement-and-external-context/quality-enhancement/> Alignment with the Student Experience Strategy should be explained in the Definitive Programme Document. Ongoing quality enhancement activities will be documented in AMRs and through sharing of good practice in other ways.

### **3) Quality assurance**

#### ***Policy***

As leader of a Team, the Programme Leader will be instrumental in ensuring the  
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It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader to lead the Team through these processes. This will typically include convening meetings, allocation of tasks and liaison with other units, including GQE. There are useful guidelines for all involved at this website, and it is wise to read these in advance. Advice and training for validation and review is provided by GQE. GQE staff can also suggest colleagues in your Division with prior experience of the process who can assist you with your preparations and help you understand the process and your role.

Often, validation and review is associated with accreditation by professional bodies. Specific requirements for accreditation will vary according to the profession. As these processes are not the same, it is best to seek help from colleagues in the discipline and from staff of GQE who are also knowledgeable about the professional bodies which accredit QMU programmes.

### ***Definitive Programme Document***

The Definitive Programme Document includes crucial information about the programme, such as aims, philosophy, learning outcomes, structure, admissions requirements, progression requirements, learning and teaching approaches, assessment strategies, placement information and module descriptors. Good document control should ensure that it provides definitive information about the programme to all members of the Team. Full guidelines for preparation of programme documents is available from GQE.

### ***Student Handbooks***

All students should receive a Student **Programme** Handbook which should include information on: aims and learning outcomes, the programme structure, strategies for learning, teaching and assessment, learning support, learning resources, programme-specific regulations and guidelines. Should you wish to include information regarding the submission of assessments, teaching timetable,





information. Survey results should also be considered in Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs).

Programme Teams have a key role in encouraging students to take part in surveys. A higher response rate can provide more meaningful results. There is specific guidance on the NSS which staff should be aware of. Refer to the NSS promotional briefing for staff produced by GQE on the [NSS results intranet site](#).





## APPENDICES A-E

### A Academic calendar

<http://www.qmu.ac.uk/quality/ac/default.htm>

### B Contacts

Admissions and Recruitment	<a href="mailto:admissions@qmu.ac.uk">admissions@qmu.ac.uk</a>
Effective Learning Service	<a href="https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/effective-learning-service-els">https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/effective-learning-service-els</a>
Finance	<a href="https://www.qmu.ac.uk/finance/">https://www.qmu.ac.uk/finance/</a>
Governance and Quality Enhancement (GQE)	<a href="https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/dmartin1@qmu.ac.uk">https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/dmartin1@qmu.ac.uk</a>

## D Programme Committee Agenda



**SCHOOL OF**

**PROGRAMME COMMITTEE  
PROGRAMME TITLE**

**Date  
Time  
Venue**

**Convener  
Secretary**

- 7      SSSC minutes  
(The Programme Committee should consider any issues referred from the SSSC and also identify the mechanism by which actions are to be reported back to students)
- 8      Other student issues  
(Student representatives should be invited to raise any issues not covered in the SSSC minutes)
- 9      Issues arising through institutional committees  
(Papers are circulated periodically to Programme Leaders by the Secretaries to the institutional academic committees. These are mainly for information, but sometimes action is required, or feedback requested)
- 10

**Reserved Business**  
**(Students should not be in attendance for the items below)**

- 1 Determination of any other business
- 2 Minutes of previous meeting
- 3 Matters arising from minutes
- 4 Student progress
  - Exemptions
  - Withdrawals
  - Deferrals
  - Extenuating circumstances

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7. Any Other Business
8. Date of Next Meeting

If preparing for review, it may be helpful to include a separate agenda item about this process.

**F Student-**