

Taught Postgraduate Program Review

Overview

- 1 As part of the University's quality assurance framework, with effect from 2014, Deans¹ should request those responsible for taught postgraduate programs to undertake a review of their programs **every five years** according to the procedures below.
- 2 Programs may be reviewed individually or by cognate group. Special arrangements may apply to some programs, e.g. those that are professionally accredited, subject to approval by the Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality (CTLQ).
- 3 A review schedule will be approved by the CTLQ in consultation with the Committee on Postgraduate Studies (CPS) and Deans.
- 4 There are four stages to the review process:
 - Stage 1: Production of a self-evaluation document
 - Stage 2: Review of the program by an External Panel
 - Stage 3: Production of a Taught Postgraduate Program Review Report and Action Plan
 - Stage 4: Consideration of the Program Review Report and Action Plan.

Stage 1: Self-Evaluation Document

- 5 A self-evaluation document (SED) should be completed in accordance with a standard template, to address the following core areas:
 - a. Program Delivery, Management and Quality Assurance
 - b. The Curriculum, Benchmarking and Quality Enhancement
 - c. Students: Intake; Performance; Support
 - d. Stakeholder Feedback
 - e. Assessment
 - f. Resources and Risk
 - g. Plans for Development
- 6 The SED template will include guidance in regard to the items to be covered under each core area. It may be customised to include aspects of review specific to individual programs.
- 7 Program Directors will collate relevant documentation and data (for which guidance will be provided), for discussion and analysis with the faculty and instructors who deliver a program's constituent courses (i.e. the program teaching team) and the program's administrators. This may take place over a period of up to two months and involve several meetings prior to a visit by the program's External Review Panel.

Stage 2: Review by External Panel

- 8 An External Review Panel, approved by the CTLQ on the recommendation of the relevant Dean, will be appointed for each review. Panels normally² will comprise the following members:
 - An academic/subject specialist from a peer institution outside Hong Kong (Panel Chair)
 - A local stakeholder (e.g. employer or alumnus)
 - A HKUST senior academic from another School

¹ Director, IPO, for interdisciplinary programs

² Exceptionally, the CTLQ may approve alternative memberships for individual programs on submission of an appropriate case

- 9 External Review Panels will serve as “critical friends”. They will be asked to comment on the quality assurance of a program, the appropriateness and international comparability of a program’s curriculum and academic standards, and the quality of the student learning experience; and to provide constructive feedback and advice to the Program Director, as deemed appropriate.
- 10 External Review Panels will visit the University to review the SED and other documentation, including course and program documents and a range of assessments, student work, mark profiles and grade distributions. They will also observe the program’s teaching and learning facilities and resources, and discuss the program with the relevant Head of Department (and, where appropriate, the Dean), the Program Director and staff involved with the delivery and quality assurance of the program, students, graduates/alumni and employers.
- 11 The documentation to be reviewed and the visit program will be agreed between the Program Director and the External Review Panel Chair, in consultation with the Dean. Guidance will be provided.
- 12 Chairs of External Review Panels should draft External Reviewers’ Reports, based on an agreed template, for approval by the other Panel members, and send Reports to Program Directors **within two weeks** of visiting the University.

Stage 3: Program Review Report and Action Plan

- 13 Program Directors should prepare Taught Postgraduate Program Review Reports, in accordance with a standard template and guidance. Reports should be agreed by program teams and incorporate the feedback provided in External Reviewers’ Reports (which should be appended to Program Review Reports).
- 14 Action Plans should be annexed to Taught Postgraduate Program Review Reports, to indicate how a Report’s recommendations would be taken forward, the timescales for implementation, milestones to allow monitoring and identifying those responsible for each action.

Stage 4: Consideration of the Program Review Report and Action Plan

- 15 Taught Postgraduate Program Review Reports should be submitted to the relevant Dean, via the responsible Department Head where appropriate; to the CTLQ and CPS (for comment and subsequent monitoring, as deemed appropriate); and to the Executive Vice-President and Provost (for information), **within four weeks** of receipt of External Reviewers’ Reports.
- 16 Deans should comment on Taught Postgraduate Program Review Reports in their School Annual Reports on Undergraduate and Postgraduate Education to the CTLQ, as part of the University’s quality assurance framework. Deans also may choose to submit Program Review Reports to School Advisory Committees and, where applicable, to Departmental Advisory Committees, as part of those committees’ general remit to provide advice, *inter alia*, on teaching and learning at School and Departmental levels.
- 17 Program Annual Reports on Taught Postgraduate Education will not be required in the years in which Taught Postgraduate Program Reviews are undertaken.
- 18 Program Annual Reports in the years following Taught Postgraduate Program Reviews should be accompanied by progress reports on implementation of action plans, indicating reasons for any delay in implementation, where appropriate.

Approved by the Senate on 3 December 2013