



## HE08 – Higher Education (HE) Enhancement Policy & Procedure

<b>Policy Author:</b>	Head of HE	<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Vice Principal Curriculum
<b>Approval Date:</b>	March 2021	<b>Review Date:</b>	March 2023
<b>Purpose of the Policy</b>  Enhancement is defined by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education for the purposes of review as  <b><i>“Taking deliberate steps to improve the quality of learning opportunities”</i></b>			



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The enhancement of learning opportunities is integral to the Higher Education framework, and ensures that academic standards are appropriate for the level of course. Deliberate steps are taken by the College to improve the quality of the students experience, and satisfaction. These initiatives are identified through the College's Higher Education Self-Assessment Report, and awarding bodies Quality Assurance processes. These are then monitored and evaluated for effectiveness through quality and improvement plans. Evidence is gathered from a number of different sources, listed below.

## **1. External Examiner Reports**

Both University and Pearson programmes are appointed with an External Examiner (EE). They quality assure coursework and assessments which results in an EE report at the end of the academic year. In addition appointed EEs also provide informal reports after an interim visits. An important part of this process is to record comments and recommendations made on good practice, learning, teaching and assessment as well as opportunities to enhance the quality of learning opportunities provided to students. These reports are sent to directly to the university quality office or the College Quality of Education, Quality Nominee and are then sent on to the Programme Leaders and HE Registrar.

The reports are stored within the annual report folder for each programme area on the College's HE shared drive accessible for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) responsible to view. Actions are tracked through Programme Plans, Annual Reports, College HE SAR and HE Action Plan.

The Vice Principal Curriculum ensures all actions are met. Any issues, actions and resolutions are then reported as part of the Programme Annual Report and Action Plan. The EE Report and responses are made available to students through the College VLE.. However, the Pearson EQA reports cannot be posted on the VLE due to data protection but are available on request.

## **2. Awarding Bodies Programme Monitoring**

All university programme Action Plans are submitted to the university for their scrutiny and approval. The designated person responsible for the scrutiny of annual reports will then feedback directly to the programme leader with any comments or issues.

## **3. National Student Survey (NSS)**

The NSS provides local student responses with national rates. Level 5 students are encouraged to answer a range of questions about the provision and the quality of individual aspects. Our number of students is such that we rarely receive course specific data. However all answers are noted and these form part of Programme Plans.

## **4. Plymouth University Student Perception Questionnaire (SPQ)**

This is deployed at the same time as the NSS to students on Level 4 of their programme. The outcomes and additional comments from these questionnaires are sent to the HE Registrar and disseminated to Programme Leaders and the Head of HE and Vice Principal Curriculum for comment and inclusion in annual reports and action plans. In turn any identified areas for improvement are discussed with Faculty Partnership Managers and at Plymouth University Joint Board of Studies.



## **5. Students Unit Survey & Module Evaluations**

Students are surveyed at the end of their unit/module and the outcomes of these surveys feed into annual reports and programme team meetings for further discussion.

## **6. Student Representative Feedback**

Each programme should have one or more student representative(s) elected by their fellow students to sit on the Programme Committee. Course representatives are a vital conduit, linking staff and students so that issues of quality of provision affecting students can be promptly and appropriately addressed. In addition, representatives provide feedback to the programme's staff on innovations and can assist the programme team in developing the curriculum to meet student needs. The Head of HE and HE Registrar will arrange student representative training for all HE programmes.

The role of the course representative is to meet with their peers and get feedback on a variety of issues, including aspects of the teaching, learning and assessment on their course, improvements that they would like to see, feedback on social events and the communication of any issues that are affecting the student experience.

A Lead Student Representative is appointed annually. The role of this person is to oversee and encourage student involvement and contribute to quality assurance processes and attend relevant university level and College higher level meetings.

Student Representatives are also invited to the termly College Student Rep meetings where they are given the opportunity to raise issues specifically related to College matters.

## **7. Annual Programme Review & Monitoring**

University of Plymouth annual reports and action plans are discussed at strategic partnership level as part of the Joint Board of Studies held annually.

Online annual reports are also produced for all Pearson programmes and submitted to the awarding body.

Discussions arising from these meetings which have taken place that relate to course delivery are where appropriate added to action plans. Where discussions occur that relate to overall college HE delivery and management then these are overseen by the Head of HE and Vice Principal Curriculum and are incorporated into the overall College HE Quality Improvement and Development Plan.

University of Plymouth Faculty Partnership Managers and Academic Liaison (ALPs) are a conduit for advising on course and curriculum matters and also act as a critical friend to the Programme Leaders.

## **8. Institutional Periodic Reviews**

The Periodic Review process allows the partner University and the College to maintain:

- The coherence and relevance of its portfolio of taught programmes
- Academic standards and student achievement
- The quality of the student learning experience
- Opportunities for enhancement.



## **9. Quality Assurance & Centre Visits from Pearson**

Pearson Higher National Certificate and Diploma programmes are monitored on an annual basis through external quality assurance and centre visits. Outcomes and actions from these visits are monitored and addressed via the Quality of Education Team, supported by the College Lead Internal Quality Assurer (IQA).

## **10. Students Complaints Procedure**

This is an integral part of the quality assurance system. Complaints are monitored through the Head of HE, HE Registrar and the Quality of Education Team who handle the complaint in accordance with the relevant HEI or College procedure. The student complaints process both enables students to secure redress (where appropriate) for any grievance, and the College to learn from the experience of one of its stakeholder groups. Unresolved complaints are signposted to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

## **11. HE Quality Audits**

The Quality Audit is Weymouth College's model for internal audit of the framework supporting teaching and learning activity. The process will also ensure that adequate and appropriate mechanisms are in place to guarantee the quality of educational provision. Quality Audits are an effective method of observing, communicating and supporting the practices within each department and across the College. They also identify any significant areas where there is a lack of adherence to the Quality Policy.

The audit process focuses attention on the systems and procedures which the College use in their dealings with staff and students. The overriding objective is to make these as effective as possible in supporting the College's aim of providing an excellent learning experience for its students and to assist in identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses, through evidence based documentation.

The survey will also provide an opportunity to highlight good practice within departments and ensure that these practices are communicated effectively cross college. The audit team will have the opportunity to seek the views of both staff and students and thereby be able to compare delivery with course specification. Where feasible, lesson observations will be undertaken during the audit.

The focus of the HE Quality Audit will actively link to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's (QAA's) principal review method for universities, colleges and alternative providers, and will be based around four key elements:

1. Setting and maintenance of standards
2. Assuring and enhancing academic quality
3. Information about Higher Education provision
4. Quality enhancement

## **12. HE Tutorials (see HE Personal Tutoring Policy)**

Students will be given the opportunity to feedback on the quality of their tutorial support through a range of mechanisms including: University or College questionnaires, focus groups, programme team meetings.



The tutorial process allows the College to ensure that all crucial parts of the study programmes are being monitored. The process allows students to review progress, negotiate and agree their targets and to discuss with their tutors in confidence any issues affecting them or their ability to progress and succeed.

Tutorial programmes play an important part in motivating, empowering and enabling students to maximise their potential and progress to further higher education study or employment.

The key aims of the tutorial process is to:

- ensure that HE students receive an appropriate induction into the College and their programme of study;
- provide students with a range of activities to develop employability related knowledge and skills;
- support learning, target setting and action planning for future improvement;
- help resolve students' problems, whether academic or personal using a referral system where applicable;
- provide a channel of communication for students about general College issues;
- provide information, advice and guidance (including UCAS guidance) to students to enable them to make informed decisions regarding future career or studies.

The enhancement of the Learner experience is the responsibility of all staff. For this process to be successful there is a clear cycle of feedback to share best practice and enhancement that involves students, lecturers, SLT and support staff.

All enhancement that relates to course delivery is tracked through programme action plans. Any areas for development are included in the College HE Action Plan which is rag rated.

All Course Action plans are monitored by the Head of HE and Vice Principal Curriculum.

All College wide HE enhancement opportunities are tracked through the College HE SAR. The College HE SAR is monitored by Quality of Education Department and overseen by awarding bodies and SLT. Where CPD needs are identified these are forwarded to the Quality of Education Team to be incorporated into the College CPD programme.



<b>Definitions:</b>	None.	<b>Who Needs to Know?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All HE Staff</li><li>• All HE Students</li></ul>
<b>Related Policies and Procedures:</b>	HE Framework HE Students Complaints Policy Quality Policy HE Personal Tutoring Policy	<b>Approval Date:</b>	March 2021
<b>This policy was approved and adopted by:</b>  <i>Julia Howe</i>  <b>Julia Howe</b> <b>Interim Principal</b>			