



# **ACADEMIC QUALITY POLICY & PRACTICE 2023 V1.5**

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## **Section 6: Programme Monitoring**

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### **Contents**

6.1	Introduction	24
6.2	The Monitoring Process	24
6.3	Process Outcomes	26
6.4	Departmental, School and University Consideration of the Programme Monitoring Process	26

## 6. PROGRAMME MONITORING

### 6.1 Introduction

Programme monitoring and review is the process by which the University:

- discharges its responsibility for setting and maintaining academic standards
- assures and enhances the quality of learning opportunities within the University
- provides a mechanism for the dissemination of good practice internally and, where appropriate, across the sector.

GCU adheres to the principles of the [QAA Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and:

- maintains strategic oversight of the processes for, and outcomes of, programme monitoring and review to ensure that processes are applied systematically and operated consistently
- takes deliberate steps to use the outcomes of programme monitoring and review for enhancement purposes
- operates a process to protect the academic interests of students on programme closure or as the result of portfolio review
- defines the processes for programme monitoring and review and communicates them clearly to all internal staff and external bodies involved
- evaluates the process for programme monitoring and review
- involves external stakeholders and draws widely on internal and external expertise
- involves students in all aspects of programme monitoring and review
- enables staff, students and external participants to contribute effectively by putting in place arrangements for support and development.

The process is undertaken annually. Programme Boards evaluate and reflect on their academic provision and highlight where the student learning experience can be enhanced and identify areas of good practice. This is a core activity and whilst all staff collectively have a responsibility to uphold standards some staff have specific roles in the Annual Monitoring process.

Annual Programme Monitoring is a continuous enhancement process carried out 'in-year', formally commencing at the beginning of each new academic session and following the flow of the academic year as data, such as admission statistics, first diet examination results and NSS results etc are released by Strategy, Planning & Business Intelligence.

### 6.2 The Monitoring Process

In accordance with [University guidance](#), Programme Boards will complete an [Annual Programme Analysis and Monitoring Report](#) which considers the following key performance indicators (KPIs):

- review of the previous year's Enhancements, including areas identified for development in the new academic year

- trends in admission, progression and awards statistics, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and articulation policies and honours classification\*
- trends in graduate employment, including the most recently available graduate employment statistics\*
- the minutes of the Student Partnership Forum and an evaluation of the GCU student experience priorities related to the programme
- External Examiner comments (at Progression and Award Boards) and final report(s), and the Programme Board's response to the Examiner(s).
- where appropriate, an analysis of evidence of interaction with any academic units contributing modules to the programme
- equality and diversity
- a review of the [Strategy for Learning](#) (SfL) in relation to the demonstration and application of the curriculum design principles
- collaborative and professional/statutory/regulatory body activity
- the requirements or recommendations of approval/review events or visits from professional/statutory/regulatory bodies.

\* based on comparison of data from no more than three previous years

Where monitoring covers a suite of programmes, such as within a framework, the statistical information will, where possible, be collated and held separately for each programme within the suite.

For audit purposes, evidence of consideration of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be provided within the minutes of the Programme Board and the Board should retain the complete evidence-base on which the considerations were founded. Any proposals for programme change arising from annual monitoring will comply with the relevant GCU policy and procedure.

The [Annual Programme Monitoring Process flowchart](#) details the sequence and timing of consideration of the relevant KPI and Departmental, School and University consideration of the outputs from programme monitoring.

The review should be completed substantially by June of each year for undergraduate programmes and updated with second diet assessment results as they become available. Timelines for postgraduate programmes and programmes which commence in Trimester B are detailed on the [Annual Programme Monitoring Process flowchart](#).

The monitoring process must identify and highlight any updates to the programme since approval/last review that may affect the programme's compliance with UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) regulations for International Student Visa Holders in force at that time.

### 6.3 Process Outcomes

The outcome of the monitoring process will be:

- the production/updating of an Enhancement Plan for the programme. The Plan will include 'SMART' targets and will specifically address issues arising from the process, including but not limited to where:
  - students have shown dissatisfaction with a programme (or associated modules)
  - progression rates after the second diet are lower than agreed School benchmarks
  - an External Examiner has expressed concern in relation to the quality and/or standards of a programme.
- confirmed Programme Specification or proposals for change to the programme structure (these must be approved via the relevant GCU policy and procedure). The programme specification is part of University public information set and conforms to the [QAA guidelines for preparing programme specifications](#)
- the identification of wider issues for consideration by the Department, School and/or University.

### 6.4 Departmental, School and University Consideration of the Programme Monitoring Process

The outputs from programme monitoring and review will be considered at Departmental, School and University level.

As indicated in the [Annual Programme Monitoring Process flowchart](#) each Head of Department, based on analysis of the APAs, will submit a summary [Departmental Annual Monitoring Report Template](#) to the ADLTQ who will prepare a [School Annual Monitoring Report Template](#) for consideration by the School Board.

Once approved by the School Board, this report will be submitted to Learning Enhancement Sub-committee (LESC) which will report on any cross-University trends or issues for consideration by this and/or other University committees as appropriate.