



QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND ASSURANCE HANDBOOK

2016 V6.3

Section 1: Foreword

1. FOREWORD

The GCU Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook (QEAH V6.2) has been revised and updated to take account of the following major policy drivers (policies approved since QEAH (2014) are shown in **bold**):

- **GCU Strategy 2020** (2015);
- GCU Strategy for Learning (SfL) 2015-2020;
- **GCU Academic Pillars for Learning, Teaching and Quality** (2016);
- The QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education;
- Student Experience Framework (SEF) 2013-2017;
- **Common Good Curriculum Attributes** (2016);
- College Connect Strategy 2013-2020;
- QAA Enhancement Themes; ¹
- SFC Outcome Agreement (2015/16);
- Internalisation Strategy;
- **GCU Values and Behaviours** (2015);
- **Digital Strategy** (approved June 2016 Senate);
- **UK higher education providers – advice on consumer protection law** (2015)
- Revised SFC Council Guidance to higher education institutions on quality issued in 2012;
- The internal review and audit of international partnerships (May 2013)

Additionally, the QEAH is underpinned by the SFC (2012) three key principles of:

- high quality learning;
- student engagement and,
- A quality culture.

Student engagement continues as a key principle and as a fundamental dimension of the GCU QEAH and now reflects the SFC shift from encouraging Institutions with regard to student engagement to setting out expectations of the type and nature of that engagement.

¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/428549/HE_providers_-_advice_on_consumer_protection_law.pdf

Overview of main updates and revisions in QEAH V6.3 (2016)

- **The Quality Enhancement and Assurance Strategy (Section 2)** has been revised to reflect policies approved and practices introduced since previous QEAH.
- **The GCU Academic Pillars for Learning, Teaching and Quality** (approved by Senate in June 2016) underpin the University's core principles and priorities for Learning, Teaching and Quality Assurance. The key messages from the paper are integrated into QEAH V6.2 (2016) such as the reaffirmation of the role of the Programme Leader and the responsibility of the Programme Board.
- **Annual Monitoring** has been revised and a standalone manual and templates provided for Programme, Department and School use (**Section 5 Appendix 5(b)**). A summary of Annual Monitoring Roles and Responsibilities is detailed in **Section 5 (Appendix 5(c))** of the Programme Monitoring Manual.
- **Module Monitoring and Review** for the forthcoming academic session completed no later than **1st June** of each year and fits with the overall **host² Programme Review. Section 7** has been revised and a template and guidance notes for the **module monitoring process** is provided in **Appendix 7(b)**.
- **Reaffirmation of an 18-month Programme Approval timeline** (Senate 2009) from School Board consideration to Programme Delivery. It should be noted that this can only be compressed **where a timely response to commercial and fully funded commissioned programmes is required. The need for adequate time for marketing and publicity coupled with CMA requirements reinforces the need for an 18-month timeline.**
- **Internal Panel Member-** Interschool representation is acceptable provided the panel member is from another Department. This means that the Panel can access and be guided by a member of academic staff who has specialist school based knowledge. This can be useful when dealing with questions around professionally regulated Programmes and School based issues that require further explanation or clarification.
- **The Common Good Curriculum** is part of the student learning experience at GCU and will prepare students to develop four '**Common Good attributes**'.
 - **Active and global citizenship,**
 - **Entrepreneurial mind-set**
 - **Responsible leadership**
 - **Confidence**

From session **2016/17** these will replace the current **GCU Graduate Attributes** in ELISR/Programme Approval/Review. **The common good curriculum mapping tool can be found in Appendix 2(a).**

² The host Programme Board is the owner of all the modules that make up the programme regardless of the number of programmes that may access an individual module.

- **Partnership and Collaborative Arrangements (Section 10)** – this section has been updated alongside the redrafting of all the other sections and to incorporate the outcomes of the March 2016 internal audit on partnership review commissioned by the University’s Audit Committee. The main revisions are as follows:
 - The section will be presented as overarching statements of our QA principles and processes for partnership development; some of the current prescriptive operational detail is removed with relevant signposting to the underpinning forms and tools that will be refreshed to support activity. The section is essentially our academic quality framework for development and managing activity.
 - That the section be renamed ‘Managing provision delivery in partnership’. There is a view that the dual terms being used through ‘partnership’ and ‘collaborative arrangement’ are sometimes confusing and essentially this section is all about how we develop/approve/monitor and review our partnership activity.
 - Refinement of opening sections to remove strategy and policy commentary.
 - A restatement and expansion of the governing principles and criteria to include reference to non-academic policy elements (anti-bribery, anti-corruption and cyber security) and compliance with UK Government policies (UKVI, CRA, CMA).
 - Inclusion of specific KPIs for partnerships agreed by Executive Board as an outcome of March 2016 internal audit.
 - Monitoring and review section updated to include arrangements for bi-annual review of partnership register standing data as an outcome of March 2016 internal audit.
 - Credit rating added as a type with cross reference to the guidelines to support.
 - Development and approval section stripped back to expand the three main stages to high level stages.
 - A Task and Finish Work Group will be set up following Senate approval to undertake review of templates and forms, reporting to APPC and IC.