

MANAGEMENT OF PROGRAMMES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out the relative functions and responsibilities of the committees and office bearers connected with the operation of programmes, Divisions and Schools. The arrangements for the management of collaborative programmes delivered by partner organisations will follow the principles set out in this chapter, but may differ in certain respects according to the structures and practices operated by these institutions. The University will however ascertain that collaborative partners have effective and equivalent mechanisms for the management of programmes.

The following definitions are used in this chapter:

- **Division** is used here in a broad sense to define a range of academic areas. It includes traditional disciplines such as Psychology, and professional areas such as Podiatry. Divisions represent a coherent group of programmes within single or related disciplines. It is recognised that different structures may apply within different Schools.
- **Programme** is used to cover courses, schemes and student programmes of study within schemes

2.0 DEAN OF SCHOOL

- 2.1 The School is the academic home of several related Divisions. The Dean of School is responsible for the academic development of these subjects and for the development of the staff to ensure that the teaching in these subjects is relevant, current and of a high standard.
- 2.2 Resources are allocated to Divisions for the prime purpose of effecting the teaching and research functions for which that Division is responsible. This includes the teaching commitment on modules in courses owned by other Divisions. As a resource manager, the Dean of School is accountable to the Principal to ensure that the resources given to the Division are deployed to the best advantage.

3.0 HEAD OF DIVISION

In a Division, the Head has operational responsibility for the quality of the disciplines offered.

4.0 PROGRAMME LEADER

- 4.1 Each programme is based in a Division and a School. The School provides administrative support, a focus for student interaction, the source of information, and easy contact between the Programme Leader and students. In most cases, the Division will be easily identified, as the Division providing the major input to the programme. The Dean of School is responsible for determining the home Division and for approving any change thereof.
- 4.2 A Programme Leader will be drawn from the home Division and be nominated by the Head of Division. In the unavoidable absence of a Programme Leader, an Acting Programme Leader will be appointed by the Head of Division. A Programme Leader is accountable in day-to-day operational terms to the Head of Division and will normally hold office for a full cycle of the programme, and possibly longer.
- 4.3 The appointment of the subsidiary office-bearers such as year tutors, admission tutors etc is at the discretion of the Head of Division. In the case of very large or complex courses it may be appropriate to appoint an assistant Programme Leader.
- 4.4 The Programme Leader will provide the academic and organisational leadership for the programme through the Programme Committee. A Programme Leader can expect the full support and co-operation of the Head of Division and Heads of other contributing Divisions but should recognise that a Head will have to balance a range of Division demands and priorities in allocating staff and resources.

4.5 In particular, a Programme Leader's responsibilities are:

- as Convener of the Programme Committee to ensure the effective organisation and conduct of the programme within agreed policies and regulations;
- to lead the academic development of the programme;
- to monitor the operation of the programme on an ongoing basis, and to co-ordinate its annual evaluation;
- to negotiate with the Head of Division the allocation of appropriate staff for teaching and other duties required by the programme;
- to co-ordinate any necessary interaction with professional and external validating bodies through the appropriate internal mechanisms;
- to select students for admissions;
- to keep in close touch with the academic welfare and progress of students in the programme, and to be closely aware of students' views about the programme;
- in consultation with the Module Co-ordinators to agree an assessment schedule;
- to take executive action as agreed by the Programme Committee;
- to present student marks and grades to the main Board of Examiners;
- to take executive action as agreed by the Programme Committee.

4.6 The Programme Leader will normally be responsible for the co-ordination of all assessments for the programme, for ensuring that the examination papers are dispatched to the External Examiner and the responses addressed, and for presenting the student marks and grades to the Board of Examiners.

4.7 It is permissible, in cases, for a Programme Leader to take responsibility for all the modules that form a programme, irrespective of the various awards to which the modules contribute. For example, the examination papers for a Psychology module should be the responsibility of the Psychology Programme Leader, irrespective of the number of awards to which that Psychology module contributes. It is the responsibility of the Head of Division to define in writing any such arrangement.

4.8 The case of tiered Boards of Examiners is dealt with in the Boards of Examiners Section of the Governance and Regulations.

5 PROGRAMME COMMITTEES

5.1 The Programme Committee will:

- exercise the overall academic and operational responsibility for the programme and its development within defined policies, procedures and regulations;
- be responsible for maintaining and enhancing the academic standards of the programme through the:
 - a) monitoring and evaluation of the aims, objectives and structure of the programme;
 - b) establishment and development of mechanisms to ensure student feedback;
 - c) review of academic regulations, admissions policy statements, assessment instruments;
 - d) development of teaching and learning methods.
- ensure that the programme is resourced to agreed levels by recommendations to, and negotiations with, the Dean of School, and the Deans of any contributing Schools;
- ensure that programme/programme delivery is effectively managed, including programme/year/subject time-tabling, access to teaching rooms, access to specialist facilities, etc;
- through the appropriate University committees, nominate proposed External Examiner(s);
- monitor student admission and student progress;
- be responsible for the formal submission of the necessary documentation for the approval, accreditation or assessment of the programme to the appropriate

professional and accreditation bodies, in line with the University's established procedures.

- submit minutes of its meetings to the School Academic Board.

5.2 Membership consists of the following:

- Convener – Head of Division or Programme Leader
- Ex Officio - Dean of School
- A representative from each of the contributing disciplines, all of whom should teach on the programme.
- Staff with specified programme responsibilities such as admissions, clinical supervision and projects.
- Level co-ordinators.
- Two students from each level of the programme
- Exceptionally, external membership may be proposed where directly relevant to the operation of the programme.

5.3 The membership of the Programme Committee will be approved by the Head of Division.

5.4 The Programme Committee will meet at least twice a year and additionally at the request of the Convener, or of one third of its membership, or of the Convener of Senate. For programmes that are substantial in scale, range of modules, outcomes or complexity, a small core executive group defined by, and responsible to, the Programme Committee will normally manage the day-to-day operation of the programme. The group will operate informally, be organised by the Programme Leader and typically include staff with key programme responsibilities. For relatively simple courses, the Programme Leader will normally manage the day-to-day operation of the programme him or herself.

6.0 MODULE CO-ORDINATOR

6.1 Each module belongs to a Division, which is responsible for the quality of delivery of that module. The Module Co-ordinator will be a member of staff of the home Division.

6.2 Responsibility for the quality of delivery of the module extends to the appointment of the Module Co-ordinator and of the staff responsible for teaching the module. Responsibility for the standard of the module and responsibility for the appointment of staff should not preclude mutually advantageous arrangements for the sharing of teaching but the responsibility for the module must not be in doubt.

6.3 The transfer of the ownership of a module from one Division to another is a matter of executive responsibility since it affects the allocation of duties and resources between Schools or Divisions. It is expected that this will normally be carried out only with the agreement of the Deans of all Schools and Divisions concerned.

6.4 The Module Co-ordinator is appointed by the Head of Division responsible for the delivery of the module. Heads will seek to provide continuity of staffing for modules.

6.5 The duties of the Module Co-ordinator are as follows :

- to advise the Head of Division on the staffing and other resources needed for the module;
- to ensure that the teaching and assessment of the module complies with the approved module descriptor and that all required sessions are timetabled;
- to maintain the currency of the curriculum content;
- in the first week, to provide students with the curriculum, reading lists and assessment schedules;
- to be responsible for the assessment of the module including the co-ordination of marking and the preparation of examination papers;
- to provide the Programme Leader, well in advance of the Board of Examiners, with the marks and grades of students who have studied that module;
- to evaluate the operation of the module and contribute to the evaluation of the programmes of which the module forms a part.

7.0 STUDENT-STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

- 7.1 A Student-Staff Consultative Committee will operate for each programme for the purpose of ensuring an adequate and effective opportunity for discussion between students and staff, in a context that allows wide student participation.
- 7.2 The function of the Committee is to provide a forum for constructive discussion of the programme in general terms, of the demands of the programme on students, and of possible developments.
- 7.3 The Committee will consider any matters directly related to the programme and report or make recommendations, as felt necessary, to the Programme Committee.
- 7.4 The membership of the Committee shall be drawn from staff teaching on the programme and student representatives; there should be more students than staff. The student membership should cover the main subject areas and activities of the programme. It is appropriate for a student to convene the committee and take minutes. Where a student member is not identified to take minutes, a member of the Programme Team will take on this role.

8.0 PERSONAL ACADEMIC TUTORING SYSTEM

8.1 Aims and purposes

The University recognises that a Personal Academic Tutoring System (PATS), for all students on taught programmes, should operate across the University with the following aims and purposes:

- The Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) will act as a facilitator and mentor to the student whilst at the University, encouraging the student to optimise their learning opportunities;
- The PAT is expected to refer students to other appropriate agencies and fully trained staff either within the University or elsewhere for support and resolution of issues of concern to both Tutor and student.
- The PAT may, on occasion, act as advocate on behalf of the student and in this role can be expected to make statements, either written or oral, to the Programme Committee (reserved business), Board of Examiners or others, as requested to do so.

See the Personal Academic Tutoring Guidelines for more information.

8.2 Policy

8.2.1 Each Dean of School is expected to;

- provide each student with a PAT throughout their academic studies at QMU;
- provide details about the PATS at QMU in Student Handbooks and especially to detail the expectations which the student may have of the system and the expectations the academic and other staff have of the student;
- establish a system for recording the nature and outcome of the interaction between student and PAT;
- have a named person within each Division who is responsible for co-ordinating the PATS and provide an effective evaluation and monitoring process;
- establish regular opportunities for staff development and training for academic and other staff in order to support the System.

The overall responsibility for an effective PATS lies with the Dean of School.

It is expected that:

- the PAT will meet with their tutee at least once per semester;

- all students new to the University will meet with their PAT during the first four to six weeks, and ideally earlier, of their studies at QMU;
- all students returning to QMU will meet with their PAT in the first four to six weeks.

8.3 Implementation of the PATS policy at QMU

It is expected that the Dean of School will make explicit to both staff and students the nature of the PATS, its purpose and its boundaries. A co-ordinator (e.g. Programme Leader) will be appointed and a system for monitoring and evaluation established. It is expected that the Dean of School will, through Performance Enhancement Review, acknowledge the role which staff are expected to undertake commensurate with the responsibilities of a successful PATS.

It is acknowledged that for part-time students meetings may not always be easily arranged. However, it is vital, and perhaps more so, for part-time students, that an effective PATS is maintained. The PATS policy allows for a defined explicit system to be devised for part-time students.

8.4 Expectations of the PAT

- 8.4.1 The PAT will be the direct link between the student and the University and plays a key role (see below) in the support network for the student offered by the programme and the University.
- 8.4.2 The PAT will make clear to the student the boundaries of their supporting role and encourage the student to make use of other facilities, especially academic counselling offered by Module Co-ordinators, to their tutees.
- 8.4.3 A PAT can expect to remain with the same student for the duration of their time at the University. In some cases the student or the Tutor may request that a different Tutor is assigned.
- 8.4.4 The PAT must initiate a meeting with their academic tutee at least once a semester.
- 8.4.5 The PAT will keep an agreed record of each meeting with the student. Ideally, it will indicate areas for action and this will be filed centrally in the School with the confidential records of the student.
- 8.4.6 The PAT may meet with their tutees as a group, but should always be prepared to meet with each tutee individually.

8.5 Expectations of the student

- 8.5.1 The student must expect to meet with their PAT at least once a semester. Tutees may request further meetings but it is the responsibility of both student and staff that at least one meeting takes place.
- 8.5.2 The student can expect to be part of an Academic Tutorial Group, which is likely to comprise students from different years of programmes of study. The student may also expect to meet with other members of an Academic Tutor Group on at least one occasion during the academic year to foster group support.
- 8.5.3 The student, during their studies at QMU, is expected to accept the responsibilities of autonomy and independence. This includes acknowledging and using the PATS in a responsible manner and with sensitivity.
- 8.5.4 The student can expect to take responsibility for any agreed course of action which may result as an outcome from the meetings.
- 8.5.5 Students who consistently fail to attend meetings initiated by the PAT, can have this non-attendance notified to their Head of Division.

8.6 Confidentiality

8.6.1 Meetings and discussions with PATs may raise confidential issues. PATs and students must be aware of the Tutor's duty of confidence to the student and also of the need to carry through the consequences of this discussion, particularly if it raises serious academic issues. The student must also be aware that, in some cases, the law requires that issues concerning criminal behaviour may need to be revealed.

8.7 Expectations of the Dean of School

8.7.1 The Dean of School must establish a system for effective Personal Academic Tutoring based on the Policy and is responsible for communicating the System to all who work and study in the School including Visiting Lecturers.

8.7.2 The PAT has a role significantly different from that of the Programme Leader and this must be made clear to both staff and students.

8.7.3 The PAT will be a member of the academic staff, normally within the Division which is responsible for the programme on which the student is registered for an award.

8.7.4 The Dean of School, as resource manager, must acknowledge the vital role of the PAT during reviews of resource deployment in the School.

8.7.5 PATs must have the opportunity to attend appropriate training sessions and discussions concerning their role at School and University level.

8.7.6 A list, clearly indicating the allocation of PATs, together with their contact address, must be made known to academic staff, students and other support staff in the School within one week of the start of the semester and preferably before. A copy of this Policy must be available to all students.

8.7.7 Each School may wish to add additional responsibilities to the role of the PAT. This is a matter for internal discussion and resource allocation. The roles and responsibilities of the Academic Tutor and tutee must be clearly articulated to students through their handbooks.