Section 3:
Curriculum and Assessment Check-in, Learning, Teaching and Assessment Refresh and Internal Scrutiny Events

Principles

3.1.   The importance of a cyclical review process that facilitates a deliberate opportunity for a holistic reflection of the curriculum is recognised.

3.2.   It is conversely recognised that changes should be appropriately implemented as the need is identified rather than await a cyclical process. It is therefore expected the modifications process is utilised to ensure courses and modules are regularly reviewed and kept up to date and:

   i)   reflect feedback from various stakeholders' including students, the course team, external examiners and industry experts as appropriate.

   ii)   respond to actions identified through the ongoing continuous improvement processes as deemed appropriate.

   iii)   respond to internal strategies and external academic standards requirements.

3.3   Colleges and Schools have a responsibility to ensure the portfolio of courses and modules within their remit are appropriately updated.

3.4   The cyclical approach should consider subject areas collectively. This recognises the importance of a holistic approach, shared modules, the inter-disciplinary nature of the curriculum and sharing good practice.

3.5   It is recognised that a risk-based approach is appropriate.

On going continuous improvement summary

3.6   Each year there are several processes that contribute to the ongoing continuous improvement of courses.

   -   module leaders are required to reflect on their modules, including student feedback through a module leader report.

   -   course leaders in turn then reflect on the module leader reports and course matrix of data as part of their annual course leader report.

- each course must have a formal process for consulting with and gathering feedback from students with agreed action points (refer to section 8).

- Subject Area meetings are expected with external examiners (Level 5 and above, refer to section 9)

- Each year the Portfolio Planning Committee Portfolio Sub Committee considers a matrix of data and reports and identifies appropriate actions (refer to section 7).

3.7 The above processes are expected to result in deliberate actions to improve the student experience for example modifications.

Definition of each process

3.8 Curriculum and Assessment Check-in is a 6 yearly cycle where the university 'checks-in' on the subject area's curriculum and its approach to assessment. At this time, course teams should take a holistic view across the subject area, sharing good practice and making modifications as required. It is expected that course teams have been modifying their courses throughout the 6-year cycle. The Panel of peers will view the approved curriculum. The Panel are focussed primarily on the approach to curriculum and assessment and will provide recommendations to the School to take forward as deemed appropriate by the School/College.

Refer to 3.11 – 3.22

3.9 Internal Scrutiny Events are reserved for apprenticeship degrees, collaborative partners and specific Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies where a detailed course team discussion on the curriculum and proposed changes is required. The approval of such an event will be agreed by the Deputy Registrar Quality and Standards, and the remit of such panels will be approved by the Chair of the Teaching Committee or nominee.

Refer to 3.37 – 3.41

3.10 Learning Teaching and Assessment Refresh Events are a risk-based outcome of student experience and performance data discussions undertaken by the Portfolio Planning Committee Portfolio Sub Committee. They require a meeting between the Panel, including external advisors and Course Teams and are focussed on the enhancement of the curriculum, the approach to learning and teaching alongside consideration of the matrix of data. There is an expectation that changes are proposed through the processes and approved by the Panel.

Refer to 3.42 – 3.53

Curriculum and Assessment Check-in overview of the process

3.11 The stages of curriculum and assessment check-in are as follows:

i) Quality and Standards maintain an overall 6-year schedule of all Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate (PG) subject areas/Schools.

ii) Ongoing continuous improvement processes lead to modifications of the curriculum as required.

iii) Prior to a Curriculum and Assessment check-in year, deliberate more detailed discussions to determine if further changes to courses are required is expected to take place within the School. Where modifications at a course or module level are thought to be needed these should be submitted by the published modification deadlines.

iv) A minimum of two external advisors should be nominated by the School

v) A Panel is appointed by Quality and Standards

vi) Quality and Standards provide the panel with a curriculum pack

vii) The Panel including external advisors meet with the appointed Course/School Student Representatives to gain feedback of the curriculum and overall learning and teaching experience.

viii) Following the meeting with course representatives, the panel including external advisors have a discussion and agree draft recommendations, to be approved by the Chair(s) and Quality and Standards.

ix) A non-mandatory meeting with the internal panel and course or School team can be facilitated following the dissemination of the recommendations.

x) A required meeting facilitated by Quality and Standards takes place with Centre for Education and Teaching Innovation.

xi) A workshop takes place normally focussed on the themes of the curriculum and assessment recommendations.

xii) Modifications are submitted as thought required by the School.

Curriculum and Assessment Check in Timings (CA Check-in)

3.12 Curriculum and Assessment Check-ins takes place on a six-yearly cycle. It enables the university to verify over a particular timeframe that academic standards are being maintained and the approach to the courses and modules being taken by the School aligns with internal and external expectations. For example, the Education Strategy, Curriculum Framework and compliance with the Office for Students B conditions and Quality Frameworks. Further information is available in Section 2 of the handbook.

3.13 The CA Check-in is expected to take place on a calendar cycle aligning with the considerations of published information for applicants and students. Where possible the recommendations of the Panel will be provided prior to September annually allowing the Course Team sufficient time to make modifications if required.

Example: A course in the 2026 calendar year CA Check-in cycle is being considered for September 2027 implementation. Therefore, where possible any recommendations are provided to the course team by September 2026 so if the course team would like to take forward any structural modifications by the November structural modification deadline they can do so.

Note: For the 2025 cycle it is recognised that due to the shorter planning time for those course teams that adapted timelines will be required.

School/Course team processes prior to a year check-in

3.14   CA Check-In is simply that, a check-in. It is the university touching base with the School or College to confirm that the curriculum and assessment strategies for the subject area are meeting expectations to ensure the continuing improvement of the student experience.

3.15   Schools should ensure opportunities for holistic course discussions take place annually as part of existing continuous improvement processes e.g. subject area meetings, meetings with students, course team discussions. However, it is recognised that Curriculum and Assessment Check-in is a key opportunity to have a more detailed holistic discussion taking a 'programme audit' approach. For example, the number of summative or formative assessments, assessment tariffs, assessment deadlines, the variety of assessment, the approach to authentic assessment, assessment and feedback times.

3.16   It is anticipated that the outcome of the holistic discussions is to ascertain if modifications may be required before the published modifications deadlines.

Documentation to be considered by the Curriculum and Assessment Panel

3.17   The CA check-in is a process that focusses on the approved curriculum. No further documentation is required by the course team and only the already approved curriculum will be considered by the panel.

3.18   The Quality and Standards Office will lead on providing all documentation to the panel. The following documentation is expected:

    i)   the latest approved version of all Programme Specifications

    ii)   modules owned by the School/subject contained within the programme specifications. This includes any and all modules associated with the courses owned by the school, as well as any standalone elective modules, study abroad modules and any other credit bearing modules.

    iii) modules from outside the school contained in the programme specifications (for oversight of the course but largely for information).

    iv)   summary of assessments as available in E Vision.

    v)   the last three years of Continuous Improvement Process Course Leader reports and relevant external examiner reports

Curriculum and Assessment Check-In Panels

3.19   Panels will convene to consider the documentation against the internal policies, strategies and external academic standards expectations. The Panel will meet course representatives studying on the courses. The Panel can only set recommendations to the school.

3.20   Curriculum and Assessment Check-in Panel members are expected to provide comments in advance of the meeting with students or the panel. This reflects that the process is largely based on the approved curriculum already approved for students and is therefore taking place via correspondence, except for the meeting with students and rounding up prior to decisions.

Chair

3.21 Meetings will be Co-Chaired to balance a recognised need for College accountability as well as the importance of the role of sharing approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. The role of the Chair is to manage and direct the Curriculum and Assessment Check-in.

3.22 The Head of College is expected to nominate one lead Chair derived from within the College, normally an Associate Head of College (Education and Students or External Relations). Quality and Standards will appoint a second Chair from outside the College, to encourage the sharing of good practice university wide and provide additional support to the lead Chair.

Note: Quality and Standards retain an approved list of trained Chairs.

Learning, Teaching and Quality representatives

3.23 Learning, Teaching and Quality representatives are also appointed to Panels to provide further insight on the values, strategies and policies of the university and to facilitate the dissemination of good practice. Learning, Teaching and Quality representatives will normally be balanced from both within the College (but not School) and representation from another College or CETI.

3.24 **A Student Adviser** will be appointed as set out in section 8 of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook. They will be full members of the Curriculum and Assessment Check-in Panel.

3.25 **Quality and Standards Adviser**
The Quality and Standards Adviser is responsible for ensuring the latest published course documentation is circulated to the Panel, liaising with the course team as appropriate. The Adviser will also act as the Secretary organising the meeting with student representatives, liaising with the external advisors as appropriate, supporting the Chair, preparing the draft report for approval by the Chair, outlining recommendations and areas of good practice for circulation. The Quality and Standards Adviser will also circulate the report to the Course team and facilitate a meeting with CETI following the circulation of the approved recommendations.

External Subject Advisers

3.26 The role of the External Subject Advisers is to provide appropriate subject expertise to the Panel, within the wider context of Higher Education, and business or industry. External Advisers should evaluate the documentation in the context of external reference points with reference to academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and employability. External advisors act as advisors to the Panel.

3.27 Each subject area curriculum and assessment check is expected to have a minimum of two external advisors, one academic and one industry expert. Any exceptions e.g. no industry advisor is expected to be approved by the Lead Chair based in the College.

Meeting with Course Representatives

3.28 Quality and Standards will be responsible for contacting the Course Representatives (or School Representatives who are students on the courses being considered) to invite them to attend a meeting with the Panel, including external advisors. The

meeting is aimed at providing feedback from students on the delivery of the curriculum through the approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. The invite will be extended to students who are not course or school representatives to ensure where possible all courses and modes of study are represented.

Note: The course team will normally be asked if they would like to invite any alumni to the meeting. This is strongly encouraged to ensure the employability perspective is considered.

Meeting with the Course Team

3.29 A meeting with the course team is not normally required. The course team have the right to request a meeting with the Chair following the circulation of the recommendations.

3.30 In some cases, the PPC Portfolio Sub Committee, taking a risk-based approach, may require the course team to meet with the full panel. This need will depend on the risks identified by the Sub Committee and where a fuller discussion with peers is thought to be particularly beneficial. All such decisions will be notified well in advance of the CA Check-In cycle.

Decisions

3.31 Following the meeting with course representatives/students the Panel Chair will agree recommendations to take forward as deemed appropriate by the School.

3.32 Curriculum recommendations are normally derived from the courses and modules owned by the School but may extend beyond that for consideration e.g. with other Schools, most commonly where modules are shared.

3.33 All decisions will be communicated by Quality and Standards in the form of a report of the discussions and formal recommendations. A summary of all recommendations will be made available to the Teaching Committee and Planning Portfolio Committee Portfolio Sub Committee.

Meeting with CETI and workshop

3.34 Following the circulation of the recommendations, a meeting with the relevant course leaders and CETI is normally required. This is a deliberate cyclical opportunity for all subject areas to have an appropriate workshop or curriculum development opportunity. The discussions with CETI will normally be facilitated by Quality and Standards and reflect on the panel recommendations to determine whether the existing portfolio of workshops or a more targeted approach would be most beneficial. It is envisaged in some cases that following the workshop or curriculum development opportunity future actions including modifications may be required.

Curriculum and Assessment Check-in What happens next?

3.35 Following the Panel recommendations to the College or School, it is for the College or School to determine if, how and when those recommendations will be actioned within the context of wider ongoing Continuous Improvement discussions.

3.36 Quality and Standards will keep an annual overview of recommendations which is available upon request to the PPC Portfolio Sub Committee when considering the matrix of data.

Internal Scrutiny Events

3.37   Internal Scrutiny Events are normally reserved for courses with apprenticeship provision and awards delivered at a collaborative partner.

3.38   Some courses approved by a Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body may also require an internal scrutiny event, where there are explicit requirements not covered by the CA Check-in process. The approval of such an event will be agreed by the Deputy Registrar, Quality and Standards in line with the specific requirements of the PSRB or external body. The membership and remit of such panels will be approved by the Chair of the Teaching Committee or nominee, in some cases this may involve the PSRB being included as advisers to the panel.

3.39   Internal Scrutiny events are cyclical review events similar to CA Check-in. However, the event can consider proposed changes to the curriculum and student data as deemed appropriate. Internal Scrutiny events can set conditions, recommendations and requirements.

3.40   Additional documentation to that required for Curriculum and Assessment Check-In will normally be required (for example, mapping to PSRB requirements). The documentation required will vary depending on the event and be confirmed by Quality and Standards well in advance of deadlines.

3.41   The deadline for Colleges to submit documentation to Quality and Standards internal scrutiny panels will be 4 weeks in advance of the event.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Refresh Events (LTA Refresh Event)

3.42   The standard expectation for all courses is a Curriculum Assessment Check-in. However, taking a risk-based approach the Portfolio Planning Portfolio Sub-Committee may require a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Refresh Event, this is one amongst a wide range of other actions that may be appropriate. Refer to section 7 for more information on the role of PPC in Continuous Improvement Processes.

What is a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Refresh Event?

3.43   A Learning, Teaching and Assessment Refresh Event can be required by the PPC Portfolio Sub Committee as part of the risk-based approach to consider both the curriculum and matrix of data, leading to a more detailed event or meeting which includes a discussion between the Panel and the Course Teams. Additional reflective documentation is also required by the course team.

3.44   **Summary of LTA Refresh Event Process**

   i)   The PPC Portfolio Sub Committee meeting considers a range of data e.g. student experience, student outcomes and first sit data. Based on the data a Refresh Event is one of several possible actions that may be required. Refresh events for individual courses will not normally be considered, the approach is at School/Subject area level. The Sub Committee can normally only recommend a maximum of three Refresh events per calendar year.

   ii)   Where the PPC Portfolio Sub Committee agrees a Refresh event this will be communicated by the PPC Secretary or nominee. The Refresh event is expected to take place over a calendar year.

Example: Following the release of Graduate Outcomes/NSS/PTES data a PPC Portfolio Sub Committee meeting takes place in September/October 2025. Any decision to require a Refresh event would be taken forward between January – December 2026, for September 2027 implementation.

iii) A required course design or appropriate workshop is normally expected to take place prior to the event unless one has recently taken place.

iv) At least two external advisor nominations are required (refer to 3.50 – 3.53), this should normally include at least one academic and one industry-based advisor.

v) Curriculum changes can be submitted as part of this process, rather than being required through the modifications process. This enables a fuller holistic discussion on proposed changes. Curriculum changes are not required as part of the process, recognising modifications may have been made recently, this is a decision for the Head of School or nominee.

vi) A meeting is arranged to include the Chairs, Course Team and School representatives, Learning, Teaching Quality Representatives and external advisers. This will include a meeting with course representatives (or School representatives from the courses being considered) and where possible alumni.

vii) The Panel can set conditions, recommendations and commendations.

Documentation to be considered.

3.45   The Course Team(s) are expected to provide a short-written submission on how the LTA Refresh event addresses the data (refer to section 6) and provide staff CV's for all course leaders, module leaders and other key staff.

3.46   Changes to the curriculum can be submitted for consideration by the Panel (programme specifications and modules). Where this is the case the Course Teams must provide an accompanying communication of changes document for applicants and students. The deadline for all documentation to be signed off within the School for submission to Quality and Standards will be 4 weeks before the event.

3.47   Quality and Standards will provide the data, three years of Course Leader Continuous Improvement reports, assessment summaries available in E Vision and relevant external examiner reports. Additional documentation can be provided by the course team as required.

LTA Refresh Panels

3.48   The Panels for Refresh events are the same as for Curriculum and Assessment Check-in (refer to 3.19 – 3.22). However, in addition it is noted that the Head of College or Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education), may be considered as one of the Chairs.

LTA Refresh Event Decisions

3.49   The LTA Refresh Panel can make conditions that are required to be signed off by the Chair. All conditions and recommendations will be included in a report provided by the Quality and Standards Office. The report will be made available to the PPC Portfolio Sub Committee. The Panel will normally also decide when the next Curriculum Check in cycle should take place.

Independent Externality- External Subject Advisers all processes

3.50   The role of the External Subject Advisers is to provide appropriate subject expertise to the Panel, within the wider context of Higher Education, and business or industry. External Advisers should evaluate the documentation in the context of external reference points with reference to academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and employability. External advisors act as advisors to the panel.

3.51   Each subject area curriculum and assessment check in should normally have a minimum of two external advisors, one academic and one industry expert. Any exceptions are to be agreed by the Chair.

3.52   External Advisors are expected to complete comments in writing in advance of the meeting with students/panel.

        In all cases:

  * External advisers must not be either current or recent (i.e. within the previous six years) External Examiners at the University, member of staff, student or member of the College Employability Board. Any other connections with the University or course teams are expected to be declared on the nomination form. All Panels should include one External adviser with appropriate academic experience. Course teams are however also encouraged to include an External adviser from industry, commerce or professions who can explicitly consider the course in terms of its employability, graduate attributes, links with industry and specific/transferable skills. For distance learning courses, an external with experience of online provision is expected.

  * Direct reciprocation must always be avoided, such examples include if a Course Leader were an external examiner at an institution, reciprocal arrangements would include an external advisor from that same subject area or department. The general principle that academics, senior administrators and practicing professionals are prepared to give their time to contribute constructive criticism to course provision is central to the UK's quality assurance processes in Higher Education. The nominating course representative and the Head of College attests to this independence in nominating and signing the nomination form.

  * The Head of College or nominee may also consider that the University should not draw external advisers from institutions identified as being in direct competition with the University of Westminster in the subject area concerned: in this context direct competition normally implies geographical proximity.

3.53   External Advisers to Panels convened at the University of Westminster receive a standard fee in recognition of their contribution; they will be required to provide the appropriate documentation in accordance with the Home Office right to work requirements.

        Note: External Advisory Board members are linked to each College or School. With the agreement of the Chair, cyclical review nominations can be derived from this pool of individuals where there are no other conflict or reciprocal arrangements and where there is an assumption there is another academic external with no conflicts of interest. Note for validation this is not permitted.

For internal users, diagrams are available of the following processes and timelines:

Curriculum and Assessment Check in

1. May: annually the calendar year Curriculum Check in cycle is published by Quality and Standards. For example, in May 2024 the calendar for January – December 2025 processes.
2. October/November: briefing sessions led by Q&S
3. November: structural modification deadline if required to approve any course level changes within the College.
4. External advisor nominations submitted by the college or School
   Concurrently the Head of College and Q&S appoint internal Co-Chairs and LTQ Reps
5. January – May:
   - the Panel are sent the last published programme specifications and modules with a template to complete and submit prior to a meeting with students
   - The panel including external advisors meet course representatives
   - Following the student meeting the panel agree recommendations
   - Chair approved recommendations circulated to the School alongside a short report on the comments of the panel and summary of discussion with students
   - An optional meeting with course team representatives can be arranged with the Panel Chairs or Q&S
   - Q&S facilitate a workshop planning meeting with CETI
   - CETI run a workshop
   - School or College take forward changes as deemed appropriate
   - Recommendations are available to the PPC Portfolio Sub Committee when considering the data annually.
   - Modification overviews are available to PPC as required

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Refresh Events

1. Approximately November: PPC Portfolio Sub Committee considers data annually, November meeting with Schools to discuss the portfolio
2. Actions are agreed by PPC one of which may be an LTA Refresh Event
3. Approximately January: Q&S Briefing session arrangements with course teams (can also be included in the workshop below)
4. A workshop planning meeting takes place with CETI
5. A curriculum design workshop takes place with CETI
6. Course team work on proposed changes to be considered by a panel
7. External advisors are nominated by the School or College
8. internal Co-chairs approved by the head of College and Q&S
9. Date agreed for a Panel meeting to discuss the proposed changes and reflections
10. documentation is submitted one month in advance of an event
11. Panel meeting takes place, including a meeting with course representatives and panel meeting with the course team
    - Conditions/recommendation/commendations are agreed as deemed appropriate by the Panel, and approved by the Co-Chairs, a deadline is set prior to November to address any conditions.
    - Q&S provide a report summarising the events discussions and decisions
12. Panel reconsider the changes and approve curriculum changes
13. Admissions, web teams, registry, timetabling and other key stakeholders advised of the changes.

14. Students and applicants informed.
15. PPC Sub Committee and the Teaching Committee receives a summary of Refresh Reports as appropriate

Internal Scrutiny Panel

Collaborative, PSRB or external event cycle
1. In consultation with the College, Q&S establish which PSRBs or external agencies may explicitly require a bespoke event.
2. The Deputy Registrar Q&S approves the establishment of an Internal Scrutiny Panel
3. The College and Q&S agree required documentation based on the needs of the event.
4. A workshop planning meeting takes place with CETI
5. A CETI workshop takes place
6. Course team work on proposed changes and reflections
7. External Nominations are submitted by the School
8. A panel is established by Quality and Standards as deemed appropriate
9. A date is agreed for an event
10. Draft Documentation is submitted one month ahead of the event
11. A meeting takes place
12. Conditions/Recommendations/Commendations are agreed by the Panel and approved by the Chair, including a deadline by November each year
13. Quality and Standards provides a formal report
14. Sign off expected by mid-December for September implementation.
15. Admissions, web teams, registry, timetabling and other key stakeholders advised of the changes.
16. Students and applicants informed.