

# Section 4:

## Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body Accreditation and recognition

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- 4.1. Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation is a general term used to describe organisations which are authorised to accredit, recognise, endorse or approve named awards in the context of a particular subject area, discipline or profession. They are a diverse group of professional and employer bodies, regulators with statutory authority over a profession or group of professionals. The University of Westminster has a large and diverse group of PSRBs who approve, recognise or accredit a wide range of our courses.
- 4.2. PSRBs are an important feature of the University's Employability Strategy and are also a valuable independent quality assurance and enhancement resource. PSRB status forms part of the Consumer Law through the Competition and Markets Authority and has required reporting processes through the Office for Students.
- 4.3. PSRBs normally accredit a course(s) for a specific number of years after which they return to review and re-accredit for the next period. Quality and Standards must be informed of any upcoming accreditation visits as soon as they are known (refer to section 3).
- 4.4. PSRBs' diverse nature, expectations, processes, requirements differ greatly, and therefore there is no single approach to PSRB events or quality assurance processes.
- 4.5. Each PSRB should have a nominated contact within the College. A central register of all accreditations is held by the Quality and Standards Office. This is updated annually in consultation with the nominated college representatives. There is however an expectation that college representatives inform Quality and Standards of any decisions in a timely manner throughout the year.

### **Accreditation**

- 4.6. The process of each accreditation can differ greatly dependent on the PSRB. However, such bodies normally have a periodic review and re-accreditation process for which they normally provide detailed guidance on the format for the presentation of documentation. This may correspond closely with the University's requirements in terms of course documentation. However, evidence of continuous improvement and of student achievement may need to be formatted separately to accord with PSRB requirements.
- 4.7. The first point of contact between the University and a PSRB is located within the College which holds responsibility for the courses which are the subject of accreditation. Normally this would be the Head of College, Head of School or Course Leader. Where the requirements of the accreditation are expected to be within the college or by correspondence the Associate Head of College (Education and

Students) and the Deputy Registrar, Quality and Standards must still be informed that the process is being undertaken.

- 4.8. Preparation for PSRB visits is normally organised by the College-based contact with the PSRB and the Director of College Operations or nominee.
- 4.9. Where a Re-accreditation Panel with responsibility outside the College is required, this must be communicated to the Deputy Registrar, Quality and Standards and the Vice Chancellor's Office as soon as possible. This acknowledges that a number of PSRBs expect the attendance of a member of the University Executive, therefore determining availability of the appropriate staff and agenda must be done as soon as possible.
- 4.10. Arrangements should be made by the Head of School and Deputy Registrar, Quality and Standards or nominee to brief all University representatives involved, as well as students and external examiners.
- 4.11. The draft documentation, together with the PSRB criteria and guidelines, must be drafted by the College. Normally this stage of preparation is conducted through the College Office, and the submission is checked for consistency of presentation and up-to-date references to University and College policies and procedures.
- 4.12. The final draft documentation should be submitted simultaneously to the Deputy Registrar, Quality and Standards.
- 4.13. A planning meeting with those required will normally take place to prepare for the event. This should make clear the PSRB process, remit and individuals' roles on the day.
- 4.14. The draft report or final email decision of the PSRB panel should be submitted to Deputy Registrar, Quality and Standards or nominee for collation and drafting of the formal response on behalf of the University.
- 4.15. All PSRB accreditation and review reports or decision-making notifications should be submitted to the Quality and Standards Office for consideration by the University Teaching Committee and College Teaching Committee.
- 4.16. No new courses that are pending PSRB accreditation should include a PSRB status until a decision has been made regardless of the status of other linked courses in the subject area.

#### **Joint Internal Scrutiny Event and Accreditation**

- 4.17. In some cases, the PSRB may require attendance at the Internal Scrutiny event. In such cases the Quality and Standards Office will work with the Course team, Vice Chancellor's Office (where required) and the PSRB to incorporate the PSRB elements into the event. In the case of joint University/PSRB Panels, external advisers normally hold full membership to the panel.

#### **Change in status**

- 4.18. Any changes to the status of a professional accreditation must be reported to the Deputy Registrar, Quality and Standards as soon as a preliminary decision has been communicated by the PSRB. Where a loss, or partial loss of accreditation, recognition or membership has taken place an action plan will be required. This includes if the decision to not seek re-accreditation is with the University.

- 4.19. The College action plan must be completed promptly in consultation with the appropriate Associate Head of College (Education and Students), Deputy Registrar, Quality and Standards, Assistant Registrar (Compliance and Development), and Director of College Operations or nominee.
- 4.20. The following constituency will be informed of the decisions, impact and process to be followed.
- Global Recruitment, Admissions and Marketing Communications  
For communication with applicants, updating web pages and externally published course information.
  - Head of College/Director of College Operations  
To advise continuing students of the changes
  - Strategic Planning and Performance  
The nominee with responsibility for external returns
  - Teaching Committee Secretary  
To report to the Teaching Committee
  - Portfolio Planning Committee Secretary  
To report to the Portfolio Planning Committee Portfolio Sub-Committee

#### Other considerations

- 4.21. In some cases, PSRBs allow their logo to be used in associated course advertising; where this is the case the College representative is responsible for making clear the requirements, limitations and expectations. It is expected the written guidance from the PSRB is disseminated appropriately to help ensure any advertising is not misleading.