Policy on Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Accreditations

Scope
All programmes accredited by a professional, statutory and regulatory body.

Date of approval/re-approval
Senate 27 June 2012

Date for review
To be reviewed on a periodic basis.

To be read in conjunction with: Policies and Processes on Annual Programme Evaluation and Periodic Review in Section 8 of the Quality Manual

Definition
Professional and Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) is a general term used to describe those organisations that work with the University in the approval, monitoring and review of programmes that lead to a professional or vocational qualification and which exist to ensure that national standards within the professions are met. PSRB accreditation may include recognition of membership or exemption from professional exams.

Policy
The University considers engagement with PSRBs to be instrumental in the development of programmes that are current and which meet the needs of business and the professions and the expectations of students. Responsibility for the acquisition and retention of PSRB accreditation rests with the Board of Studies within which eligible programmes reside. The University requires Schools to seek and retain professional, statutory and regulatory body accreditation for all programmes which qualify for such recognition.

Reports arising from such engagements provide valuable information about the quality and standards of programmes. The reports and the responses to any matters arising should be used as part of the normal review process – through APE and Periodic Review. Boards of Studies, or appropriate sub-committees, such as Programme Approval and Review Committees (PARCs), should consider reports and responses and monitor any follow-up action that is required.

Procedures
1. Due to the diverse nature of PSRBs, the approach to the management of these accreditations should be determined by Schools and overseen by the Board of Studies or appropriate sub-committees of the Board of Studies. Associate Deans (Education) should be consulted as part of the preparations.
2. Where possible, and where it is desirable, PSRB (re)accreditations should be undertaken alongside the University’s process for Periodic Review of programmes.

3. The Programme Director will prepare the documentation in support of the application for PSRB (re)accreditation and will seek approval from the Associate Dean (Education) and from the Dean of School through the Board of Studies.

4. Schools should inform Student and Academic Services on an annual basis of the PSRBs (re)accreditations scheduled to take place in the forthcoming academic year in order to assist the University in the planning and delivery of its educational provision.

5. Schools will seek advice on quality assurance, standards and enhancement issues from Student and Academic Services and for advice on other institutional support as appropriate.

6. Where a programme or a group of programmes is the joint responsibility of two or more Schools the Associate Deans (Education) of each School will agree a suitable mechanism by which to manage the preparation for the (re)accreditation visit to allow each School the opportunity to comment on the documentation prior to submission to the PSRB.

7. Where provision is delivered through Flexible and Distributed Learning, the Programme Director will inform the PSRB and advise students of any specific conditions attached to the PSRB recognition.

8. The PSRB will provide the School with a (re)accreditation report and will notify the Programme Team of its decision and the period of further (re)accreditation awarded.

9. Schools will consider the outcome of PRSR engagements, the content of the PSRB (re)accreditation report and any recommendations and/or good practice arising and the Programme Team’s response to the report through the Board of Studies or appropriate sub-committees.

10. Where responsibility for the programmes is across two or more Schools the Associate Deans (Education) will agree a suitable mechanism by which to provide each School the opportunity to consider the report; a single, consolidated response to the PSRB will be produced.

11. Actions in response to PSRB reports should be reflected in the Annual Programme Evaluation and in the next Periodic Review of the programmes.

12. Programme Directors will advise the Dean of School and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor immediately if (re)accreditation is withdrawn and/or the outcome of the (re)accreditation is anything other than full approval.

13. To support Senate oversight and to work alongside Student and Academic Services in the identification and dissemination of good practice, Student and Academic Services will report annually on outcomes of PSRB (re)accreditations to the Education and Student Committee.
14. Student and Academic Services will maintain an institutional-wide register of PSRB accredited programmes and will report to Senate on the University’s register annually.

15. Where a legally binding agreement between the School and the PSRB is proposed Student and Academic Services can support the co-ordination and finalization of the agreement.

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