Summary

Further to Senate approval of the revised policies for Programme Approval, Programme Amendment, Periodic Review and Programme Termination in May 2018, it was agreed that the APE policy, guidance and form will be revised in 2018/19 to align with those updates and ensure alignment with the requirements of KPIs, TEF and NSS.

Recommended action

Educational Quality Committee is asked to

- consider the current project plan for aligning our annual programme evaluation policy, process, guidance and forms to internal and external drivers.
Aligning City’s Annual Programme Evaluations to Internal and External Drivers

1. Background:

The Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) is a process for assuring the quality and continual enhancement of programmes. Every programme (or cluster of programmes) is required to complete an APE each year, reviewing their programme and proposing developments in an action plan. The APEs draw on evidence including student feedback, reflect upon the impact of previous actions, and are designed to support the dissemination of good practice and enabling oversight of the way in which strategic priorities are implemented at programme level.

Following recent sector changes, with the introduction of the new Office for Students (OfS) regulations and the subject-level TEF criteria / metrics, and through consultation with academic and professional staff a need has been identified to review the APE Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate taught (PGT) policy, process, guidance and forms for 2018/19 to ensure that our annual programme evaluations are fit for purpose, robust and valuable.

Validated Provision and Postgraduate Research APE forms and guidance will be reviewed and updated outside the working group by the Quality & Academic Development (QUAD) team in consultation with the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) and the Assistant Registrar (Research Degrees)

Following the publication of the 2017/18 APE forms and guidance, training workshops for staff have now taken place. Staff feedback (Appendix 1) from the workshops highlighted strengths in the current process and has also raised a number of areas for improvement including:

- Streamlining of associated mechanisms easing the administrative burden of quality assurance practices at City.
- Good Practice dissemination and impact review.
- Data accessibility and data accuracy provided from SITS (particularly for part-time students).
- Thematic Focus publication timing.
- Evaluation of the range of assessments and teaching techniques used by programmes and schools.

2. Aims

In order to address the internal areas for improvement highlighted above and to align to recent changes in sector regulations a full review of the Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) policy, process, guidance and forms for 2018/19 is being proposed. The work aims for the revised policy, guidance and forms to be approved and published by June 2019.

Following informal consultation with Schools, SEED and LEaD proposed objectives for the working group include:

- a review of the APE policy, guidance and forms to ensure they align with updates to programme approval processes and other related policies approved by Senate.
- a review of the APE Management Information Appendix and Action Plan to ensure they capture information which provide appropriate oversight to Schools and Senate, both for progress towards KPIs and future developments.
- establishing how reporting for subject-level TEF can be aligned to the APE process.
3. Next Steps

A list of staff (academic, including programme directors and professional) who have volunteered to be part of the APE Review Working Group following the workshops has been collated and work is proposed to begin in December 2018. The review will be carried out by a working group led by the Quality & Academic Development department (QUAD) in consultation with Schools, Student Experience & Engagement Department (SEED), Learning Enhancement and Development (LEaD), and the Students’ Union (SU). Formal consultation on proposed revisions to the APE policy and associated guidance & forms will take place from December 2018 to February 2019.

The consultation will be broad in order to capture the views of both academic and relevant professional staff as well as students, focusing on:

- School Quality Staff
- Boards of Study Members
- Student & Academic Services (S&AS)
- Student Experience & Engagement Directorate (SEED)
- Learning Enhancement and Development (LEaD)
- Students’ Union (SU)

The strategic aims of the Institution and Schools will be taken into account during the re-drafting and review process to ensure appropriate alignment. Communications strategies and implementation plans will also be considered and developed alongside the review.

To allow for proper consultation on potential changes it is proposed that the revised policy, guidance and forms will be presented to the May 2019 meeting of Senate.

4. Proposed Timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 18</td>
<td>• Working Group review UG &amp; PGT APE process and paperwork in liaison with Schools, S&amp;AS, SEED and LEaD.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| January 19 | • EQC review draft BoS consultation questions by circulation  
• Working Group revise UG & PGT APE forms taking into consideration as appropriate the OfS regulations, Subject-Level TEF and staff & student feedback |
| February 19| • Revised draft UG & PGT APE forms are reviewed at working group with LEaD, SEED & the SU  
• Revised draft APE forms are discussed with stakeholders from ADE & Quality Forums |
| March 19   | • Working group revise APE policy and guidance paperwork to align with internal/external developments and new forms in consultation with SEED. |
| April 19   | • Consultation with Students Union  
• Proposed changes to APE Forms, Policy & Guidance are presented at ADE & Quality Forums  
Proposed changes to APE Forms, Policy & Guidance are considered/approved by EQC |
| May 19     | • Proposed changes to APE Forms, Policy & Guidance are considered and Policy approved by Senate |
| June 19    | • Revised APE Form, Policy & Guidance is published and shared with Schools |

Georgia Moustaka  
Quality & Standards Officer (Student and Academic Services)  
October 2018
Appendix 1: APE Workshops (July – October 2018) Key Summary

Following the publication of the 2017/18 APE forms and guidance for completion, five workshops took place between July - October 2018. In response to feedback from the 2016/17 workshops, The Postgraduate (PGT) and Undergraduate (UG) Taught provisions where provided with separate workshops. Two workshops where focused on PGT provision and three had a UG focus which included details around the Thematic Element ‘Internationalisation of the Curriculum’. Programme Directors, ADEs and School Quality staff where invited to all workshops and asked to attend the one which was most suitable.

The workshops provided key information on the following:

- APE Documentation & Process for 2017/18
- Summary of Key Changes
- Regulations and compliance with the Office for Students (OfS) / TEF
- Good Practice identification & dissemination
- APE Review for 2018/19
- Thematic Element (UG Only)

Number of Staff Attended: 51

Attendance by School:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SASS</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHS</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMCSE</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY LAW</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASS Business</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SASS</td>
<td>School of Arts &amp; Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHS</td>
<td>School of Health Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMCSE</td>
<td>School of Mathematics, Computer Science &amp; Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY LAW</td>
<td>City Law School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASS Business School</td>
<td>CASS Business School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APE Workshops - Staff Feedback Summary  
(July – October 2018)

1. The presentation was engaging and easy to follow:
   - 59% Strongly Disagree
   - 41% Disagree

2. The information provided via the PowerPoint presentation was useful:
   - 58% Strongly Disagree
   - 42% Disagree

3. The ‘Good Practice’ activities were useful:
   - 27% Strongly Disagree
   - 65% Disagree
   - 8% Agree
   - 3% Strongly Agree

4. The information provided on the Thematic Element (UG only) was useful:
   - 64% Strongly Disagree
   - 36% Disagree
5. The information regarding the OfS was useful:

6. Was there anything you wanted to hear more about that was not included in the workshop?
   - More detail around the school process and timelines for completing the APEs.
   - Details of procedure for critical reader / peer review.
   - More guidance in good practice for the completion of the paperwork and advice on streamlining the process.
   - More details on the OfS Regulations and the impact they may have on the APE paperwork.

7. Are there any elements of the workshop that could be improved?
   - More time given to general discussion on tables and in groups.
   - More time on the Good Practice activity to share good practice across schools.

8. The overall workshop was valuable:

9. List of staff from all workshops who would like to contribute to the APE Working Group:
   - Farrah Saber (Quality Administrator - SASS)
   - Kate Kelsey (Quality Manager - SASS)
   - Richard Evans (Senior Lecturer - SASS)
   - Alison Cou tts (Senior Lecturer - SHS)
   - Michelle Ellis (Senior Lecturer - SHS)
   - Martin Rich (Senior Lecturer – CASS)
   - Simon Parker (ADE – CASS)
   - Jane Secker (Senior Lecturer Educational Development - LEaD)
   - Margaret Carran (Senior Lecturer – LAW)
   - James Catchpole (Director of Legal Practice – LAW)
   - Lorraine Price (Quality Officer – LAW)
   - Aurelia Murphy (School Head of Academic Services – LAW)
10. Any other comments:

- Really useful for providing an overall view of the APE process and the rationale behind it.
- A good platform for discussing areas for improvement regarding the paperwork and timeline.
- The Thematic Element for 2018/19 to be agreed and shared at an earlier date so programme teams can incorporate this and reflect on it within the academic year.
- Feedback from Senate and Committees is not always provided back to Programme Directors.
- Distinguish more clearly between ‘Employability’ and ‘Employment’.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strengths:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Areas for improvement:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A clear timeline for school process is provided within the Guidance documentation.</td>
<td>Completing the paperwork is often perceived as only the Programme Directors responsibility and collaboration does not take place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform for sharing Good Practice.</td>
<td>APE does not take into account quality processes (non-teaching team) which contribute to the efficiency and overall good health of the programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allows for oversight of overall health of a programme.</td>
<td>Critical Reader process needs clarification and additional guidance on who it should be and what the outcome should look like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works well for small departments with small student numbers.</td>
<td>Paper based process that might work better as an online form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops create a face to face platform for clarification and meeting other programme staff.</td>
<td>More guidance on how to maintain the Action Plan as a ‘living’ document to add value to its completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form is stored as a summary of each year.</td>
<td>School approval process has too many levels and staff become disengaged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear layout in the form and clear timeline with good detail on activities required.</td>
<td>APE process should link better with other processes e.g. programme amendments, NSS action planning and timeliness or EE reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful platform for critical self – evaluation.</td>
<td>Annual changes to the forms and guidance documentation is disruptive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful platform for capturing student feedback.</td>
<td>Too many columns within the Action Plan and not treated as a ‘live’ document as Programme Directors do not have the time to monitor this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good practice table is good for capturing and celebrating things programmes do well.</td>
<td>Good Practice recorded within the APEs is not always disseminated no impact seen from the activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good platform provided for working with students and gaining clear student voice actions.</td>
<td>Data is not easily accessible and data provided from SITS is not always accurate (Particularly when it comes to part time students). It can also be misleading if student numbers are small and the quality of the data is not always reliable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When data is pre-populated by quality staff this works well.</td>
<td>Training specifically for new programme directors as additional workshop and guidance details should be on the form not a separate document.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single document for review and analysis and action planning is good.</td>
<td>Eliminate any repetition within the form and across other processes and paperwork (e.g. form needed for Deputy President meeting).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good process for disseminating good practice across schools when used effectively.</td>
<td>Module evaluation results are not always accessible or disseminated to the team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful to have a document which reviews the overall health of the programme annually.</td>
<td>The completion process is too long winded and requires too many meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In theory a good platform for evidencing critical self-assessment and programme monitoring.</td>
<td>Thematic Focus is agreed and shared too late this should not be retrospective but looking at the next academic year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good process for disseminating good practice across schools when used effectively.</td>
<td>APE paperwork does not provide a clear platform to explore and identify the range of assessments and teaching techniques used by programmes and schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When accurate data is provided this gives the programme directors and ADEs a clear overview for identifying any issues and successes.

| PTES results are not always applicable in PGT APEs as programme level detail is not always available due to the number of responses. |
| No year on year analysis of data just a repetition of the numbers so not always meaningful. |
| Valuable feedback from the process and from Senate and Committees does not always go back to Schools making the activity less effective and lack in impact. |
| No space is allowed for raising questions and explaining exceptional circumstances. |