

## University of Suffolk

### PROCEDURE FOR THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY OF SUFFOLK PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

#### 1. Introduction to the institutional review process

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- 1.1 Institutional review is the process by which University of Suffolk partner institutions are reviewed at institutional level to ensure that they remain suitable for the conduct of higher education programmes leading to University of Suffolk awards. It also provides an opportunity for both the University and the partner to reflect on whether the partnership continues to operate effectively and whether there is scope for future enhancement of collaborative working. The institutional review process is informed by the principles of the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and in particular the advice and guidance on partnerships.
- 1.2 Institutional review normally takes place every five years during the final year of the existing period of institutional approval, and is the basis for institutional re-approval with effect from the following academic year. The review process can be brought forward at the discretion of the Chair of Senate or at the request of the partner concerned, for example where there is a particular concern about the quality and/or academic standards of provision or where the partner is making significant changes to structure or strategy that would benefit from detailed scrutiny.
- 1.3 The institutional review process is distinct from course re-approval and does not consider course specific issues, except where they are used as evidence of a symptomatic issue or where they provide examples of good practice to be expanded or disseminated. The institutional review process also does not include consideration of the financial basis of a partnership (which falls under the remit of the University of Suffolk Executive and Board) except where financial issues might impact on quality and academic standards, for example in relation to the provision of resources to support the student learning experience.
- 1.4 The process usually involves an institutional review event where a panel of internal and external experts meet to discuss and re-approve the partner institution based on:
- their prior consideration of a standard set of institutional review documentation, including a self-evaluation document (and supporting evidence) compiled by the partner and an evaluative report prepared by the University on the operation of the partnership; and
  - meetings with staff at the partner and with students registered (or previously registered) on University of Suffolk validated or franchised courses.
- 1.5 The purpose of institutional review is:
- a) to provide assurance that the partner institution is, and will continue to be, suitable for the conduct of higher education programmes leading to University of Suffolk awards,

incl

on the [approval, monitoring and review of partnership activity](#) pages on the University website.

- 3.2 It is expected that most of the documentary evidence to support the evaluative commentary will already be available within the institution, and that the SED will summarise the Risk-Based Monitoring and Enhancement (RiME) data provided since the previous institutional review. The evaluation should draw upon a wide range of evidence including statistical data, feedback from students, employers and external examiners and any relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) or other external review reports.
- 3.3 The SED should be submitted to the Validation and Exams team ([validation@uos.ac.uk](mailto:validation@uos.ac.uk)) in an agreed electronic format at least four weeks in advance of the institutional review event.

#### **4. The institutional review panel**

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- 4.1 The institutional review panel includes a range of representatives who are able to judge whether the partnership is operating effectively and whether the partner institution continues to offer HE provision of a suitable quality and academic standard, within the context of relevant internal and external reference points. Within the panel as a whole there should be sufficient understanding of the management of collaborative provision to enable the panel to make a sound judgement. Panel membership is subject to approval by the Chair of the Quality Committee.
- 4.2 Panel membership typically comprises:
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor or nominee (Chair)
  - one external representative with appropriate experience of collaborative provision
  - at least one member of University of Suffolk academic staff
  - Academic Registrar or nominee
  - Head of Quality Enhancement or nominee
  - one representative from Library and Learning Services
  - one representative from the Partnerships team
  - one representative from the University of Suffolk
  - one senior representative from the partner institution under review.
- 4.3 The institutional review panel will be serviced by a member of the Validation and Exams team or a senior University administrator.
- 4.4 A briefing pack containing relevant documentation is sent to members of the institutional review panel in hard copy at least three weeks in advance of the event, and will typically contain:
- a list of panel members
  - an agenda for the review event
  - a summary of the institutional review process

guidance notes for panel members  
the report  
the partner -evaluation document  
travel information for relevant panel members  
fee claim forms/guidance for external panel members.

- 4.5 All other supporting documentation from the partner is provided electronically.
- 4.6 The member of the panel from the partner institution under review is present for all the the meeting with students.
- 4.7 A checklist setting out guidance for institutional review panel members and an additional guide for student representatives is available on the [approval, monitoring and review of partnership activity](#) pages on the University website. These are sent out to all panel members with the review documentation.
- 4.8 In the absence of any panel members on the day of the event, the decision as to whether the re

- f) former staff or students of the University of Suffolk or its partner institutions, unless a period of five years has elapsed since their employment ended or they completed their studies.

## **5. The institutional review event**

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- 5.1 An institutional review event normally takes place at the partner institution under review, with the agenda scheduled for a full day. In addition to private meetings of the review panel, a meeting with partner staff and with students registered or previously registered on validated or franchised courses within the partner both form a key part of the event. Where appropriate, the panel may also meet with a range of employers. Normally, a tour of facilities and specialist resources is included (for example library, IT facilities, laboratory or other specialist facilities and HE social spaces). An example of a typical agenda for a review event is available on the [approval, monitoring and review of partnership activity](#) pages





engaging in a further institutional review, or in very exceptional circumstances phase out and withdraw academic provision in accordance with the terms of the Collaboration Agreement and the associated Student Protection Plan). The panel should make provisions to ensure that the interests of current students and applicants are protected while the partnership is either subject to a further review or phased out and withdrawn, extending the current period of institutional validation accordingly (and possibly conditionally) to cover the transitional phase.

5.15



