LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

University Framework for Quality and Standards

Responsibility for Policy:	Registrar and Chief Operating Officer
Relevant to:	LJMU Staff and Students and Academic Partnerships
Approved by:	Academic Board, 28 June 2017
Responsibility for Document Review:	Head of Quality and Standards
Date introduced:	September 2013
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Next Review Date:	June 2022

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Securing student success: Regulatory framework for Higher Education in England

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

- Academic Framework Regulations
- Professional Doctorate Framework
- Research Degree Framework
- Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors
- Guidance for Validation
- Guidance for Periodic Programme Review
- Guidance for Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement
- Guidance for External Examining
- Guidance for Programme Suspension and Closure
- Guidance for Engagement with PSRBs
- Guidance for Programme and Module Amendments
- Guidance for Joint and Dual Awards
- Academic Partnerships Operational Guidance

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Chapter 1: Context and Principles

The University's Framework for Quality and Standards provides a risk-based, transparent, robust and proportionate approach to quality management.

The University is responsible for the quality and standards of its academic provision. External expectations are that the University's academic standards must meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework, and that the value of the qualifications the University awards to students, at the point of qualification and over time, are in line with sector-recognised standards. . The Quality and Standards Framework outlines the main features of quality management within the University, with reference to the relevant frameworks, policies and processes. The University's Framework for Quality and Standards supports the Strategic Framework 2017 – 2022.

The Framework for Quality and Standards applies to all credit and award-bearing provision, including research degrees and provision delivered by the University's collaborative partners. The University acknowledges that responsibility for the academic standards of all awards made in its name cannot be delegated and consequently remains responsible for those academic standards regardless of where the learning opportunities are offered or who provides them.

The Institution's principles for quality and standards fully align with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, the requirements of the Office for Students (OfS)[1], the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015)[2] and underpin all of the University's quality management processes.

In order to register with the OfS providers were required to satisfy the following conditions of registration relating to quality and standards:

- **Condition B1:** The provider must deliver well-designed courses that provide a high quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.

- **Condition B2:** The provider must provide all students, from admission through to completion, with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.

- **Condition B3:** The provider must deliver successful outcomes for all of its students, which are recognised and valued by employers and/or enable further study.

- **Condition B4:** The provider must ensure that qualifications awarded to students hold their value at the point of qualification and over time, in line with recognised standards.

- **Condition B5:** The provider must deliver courses that meet the academic standards as they are described in the Framework for Higher Education Qualification at Level 4 or higher.

Having satisfied the initial conditions of registration, as at September 2018, Liverpool John Moores University was entered in the Register of English Higher Education Providers.

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) is the OfS's Designated Quality Body for Higher Education in England with responsibility for managing the quality assurance elements of the

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[1] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1406/ofs2018_01.pdf
[2] http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

Higher Education Regulatory Framework, underpinned by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education[3] that sets the following Expectations for providers:

Expectations for standards

- The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.

- The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.

Expectations for quality

- Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.

- From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.

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[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code

Chapter 2: Management Responsibilities for Quality and Standards

Governance Structure[4]

Academic Board (AB) has overall responsibility for the University's awards, the quality and standards of the academic programmes, both taught and research, and the Framework for Quality and Standards. AB approves changes to the Academic Framework Regulations and Research Degree Regulations. AB delegates responsibility to the following sub-committees for formulating proposals for approval:

Education Committee (EC).
- Academic Planning Panel (APP).
- Recruitment Policy Panel (RPP).
- Faculty Education Committees (FEC).

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC).
- Validation and Review Oversight Panel (VROP).
- Collaborative Provision Panel (CPP).
- Dual Award Oversight Panel
- Degree Apprenticeship Steering Group
- Faculty Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committees (FQAEC).

Research, Scholarship and Knowledge Transfer Committee (RSKTC).
- University and Faculty Research Degree Committees (U/FRDC).

Executive Responsibilities

The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive is responsible to the Board of Governors and has ultimate responsibility for the quality and standards of the University's awards and is supported by the University Executive Leadership Team[5].

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[4] https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/secretariat/committees/board-of-governors-and-related-committees
[5] https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/secretariat/committees/ljmu-committees

Chapter 3: Elements of the Framework for Quality and Standards

The Academic Framework

The University's Academic Framework[6] is a common framework for its taught awards. The Academic Framework specifies those awards and their credit requirements, aligned with the FHEQ[7]. The Assessment Regulations are integral to the Academic Framework. The University operates standard assessment regulations for taught awards that define progression, classification requirements, academic misconduct, and conduct of assessments and examinations. Variances from the academic framework are allowed in order to meet professional body conditions, or according to specific academic conditions, such as subject or disciplinary sector practice. Variances must be approved through Education Committee.

The Research Degree Framework

The University's Research Degree Framework provides a common framework for postgraduate research programmes[8]. The Framework defines the mandatory requirements for enrolment, registration, monitoring, progression, and assessment of all research programmes.

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[6] https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-framework
[7] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf
[8] https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/the-doctoral-academy/research-degrees-framework

Chapter 4: Student Engagement in Quality Assurance

Students provide representation and feedback through a variety of quantitative and qualitative processes, for example:

- Students on taught programmes complete surveys at module, programme, and institutional level. Where possible, surveys allowing external benchmarking are used, for example National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES).

- Data from surveys informs the Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) and periodic programme review processes.

- Students are involved in periodic programme review through consultation during the development of the self-evaluation and at the periodic programme review event. .

- Students are involved in the validation process during programme development and at the validation event.

- Student representative(s) are panel members at validation/periodic programme review events.

- Formal feedback from research students is via the national Postgraduate Research Student Experience Survey (PRES). Data from PRES is disseminated via University Research Degrees Committee (URDC), Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC) and reported to URDC and AB.

- Research students are members of FRDC and URDC.

Chapter 5: Revisions to the Framework for Quality and Standards

The elements of the framework are revised regularly to ensure their fitness for purpose, including:

- Alignment with developments in external requirements.

- Annual evaluation of processes through appropriate governance structures.

- Annual review of the Academic Framework.

- Annual review of Research Degree Framework.

Chapter 6: Key Quality Assurance and Enhancement Processes that Underpin the Framework for Quality and Standards

Detailed Guidance for each process is provided and the links to relevant guides can be found in Table 1 on page 10 of this document.

External Examining Process

The University values its engagement with External Examiners as impartial, independent critical friends in assuring the quality and standards of its programmes. The University seeks confirmation from External Examiners in relation to the academic standards of programmes, assessment of student progression, and achievement against these standards. External Examiners highlight opportunities for the enhancement of students' learning opportunities. The University makes use of External Examiner reports in the Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement processes.

Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement Process

Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) is a real time programme monitoring process, focussed upon enhancement, which facilitates consideration of key information in a timely manner. This approach enables programme issues to be addressed as soon as they are identified.

The process is designed to enable programme teams, School Directors and Faculties to evaluate achievement against institutional expectations for academic quality and to identify any potential enhancements. At one census point in the academic year Directors of School, in conjunction with Programme Leaders, will complete a School monitoring report. The timing of each stage of the monitoring process is aligned to the University's assessment periods. This approach effectively captures non-standard programmes (including collaborative) in the process.

Evidence used to evaluate academic standards and programme performance includes student progression and achievement data, External Examiners reports, student feedback, reports from Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and other relevant external bodies. CME is based on a series of reports on performance against threshold indicators, such as completion in time, retention, and module performance, using data derived from student performance at module and programme level.

The monitoring process, at every level, is proportionate, risk-based and reporting is by exception. This inclusive process facilitates opportunities to ensure that all stakeholders are fully engaged. Programme teams develop and then maintain a Programme Enhancement and Development Plan at each stage that details actions to address any identified issues. The CME process supports timely changes to programmes, where appropriate, to enhance the experience for the subsequent student cohort.

Programme Approval (Validation) Process

Validation of a new programme is the quality assurance process used to scrutinise a proposed new programme of study in order to assure Academic Board that it meets University and external expectations of quality and standards.

Periodic Programme Review Process

Periodic programme review is a reflective, evaluative quinquennial process. The periodic programme review process mirrors programme approval (validation), however, the focus is on self-evaluation rather than curriculum development and design.

The process allows for the identification of programme enhancement opportunities and these may result in changes to the programme. It is important to note that existing students will complete the extant version of their programme of study i.e. the programme of study aligned to the agreed terms of enrolment. This is to ensure compliance with Competition Markets Authority (CMA) Guidance[9].

The process for programme and module amendments aligns with external requirements, for example the CMA.

Programme Suspension and Closure Process

The processes of programme suspension and closure (for all taught programmes including collaborative provision) ensure that safeguarding the interests of students is paramount and any action must include an exit strategy that preserves the integrity and continuity of their education and the student experience. The University fully recognises, and accepts its responsibilities towards any students remaining on a programme and ensures that students can complete the award on which they originally enrolled.

The process normally includes a closure meeting that confirms the arrangements to secure the quality of both the provision and the student experience following complete withdrawal of a programme. There must be explicit articulation of the strategy that will secure the quality of experience for continuing students and includes an external perspective.

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[9] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/428549/HE_providers_-_advice_on_consumer_protection_law.pdf

Table 1: Key documents relating to the University Framework for Quality and Standards

Document	Location/Link
Academic Partnerships Operational Guidance	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/academic-registry/collaborative-partners/academic-partnerships-operational-guidance
Academic Framework Regulations	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-framework
Guidance for Boards of Study	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/~/media/staff-intranet/academic-registry/files/aqs/boards-of-study/guidance-for-boards-of-study-202021.pdf?la=en
Guidance for Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-quality
Guidance for Engagement with PSRBs	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-quality
Guidance for External Examining	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-quality
Guidance for Validation	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-quality
Guidance for Periodic Programme Review	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-quality
Guidance for Programme Suspension and Closure	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-quality
Guidance for Programme and Module Amendments	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-quality
Guidance for Joint and Dual Awards	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/academic-registry/collaborative-partners/quality-management-processes
PhD by Published Work Regulations	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/the-doctoral-academy/policies/policy-for-the-presentation-of-research-theses
Programme Specifications	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-

	information/wider-information-set/programme-specification-documents-portal
UK Quality Code for Higher Education	https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
Research and Scholarship Strategy	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/research/world-leading-research
Research Degree Framework	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/the-doctoral-academy/research-degrees-framework
Securing student success: Regulatory framework for higher education in England	https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1406/ofs2018_01.pdf
Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)	http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf
Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework	https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/
Teaching and Learning Strategy 2017-2022	https://policies.ljmu.ac.uk/UserHome/Policies/PolicyDisplay.aspx?&id=170&l=1
University Committee Structure	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/secretariat/committees/board-of-governors-and-related-committees
University Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022	https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/strategic-plan