Evaluation, Monitoring and Planning Process

March 2020

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University of the Highlands and Islands
Perth College

Version Control History

Version Number	Date of Change	Summary of Revisions Made
3	April 2015	Removal from Quality Manual to cross college Register of Strategy, Policy and Procedure.
4	April 2017	Introduction of Quality Review Meetings to process.
5	March 2020	Consultation process over 18 months with staff. Revised evaluation and monitoring process agreed by CASE. Introduction of Operational Planning cycle to process.

Evaluation, Monitoring and Planning Process

1 Purpose

1.1 To provide a framework for regular monitoring and evaluation of the standards of the College's educational provision and facilitate the planning of SMART objectives to improve the student experience. To enable the evaluation process to inform operational planning and strategic objective setting.

2 Scope

2.1 The process applies to all educational provision delivered by the college, whether public or commercially funded, and all professional service departments that support the educational provision.

3 Definitions

3.1 Educational provision: any delivery of education, including training, provided by the college, on campus or off campus including those noted on the SCQF and uncredited courses.

3.3 Public funding: a course that is eligible to draw down funding from SCF, SDS or other public body whether delivered solely by the College or through partnership agreement.

3.4 Commercially funded: a course that is funded through a commercial partnership, that is not eligible to draw down public funding, or is part public funded and part commercially funded.

3.5 Curriculum review: the process whereby teams review their course portfolio to determine currency and fitness for purpose and fitness to the College Strategic Aims.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 Curriculum and Student Engagement Committee (CASE) are responsible for oversight of the process, reviewing courses by exception, and strategising cross college themes that emerge from team evaluation and action plans.

4.2 Corporate Management Team (CMT) are responsible for discussing and action planning any cross-college issues that emerge from team evaluation and action plans, pertinent to their remit of responsibility.

4.2 Sector Development Directors are responsible for ensuring appropriate evaluation is conducted by sector teams. To bring forward to the attention of CASE any courses by exception and cross-curriculum themes that emerge from evaluation conducted in the Sector areas they manage.
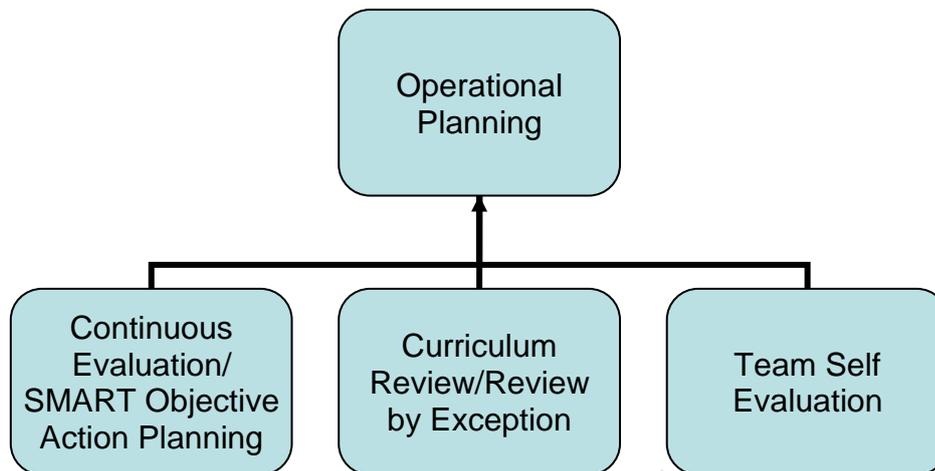
4.3   Sector Managers, and by delegation Subject Leaders, are responsible for ensuring that the process as laid out in this document and in annual guidance is followed by teams and for identifying and alerting the Sector Development Director to any issues or good practice arising from evaluation.

4.4   Academic teams are responsible for meeting regularly to continually evaluate the quality of the educational provision they deliver, and to ensure the student experience is excellent. To action plan using SMART and measurable actions and identify the impact of the actions taken.

4.5   Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that the process as laid out in this procedure is followed by professional services teams and for identifying and alerting Corporate Management Team, and where relevant Senior Management Team, to any issues or good practice arising from evaluation.

4.6   Professional Services teams are responsible for meeting regularly to continually evaluate the quality of the support provision they deliver, in particular where it impacts upon the student experience (directly or indirectly). To action plan using SMART and measurable actions and identify the impact of the actions taken.

4.7   The Head of Student Experience is responsible for making available relevant management reports to enable staff to evaluate the quality of their provision.

4.8   Quality approval check of the procedure is the responsibility of the Quality Manager, who will arrange for the policy to be published on the web.

5   **Evaluation, Monitoring and Planning Process**

Forward planning and the continuous monitoring of subsequent objectives and actions is key to successful delivery of the core business provision of the college. Teams are expected to regularly monitor their activity against identified objectives and use key performance indicators where relevant and action plan to improve practice, where relevant.

A key ethos of the overall process is to ensure there is an obvious relationship between the various methods of evaluation and planning that occur throughout the year.

The following diagram provides a simple overview of how the different procedures link together.

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```
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │ Operational  │
                    │  Planning    │
                    └──────┬───────┘
                           │
        ┌──────────────────┼──────────────────┐
┌───────────────┐  ┌───────────────┐  ┌───────────────┐
│ Continuous    │  │ Curriculum    │  │ Team Self     │
│ Evaluation/   │  │ Review/Review │  │ Evaluation    │
│ SMART Objective│  │ by Exception  │  │               │
│ Action Planning│  │               │  │               │
└───────────────┘  └───────────────┘  └───────────────┘
```
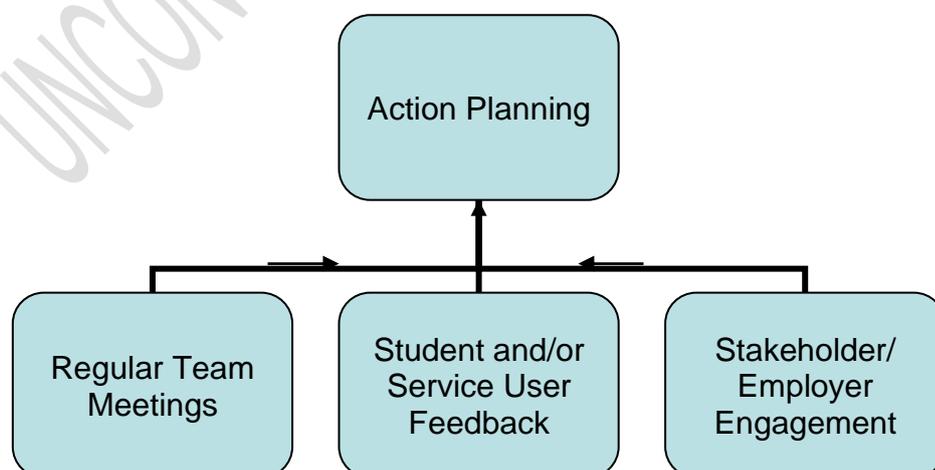
5.1 Continuous In-Year Evaluation

The aim of continuous in-year evaluation is to increase the potential to quickly implement improvements to a team's working practice that would benefit the user of that service in 'real time'. For example, professional services teams may amend a process to streamline it, or academic teams will give their attention to improving the student experience for the current student group.

The action plans will identify improvements that will enhance the users experience and the evaluation of improvements will provide the detail on the success and or feedforward enhancements.

For example, the following diagram outlines a simple overview of the evidence stream for continuous evaluation by an academic team.

```
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │   Action     │
                    │  Planning    │
                    └──────┬───────┘
                           │
        ┌──────────────────┼──────────────────┐
┌───────────────┐  ┌───────────────┐  ┌───────────────┐
│ Regular Team  │  │ Student and/or│  │ Stakeholder/  │
│ Meetings      │  │ Service User  │  │ Employer      │
│               │  │ Feedback      │  │ Engagement    │
└───────────────┘  └───────────────┘  └───────────────┘
```

The opportunity for all staff to contribute to the delivery and support of college business, and to take part in continuous evaluation is important. It establishes the ownership of key responsibilities, such as curriculum management and operational planning, and empowers staff at all levels to influence the action planning process. It means that everyone has an equal opportunity to suggest changes to current practice or to highlight resource requirements which could

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lead to improvement of the provision on offer. Another important aspect of the process is to provide the opportunity to highlight particular successes and achievements of a team.

Academic teams should meet bi-weekly to discuss a broad range of issues that affect the students experience and the standards of the educational provision, at that time.

Professional services teams should meet regularly to discuss the operational aspects of their service and identify any issues impacting productivity.

All teams should keep an action plan and identify SMART change objectives. These objectives should be reviewed at each subsequent meeting and the impact of the change evaluated. Academic teams should keep their action plans in the continuous evaluation folders (see Section 7) and professional services teams should keep their action plans on their section of the shared drive. This will enable all team members to access and review actions pertinent to them and add to the evaluation, particularly identifying the impact of any action taken.

The action plans will be regularly reviewed by the Team Manager and issues that are deemed relevant and/or to be cross-curriculum will be discussed with the Head of Department/Sector Development Director to action and/or for them to raise to the attention of CMT or CASE, as relevant to the issue.

5.2   Feedback to Inform Evaluation and Action Planning

In addition to team members themselves feeding into the planning cycle it is critical to obtain stakeholder feed-in to the planning process, for example, students, employers, professional services staff, and other key stakeholders.

5.2.1   Student Voice

Students are key stakeholders in the educational provision. By evaluating their own experience of studying the curriculum particularly the learning, teaching and assessment, and providing their view of the support mechanisms in place, they can contribute invaluable information which will inform improvements to their overall learning experience.

Student consultation will be an integral part of this process within the academic areas. Therefore, each Sector Area will hold **student focus groups**, with a minimum of one per semester (preferably mid-semester) per sector area. These will include student reps and other interested students. These focus groups will:

- ensure that the students are involved in the creation and improvement of their learning experience,

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- ensure that students have a more substantial voice and influence,
- be managed by the course teams at a local level, through eg the class rep system,
- be formally recorded as consultation and ongoing evaluation in the form of an action plan,
- meetings will be arranged by PATs with themes/topics for discussion depending on time of year eg induction/settling in process

The action plan will formally record this consultation, change objective and ongoing evaluation. The student voice should form the evaluation of the impact of any changes.

In addition to the bi-semester student focus groups information is gathered on the student experience through surveys. There are several annual surveys that teams should refer to in order to inform their SMART change objectives and should be noted on the action plan. These are:

- Early Student Experience Survey (ESE): conducted in Semester 1 for all new students. This survey is used by all UHI academic partners and benchmark data is reviewed by the UHI QAEC. The college data is reviewed by Board of Management, Senior Management Team and Corporate Management Team. The College has the option to add additional questions.

- National Student Survey (NSS): open between January and April. A national survey conducted by Ipsis Mori. For all final year students on HND or Undergraduate degree courses.

- Student Satisfaction and Experience Survey (SSES): conducted in Semester 2, usually open for 6 weeks spanning Easter recess. The first 10 questions are formulated by the SFC and the College is obliged to return the outcome statistics for these questions to the SFC. This survey is used by all UHI academic partners and benchmark data is reviewed by the UHI QAEC. The college data is reviewed by Board of Management, Senior Management Team and Corporate Management Team. The College has the option to add additional questions, including service satisfaction questions.

- Postgraduate Survey: there is a national survey issued to postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students, however this is alternated each year so that each student group is surveyed bi-annually.

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- Destination of Leavers of Higher Education (DLHE): conducted at 6 months and again at 18 months after students have completed their qualification.

5.2.2 Service Users Voice

Professional services teams, should survey service users in order to gain valuable feedback on satisfaction of their service, and use the output to evaluate their performance. Where a professional service dept is student facing then the department should gather student opinion in addition to surveying staff service users. Some professional services teams are included in the SSES service satisfaction questions.

The action plan will formally record this consultation or output data and any subsequent change objective and ongoing evaluation.

5.2.3 Awarding Body Verification

Awarding Body's conduct periodic review activity to assure the standards applied to their courses are being implemented appropriately by the college. Regulated awards are verified on an annual basis, whilst non-regulated awards are on a periodic basis and scheduled on a risk basis. The impact of any identified actions will be evaluated by the team and relevant SMART objectives will be added to the action plan. All recommendations from verification activity should also be reflected on and where relevant SMART objectives identified.

Further guidance on the external verification procedure can be found in the Assessment and Verification Procedure.

5.2.4 Employer Engagement

Most academic areas have valuable employer links and contacts that have been built up over the years, ie through work placements and or specialist employer forums.

Any sector area does not have reliable employer links, as above, will hold employer focus groups or other appropriate means in order to absorb relevant data to inform the improvements to course content and student experience.

The action plan will formally record this consultation, change objective and ongoing evaluation.

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5.2.5 **Stakeholder Engagement**

Other stakeholders, both internal and external to the College, will be consulted with on a periodic basis to ensure they inform change objectives and ongoing evaluation, which will be recorded on the action plan. For example, library services, student services, quality department, student records, and external bodies that inform or impact on the student or service user experience such as PKC, NHS, SDS, Awarding Bodies, Sector Skills Agencies, Professional Regulatory or Statutory Bodies, etc.

5.3 **Annual Self Evaluation**

In November each team, academic and professional services, will evaluate their performance against prior objectives, as well as key themed questions determined by SMT. These are normally related to areas of strategic interest eg Perth College Strategic Objectives, Education Scotland's How Good Is Our College (HGIOC), QAA Enhancement Themes, etc.

The output SMART objectives from this evaluation process will directly influence the objective setting in the Operational Planning process.

6 Curriculum Review

6.1 **Framework Review**

Each course will be reviewed annually by the team to ensure that the curriculum remains current and fit for purpose and meets workforce development needs. Key KPI data should be used for this review, such as admissions to target, retention and achievement, student satisfaction, employer engagement. Where relevant the framework should be amended using the relevant course approval procedure.

6.2 **Target setting**

Planning ahead for the next academic year begins in December with recruitment targets being set against the future portfolio of courses. This is determined by discussions between CASE and Sector Managers. KPI and market intelligence informs this decision-making process ie trend data for course admission, retention and achievement, newly identified market needs, etc.

6.3 **Course Review by Exception**

The aim of this process will be to provide an opportunity for teams to take ownership of improvement actions and avoid the need for onerous paper-based quality compliance reports and audit trails.

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CASE will undertake a quality review of a course where there is significant cause to do so ie out with the "norm", either high or low KPIs in any one academic year or over a trend of 3 years. This will therefore be by exception.

There will be a number of mechanisms to provide detailed information that relate to the performance indicators for each course. These will be scrutinised by the Sector Development Director and Sector Manager who will select courses for review. They may identify other courses that do not fit the criteria but have other reasons that they wish them to fall within the scope of exceptional review.

The Sector Development Director and Sector Managers will chair the review locally and identify SMART action plans, evidence of this action will be recorded in the continuous evaluation folders. The impact of implementation of actions will be evaluated by the teams in their bi-weekly meetings and monitored by the Sector Manager or delegated Subject Leader.

The key objectives of the discussions are to:

- Improve the student experience.
- Improve the Performance Indictors.
- Consider the replacement of the course (where there are low KPIs).
- Consider amending the course content and framework.
- Share good practice.

The learning and teaching and student experience issues raised will be a key aim of the review to ensure that teams give:

- Clear thought and planning to the learning and teaching aspects.
- Consideration to whether this could be delivered in a completely different way.
- Investigate digital learning opportunities.
- Replace any theoretical aspect with a more practical experience, where relevant.
- Improve opportunities for independent learning.
- Consider changes that will improve employability eg SVQ instead of NQ/NC.
- Deliver training in a work-based environment.

The action plans will be presented to CASE on implementation and will be reviewed with an update from the Sector Development Director at CASE. This will provide an opportunity to share practice across curriculum areas, particularly good practice with respect to review by exception of courses with continuous high KPIs.

CASE minutes will hold a record of reviewed courses and this will then provide updated detail of improvements to the student experience for recording in the College's Enhancement Plan.

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7   Operational Planning

Each February SMT gather progress updates from Teams on their previous SMART objectives. This allows teams to either close the loop or be an opportunity to review objectives before looking at next year's operational planning and can also influence future SMART objectives.

Staff guidance on Operational Planning will be updated annually and circulated to Heads of Departments/Sector Development Leaders and Team Leaders/Sector Managers to take forward for discussion with their teams. Final draft submissions will be due in March.

The output from Operational Planning is a set of SMART objectives to guide the team's key workflow for the next academic year. Teams will also submit supporting resource allocation requests. Each Head of Departments/Sector Development Leader and Team Leader/Sector Manager will discuss their operational plan with SMT in late March for approval.

8   Continuous Evaluation Folders

The following standardised folders will be used by academic teams per course/ cluster of courses within a Sector area to store generic documentation. Some of the folders will have restricted access to only relevant staff* due to the sensitive nature of data held in that folder. This set of generic folders will not preclude sector areas from setting up and using additional folders for the storage of information surplus to this.

The naming protocol to save documentation held within the folders is shown against relevant folder in italics and **must be used**.

The principle of organisation will be by year and category with deletion of documentation held in folders as per Records Management Policy and Procedure.

Those folders denoted ^ will be reviewed annually by Student Records and updated where required ie courses newly added or removed from portfolio after curriculum review. This will be supported by ICT in setting up staff access to view the folders. This will enable staff to begin to populate the course folders with relevant curriculum information in preparation for the following academic year. Academic staff will be responsible for populating the folders, and where relevant moving information from current year academic folders to next year academic folders.

Academic Year:

- **Directorate**
  - Continual Evaluation by Exception ^

  - **Sector: ^**
    - SED – How Good is Our Sector?
    - Sector Operational Planning
    - Sector Curriculum Review
    - Sector Student Feedback

  - **Course (Award) (by code):**

    - KPIs ^
      - Progression/Exam Board*
      - Application Profile Report*
      - BRAG Report*
      - Student Surveys

    - Learning, Teaching and Assessment
      - Module/Unit Name and Code
      - Assessment Material*
      - Annual Assessment Schedule ^
      - Teaching Material (back up of VLE material)
      - Verification Process* IV/EV/EE (Degree) *(IV# (and where relevant unit name/code/verification group numbers))*

    - Quality
      - Framework
      - Approval/Modification (*course code/document number/version date*)
      - Student Feedback (*eg Student Focus Group notes*)

    - Team (Operational Management) ^
      - Admin
      - Meetings
      - Action plans
      - Marketing

With respect to teaching materials each team will use the folder differently. As the VLE is the central point of contact for teaching material, this folder should be used as a backup.

Where documentation is relevant to more than one sector area then it should be stored in the primary course folder and linked to the secondary course folder, eg a unit may be delivered by more than one sector area, the primary course folder would be denoted by the verification/subject group code. For example, Business units are delivered across several areas but will sit in the relevant business course folder and be hyperlinked to other course folders.

However, where an assessment has been contextualised to the secondary course then it can sit within that course's folder. This will ensure version control is accurately maintained and ensure no double storing.

In a similar vein, HE information is stored on UHI folders in a similar way: so relevant documents should be linked via shortcuts rather than double storing.

9 Linked Policies/Related Documents

9.1 The following external publications should be read and referred to by the teams:

How Good is Our College, Education Scotland
UHI Regional Outcome Agreement, SFC

9.2 The following College Strategy, Policy and Procedures should be read and referred to by the teams:

Perth College UHI Strategic Plan

Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP)

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Business Development Strategy

Research and Scholarship Strategy

Digital Skills Strategy

International Strategy

Assessment and Verification Procedure

Course Approval Procedure

Records Management Policy and Procedure

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