

Document Title/Reference	Module/Programme Review: Policy & Procedures
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To provide clear policy and procedures for the review of modules and programmes to ensure they achieve the learning objectives and outcomes set for them. b) To facilitate the upgrading of content and continuous improvement in teaching and learning. c) To ensure that review activities occur in a regular and systematic manner.
Scope	The monitoring, review and revision of modules and programmes.
Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Policy Statement 2 Monitoring and Review of Modules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 General 2.2 Process of Reviewing a Module 2.3 Process of Revising a Module 3 Monitoring and Review of Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 General 3.2 Process of Reviewing a Programme 3.3 Process of Revising a Programme
Audience & Communication	<p>Applicable to all staff.</p> <p>Policy is available on IPA website and staff intranet. Procedures will be circulated to staff through internal communication channels (emails, memos).</p>
Contextual Guidelines	ESG 1.9 'On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes'. QQI Core Guidelines Nos. 7.1 (c) and 3.3.
Related IPA Policy	<i>Module/Programme Design and Approval Policy</i> <i>Student Feedback & Participation: Policy & Procedures</i> <i>Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy</i>
Key Definitions	<p><u>Programme</u>: prescribed group of individual modules leading to a qualification on the national framework of qualifications.</p> <p><u>Module</u>: sub-component of a programme with defined title, learning outcomes, syllabus and credits.</p> <p><u>Module co-ordinator</u>: person responsible for the management of a module or group of cognate modules in a programme (overseeing academic standards and programme delivery by lecturers).</p> <p><u>Programme co-ordinator</u>: overall programme manager.</p> <p><u>Lecturers/examiners</u>: those responsible for delivering tuition and approved to examine modules.</p>
Policy Owner & Implementation	<p>The policy owner is the Head of the Whitaker School. The policy is approved by IPA Faculty.</p> <p>The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented. Acting on this policy at a local level is the responsibility of the lecturers, module co-ordinators and programme co-ordinators of the School.</p>

<p>Key Implementation Actions</p>	<p>For each module, on an annual basis, lecturers/examiners evaluate student performance, assessment successes/problems and general teaching effectiveness in an annual module review pro forma.</p> <p>Module/programme co-ordinators review and sign-off on (i) annual module reviews from lecturers/examiners, (ii) extern examiners feedback on assessment strategies and student performance; (iii) annual student feedback on modules and programmes (surveys, programme management groups).</p> <p>Programme co-ordinators and a peer reviewer evaluate the continuing relevance and performance of each programme on a periodic basis.</p> <p>Improvement measures are implemented by module/programme co-ordinators in consultation with lecturers/examiners.</p> <p>Minutes of staff/student programme committees are recorded; student survey feedback is circulated to staff; extern comments are archived for programme enhancement purposes.</p>
<p>Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement</p>	<p>The responsibility for continuous improvement rests with the programme coordinator and module coordinator who will analyse the information collected by the evaluation process and implement changes as required.</p> <p>Head of Whitaker School signs off on annual module reviews and periodic programme reviews completed by lecturers and module/programme co-ordinators and peer reviewers.</p> <p>Module/programme co-ordinators maintain records of revisions made to modules/programmes resulting from reviews.</p> <p>The effectiveness of policy and procedures will be determined by the volume of reviews undertaken, completion of recommended changes and follow-up feedback on implementation of improvements.</p> <p>Continuous monitoring of, and adjustments to, the policy and procedures for evaluation and analysis will be carried out on an annual basis based on experience of implementing the procedures. Enhancements to this policy area will focus on improving the evidence gathering mechanisms for confirmation of academic standards and improvements required.</p> <p>Information generated from evaluation processes will be communicated to the assistant registrar/head of Whitaker School who will decide on the changes, if any, which are required to the policy and procedures.</p>
<p>Revision History & Commencement Date & Date of Next Review</p>	<p>2006: Version 1 2010: Version 2 2016: Version 3</p> <p>Commencement Date (2016 version): April 2017</p> <p>Date of Next Review: 2020</p>

Module/Programme Review: Policy & Procedures

1 Policy Statement

The Institute's programmes are designed to meet the evolving needs of IPA professional learners. These programmes require constant monitoring and review to ensure that they remain relevant and effective. Advances in knowledge alter the scope and content of courses and the angles of enquiry; changing social contexts require more appropriate sets of skills for learners; and the changing profile of the student, particularly the working student, in an era of lifelong learning, demands more flexible and effective tuition arrangements.

The Institute recognises that the process of review is iterative, and that much of this business (monitoring, review and amendment of modules and programmes) takes place at different times and through a variety of mechanisms during the year. While the process of monitoring is iterative, the Institute believes that modules and programmes should be systematically reviewed.

Modules should be reviewed on an annual basis. These modules also constitute components of an approved course schedule that itself requires reviewing. Therefore, programmatic reviews should also be conducted periodically, and involve internal and external (peer review) contributions. There are issues about programmatic coherence and balance between modules that require consideration. There are overarching evaluations, judgements and decisions about direction, admissions, delivery methods, assessment methods and weightings that impact on all modules within a programme or stage of a programme.

The responsibility of continuous improvement rests with the programme coordinator and module coordinator who will analyse the information collected by the evaluation process. It will be the decision of the programme coordinator whether or not to change or adjust the course or module where necessary in order to comply with the Institute's policies.

2 Monitoring and Review of Modules

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 Reviews of each module should be co-ordinated by the module or programme co-ordinators responsible for the management of the module. The reviews should be conducted in conjunction with the lecturer delivering and assessing the module.
- 2.1.2 Where modules in a programme of study are sufficiently related, they should be reviewed individually and together; this allows for the monitoring of content and standards across progressive levels in the same subject area.
- 2.1.3 Reviews should take place at the end of the academic year, or semester for semesterised programmes. If a module has not been delivered in a number of years, it should be reviewed before it is offered again.
- 2.1.4 The module review will use feedback from:
 - student achievement and progression (exam results & related data)
 - lecturer/examiner evaluation

- student evaluation
- and, where appropriate, from:
- internal and external examiners
 - module and programme co-ordinators

Such review will consider the appropriateness of:

- the module's stated aims and intended learning outcomes
- teaching processes
- assessment strategies
- specialist and generic skills development
- resources provided.

2.1.5 To facilitate the process of review, lecturers/examiners and Module/programme co-ordinators complete a pro forma Module Review Form. The form addresses the key areas to be evaluated – appropriateness and success of the module aims, learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment strategies – but also allows for concerns to be raised and resolutions to be identified. Both parties contribute to the completion of the Module Review Form, and completed forms are signed, in turn, by the lecturer/examiner, module/programme co-ordinator and Head of School, thus supporting enhancement and accountability through sequential review and monitoring activities. See Appendix for Module Review Form.

2.2 Process of Reviewing a Module

2.2.1 To review a module, the examiner/lecturer will require:

- (i) module descriptions including objectives, learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment methods, book lists
- (ii) distance education manuals
- (iii) exam papers and assignment titles
- (iv) assessment results relating to the module
- (v) copy of the previous module reviews

In addition to the above, the co-ordinator will require

- (vi) relevant records of consultation with external examiners and, if available at the time of the review, external examiner evaluation reports submitted to the awarding body
- (vii) student evaluation questionnaires
- (viii) minutes of staff/student programme groups
- (ix) consultation with the Distance Education specialist on the relevancy and accuracy of material in the Distance Education manuals provided to students
- (x) other feedback from students, staff, employers and/or consultants on additional material to be included in the curriculum or particular skills to be developed.

2.2.2 The module review begins when the examiner returns the examination marks. The examiner completes Parts A & B of the Module Review Form.

- a) Part A focuses on distribution of marks/grade classifications and identifies aspects of the assessment that worked well and less well.

- b) Part B focuses on the appropriateness of the module aims, learning outcomes, teaching methods, materials and assessment strategies. Considerations include:
 - (i) *module objectives and learning outcomes*: were they achieved? Were they appropriate to the students? Were they realistic given the time and resources available?
 - (ii) *module content*: is it still relevant? Is the coverage appropriate? Has additional material been added effectively? Is a comprehensive revision of the module needed?
 - (iii) *distance education manuals*: are there any changes needed to reflect decisions made about course content? Are there any minor amendments needed before the next academic year? Is the presentation of information of sufficient use to distance education students?
 - (iv) *assessment of student learning*: are all objectives assessed? Are the assessment methods appropriate to the task? Were the assessment exercises successful and effective in evaluating student learning?
 - (v) *assessment feedback*: what steps are taken to provide students with feedback on their progress? Are they effective? Are they efficient in terms of staff time as well as for informing students?
- c) Examiners will confirm whether previous amendments to module content or delivery were successful.
- d) Examiners will also identify corrective action for unsuccessful elements of module or assessment delivery, to be discussed at a later point with the co-ordinator.

2.2.3 Module/Programme Co-ordinators complete Part C of the Module Review Form, which involves:

- a) An acknowledgement that he or she has:
 - (i) reviewed the internal examiner/lecturer's evaluation in Parts A & B;
 - (ii) consulted with the examiner/lecturer on the progress and effectiveness of the module;
 - (iii) consulted with the extern examiner during the assessment phase;
 - (iv) reviewed the extern's formal evaluation of the module, if available at that point;
 - (v) considered the student evaluation of the module;
 - (vi) consulted with the Distance Education specialist on the quality of the Distance Education manuals.
- b) An assessment of what changes, if any, are required for the module based on the feedback from examiner/lecturer and students, discussions with the Distance Education specialist, or information gathered by him or her during the delivery of the module.

2.2.4 The Head of the Whitaker School signs off on each Module Review Form.

2.3 Process of Revising a Module

2.3.1 It is common that there will be minor alterations to modules to maintain relevance and freshness. These can include changes to title, aims, objectives, outcomes, syllabi, programme content and delivery methods. They may result from annual reviews or student feedback or from informal monitoring during the year.

- 2.3.2 Where changes to a module are proposed after a module review, the Head of Whitaker School will approve the proposed changes and implementation strategy. The Module/Programme Co-ordinator will be responsible for implementing the changes and will liaise with the lectures/examiners and Distance Education specialist to complete the work.
- 2.3.3 Where issues arise during the delivery cycle of a module, and immediate changes are deemed necessary, the Module/Programme Co-ordinator responsible for implementing the changes should ensure that a record of the change appears in the next Module Review Form.
- 2.3.4 Any changes that impact on the programme as a whole, or other modules in a programme, should be implemented by the programme co-ordinator in conjunction with the Module co-ordinator and logged, as appropriate, on the individual Module Review Form.
- 2.3.5 If the revisions are substantial and require approval from the awarding body, the Head of Whitaker School will put in place necessary procedures to secure such approval. Lecturers, therefore, should be aware that final confirmation might not be forthcoming for a period spanning one or more committee meetings with the awarding body.
- 2.3.6 The Programme co-ordinator will be responsible for informing the Head of Whitaker School and assistant registrar of the completed changes so that appropriate notification can be given to internal examiners, external examiners and students. Appropriate amendments should be made to the learning materials and programme guides.
- 2.3.7 A record of the final Module Review Form should be held by the examiner/lecturer, Module/Programme Co-ordinator and the Head of the Whitaker School.
- 2.3.8 While the effectiveness of any changes completed will be evaluated during the progress of the next delivery cycle of the module (and adjustments made accordingly), examiners should systematically consider the success of changes when completing the next Module Review Form.

3 Monitoring and Review of Programmes

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 The Institute recognises that the process of programme review is iterative, and that much of this business (both of review and amendment of programmes and modules) takes place at different times and through a variety of mechanisms during the monitoring year. The Institute also recognises that while monitoring and review of programmes naturally coincides with the review of modules or groups of cognate modules, there should be systematic and periodic programmatic reviews involving both internal and external contribution.

3.2 Process of Reviewing a Programme

3.2.1 Programme Review: Principles

- (a) An important aim of the programme review is to promote enhancement and to disseminate good practice within the Institute.
- (b) A programme review should be conducted every five years.
- (c) The programme review should comprise an internal and external (peer review) element.
- (d) The timing of the review should allow for the completion of both internal and external elements, and for the implementation of reasonable or necessary changes, before the next delivery cycle.

- (e) The internal programme review should be led by the programme co-ordinator and involve the course team. The course team comprises the lead programme co-ordinator and module co-ordinators responsible for the individual modules and, where appropriate, the lecturers responsible for the delivery of tuition and assessment.
- (f) The external review should be conducted by an academic or senior public servant or similar professional from a professional body or employer organisation.
- (g) To facilitate the process of review, both the programme co-ordinator and external reviewer will complete pro forma Programme Review Forms. The forms address the key areas to be evaluated – appropriateness and success of the programme aims, learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment strategies – but also allow for concerns to be raised and resolutions to be identified. Completed forms are signed, in turn, by the programme co-ordinator and Head of Whitaker School. See Appendix for Programme Review Forms.

3.2.2 Internal Review

3.2.2.1 The course team should have the following items in advance of the review:

- (i) programme descriptions including objectives; broad learning outcomes; rationale; syllabus; admission criteria; progression rates.
- (ii) module descriptions including aims; learning outcomes; teaching & learning methods; assessment methods;
- (iii) teaching material including book lists; distance education manuals; past exam papers
- (iv) assessment data (results statistics relating to individual modules and overall programme performance)
- (v) relevant forms of evaluation, such as student and extern evaluation and relevant Module Review Forms.

3.2.2.2 The programme co-ordinator should use the pro-forma Programme Review Form to document the performance of the programme against a range of quality parameters: —

- (i) *programme objectives & learning outcomes*: were they achieved? Did the programme offer the relevant knowledge, skills and competences required by the profile of students taking the programme? Were the objectives realistic given the time and resources available?
- (ii) *syllabus*: is it still relevant? Is a comprehensive revision of the structure or content of the course needed?
- (iii) *modules & distance education manuals*: are there any changes needed to reflect decisions made about programme aims & content?
- (iv) *feedback*: what steps are taken to provide students with feedback on their progress? Are they effective? Are they efficient in terms of staff time as well as for informing students?
- (v) *assessment of student learning*: are all objectives assessed? If not, how is student progress evaluated? Are the assessment methods appropriate to the task?
- (vi) *proposed new developments*: do they require revision of overall aims and objectives?

3.2.2.3 Completed forms are signed by the programme co-ordinator and made available to the module co-ordinators, Head of Whitaker School and peer reviewer. See Appendix for Programme Review Forms.

3.2.3 Peer Review

- 3.2.3.1 The Head of Whitaker School, in conjunction with the programme co-ordinator, will secure the services of a suitably qualified academic or professional to review the programme. The peer reviewer may be an academic at another third-level institution or professional body, or a senior public servant or similar professional who may be considered a major stakeholder in the programme.
- 3.2.3.2 The reviewer will not be involved in the day-to-day delivery of the programme or be a teacher on the programme. The services of the independent external examiner would be acceptable.
- 3.2.3.3 The peer reviewer will have to-hand the same materials made available to the programme co-ordinator, outlined in 3.2.2.1 above. The peer reviewer will also have a copy of the internal review.
- 3.2.3.4 The peer reviewer will use a pro-forma Programme Review Form to document the performance of the programme against a range of quality parameters, as outlined in 3.2.2.2 above. The peer reviewer will also be invited to confirm that the standard of the programme is comparable to other institutions with which he or she is familiar. The reviewer will be invited to raise any additional concerns or recommend improvements not identified at earlier stages of the review process.
- 3.2.3.5 Completed forms are signed by the peer reviewer and made available to the programme co-ordinator and Head of Whitaker School.

3.2.4 Final Stage

The Head of Whitaker School reviews and signs both internal and external Programme Review Forms. The Head of Whitaker School approves the recommended changes and discusses the implementation plan with the programme co-ordinator.

3.3 **Process of Revising a Programme**

- 3.3.1 Revisions to the programme as a whole should be implemented by the programme co-ordinator and recorded on the Programme Review Form. The programme co-ordinator liaises, as appropriate, with individual module co-ordinators to implement changes to modules arising from the internal or peer review.
- 3.3.2 Any changes that impact on modules should be logged, as appropriate, on the individual Module Review Form.
- 3.3.3 If the revisions are substantial and require approval from the awarding body, the Head of Whitaker School will put in place necessary procedures to secure such approval.
- 3.3.4 A record of the final Programme Review Form should be held by the Programme Co-ordinator and Head of the Whitaker School.
- 3.3.5 While the effectiveness of any changes completed will be evaluated during the progress of the next delivery cycle (and adjustments made accordingly), co-ordinators should systematically consider the success of changes when completing the next Review Form.

1.1 INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Annual Module Review Form – Lecturer/Examiner

Name	
Subject	
Year & Programme	
Number of Students	

Part A – Exams: Internal Examiner's Evaluation

Please provide a brief report on the examination results. (1) Please comment on grade classifications, failure rates and other relevant cohort results data, including grade distribution figures where feasible. (2) Comment on aspects of the assessment that worked well and less well. Include observations about difficulty/popularity of question types; common student errors.

Part B – Module Evaluation: Examiner/Lecturer

Comment below on aspects of the module that have worked well and less well over the academic year.

Please also evaluate the module against the following criteria:

Do the stated aims and intended learning outcomes of the module remain appropriate?	YES/NO
Do the chosen teaching processes remain appropriate to the intended learning outcomes?	YES/NO
Do the assessment strategies remain appropriate to the intended learning outcomes?	YES/NO
Are you satisfied with the overall grade distribution or failure rates within the module?	YES/NO
Are the learning materials up-to-date and accurate?	YES/NO

Where you have answered NO please identify possible corrective action to be discussed with the Module/programme co-ordinator.

Please indicate here any issues or suggestions that you would like to raise with the IPA in the context of your duties.

Signed
Examiner/Lecturer

Date

Signed
Module/Programme Co-ordinator

Date

1.2 INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Annual Module Review Form – Module/Programme Co-ordinator

Part C – Module Co-ordinator Evaluation

Have you reviewed the internal examiner/lecturer's report?	YES/NO
Have you discussed the standard of marking and student performance with the external examiner?	YES/NO
Have you reviewed a summary of student evaluation and relevant exam statistics?	YES/NO
Are the individual modules contributing fully to specialist and generic skills development?	YES/NO
Are you satisfied that the module is still relevant within the overall context of the specialist stream or programme?	YES/NO
Do you have any concerns about the overall grade distribution or failure rates within the subject?	YES/NO
Is the resourcing of the module (staffing, accommodation, library) adequate?	YES/NO

Where you **or** the internal lecturer/examiner **or** external examiner have signalled issues with the module or recommended changes, please outline the short-term changes or corrective action that is planned and the timescale for it.

Are you satisfied with the distance learning materials? Are they up-to-date and accurate?	YES/NO
If No, please indicate here the nature of the remedial work proposed. [If significant changes (changes other than typos, basic errors, formatting problems, and/or minor updates) are required, please complete a Course Manual Revision proforma in conjunction with the DE specialist]	

Additional comments

Signed
Programme Co-ordinator

Date

Signed
Head of School

Date

Programme Review Form (5 year) – Programme Co-ordinator

Programme Name	
NFQ level	
Programme last reviewed	

Part A

Have you reviewed the annual Module Review Forms?	YES/NO
Have you reviewed a summary of student evaluation and relevant exam statistics?	YES/NO
Have you reviewed a range of extern examiner forms?	YES/NO
Have you reviewed syllabi and learning materials and assessment methods?	YES/NO

Please evaluate the programme against the following criteria:

Do the programme's stated aims and intended learning outcomes remain appropriate?	YES/NO
Do the chosen teaching processes remain appropriate to the intended learning outcomes?	YES/NO
Do the assessment strategies remain appropriate to the intended learning outcomes?	YES/NO
Are you satisfied with the overall grade distribution or failure rates within the subject?	YES/NO
Is the resourcing of the programme (staffing, accommodation, library etc) adequate?	YES/NO

Where you have answered NO please identify possible corrective action to be discussed with the Head of Whitaker School and individual module co-ordinators.

Part B

Comment below on aspects of the programme that are working well and those less so.

Where you have identified corrective action, please outline the corrective action that is planned and the timescale for it.

Where you deem the module no longer sufficiently contributes to the overall objective of the stream or programme, outline what development of the module is planned?

Signed _____

Programme Co-ordinator

Date

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Signed _____

Date

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Head of School

2.2 INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Programme Review Form (5 year) – Peer Reviewer

Programme Name	
NFQ level	
IPA Co-ordinator Contact	

Part C – Peer Reviewer Evaluation

- | | |
|---|--------|
| Have you reviewed the programme co-ordinator's report? | YES/NO |
| Have you reviewed a range of annual Module Review Forms? | YES/NO |
| Have you reviewed a range of extern examiner forms? | YES/NO |
| Have you reviewed a summary of student evaluation and relevant exam statistics? | YES/NO |
| Have you reviewed syllabi and learning materials and assessment methods? | YES/NO |
| Are you satisfied that the programme is still relevant? | YES/NO |
| Are you satisfied that the structure and content is appropriate to the level at which it was taught? | YES/NO |
| Are you satisfied that the individual modules contribute fully to specialist and generic skills development? | YES/NO |
| Are you satisfied with the overall grade distributions or failure rates within the subject? Were the standards consistent with those in your own university and/or in other universities with which you are familiar? | YES/NO |

Where you have answered NO to any of the above please provide further comment.

Were you provided with evidence that recommendations for improvement from previous module reviews were considered and acted upon? Please comment also on changes to the programme recommended by the co-ordinator in his or her recent evaluation.

Are there any notable successes of the programme or recommended improvements that you wish to raise?

Signed
Peer Reviewer

Date

Signed
Head of School

Date