**Guidance for external reviewers**

**Structure of the process**

Proposals are developed within a School and undergo a three-stage approval process:

* Strategic approval of the portfolio development
* Academic design phase
* Compliance and University approval

Compliance and University approval is a two-phase stage comprising University confirmation that the proposal complies with YSJU, sector and PSRB regulatory and framework requirements followed by an external approval event. External reviewers are involved in the second of these phases.

The reason we involve an external reviewer is to provide a subject specialist perspective independent from the proposing School. External reviewers can comment on matters of quality and standards that are specific to that discipline area and make comparisons against national standards and similar courses elsewhere.

The comments from the external reviewer are considered as part of the decision on whether or not to recommend the course for approval to the University through its Quality and Standards Committee.

**Documentation**

You will receive the:

* Programme specification(s)
* Programme design narrative
* Module specifications

A report form is attached which includes a series of questions which it would be useful for you to address in your review. However, if you have any comments which fall outside these questions please feel free to include them.

Your report will form the basis of discussion at the external event held to affirm the proposed programmes relevance and quality and to provide an opportunity for discussions that could develop and enhance the programme delivery.

**External review report form**

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| **Award and programme title:** |  |
| **Name of external reviewer:** |  |
| **Job title & institution:** |  |

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| **Employer engagement** |
| Is there evidence that the appropriate employers have been consulted in the design of the programme and will be involved in programme delivery? |
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| Are the proposed employer feedback mechanisms sufficient? |
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| **Learning Outcomes** |
| Please comment on how the aims and learning outcomes of the programme meet the subject benchmark statements, the relevant level descriptor of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications[[1]](#footnote-1) and standards set by PSRBs (where relevant). |
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| Please comment on how the proposed modules enable student to meet the learning outcomes for the programme |
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| Do the programme PLOs and academic content map well to the KSBs of the apprenticeship standard? This is particularly relevant for programmes where the EPA is integrated. |
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| **Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours** |
| Does the programme enable an apprentice to develop the duties and KSBs specified in the Apprenticeship Standard?  Are there clear arrangements for how the apprentice will be supported in the workplace to develop the duties and KSBs specified within the apprenticeship standard? |
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| **Curriculum** |
| Please comment on how the curriculum enables the aims and learning outcomes to be met in respect of:   * subject content * subject specific skills * transferable skills * progression of skills and knowledge through the programme.   If not, please indicate ways in which this might be addressed. |
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| **Assessment** |
| Please comment on the suitability of the proposed methods of assessment including the suitability of the type and spread of assessment, in relation to the aims and learning outcomes of the programme, and in comparison to similar courses elsewhere.  If exams form part of the assessment strategy, do you consider them to provide an authentic form of assessment that enables students to meet the programme learning outcomes? |
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| Does the EPA reflect the requirements of the apprenticeship standard?  Does the programme enable apprentices to have adequate access and practice to these forms of assessment throughout their programme and prior to the Gateway?  Does the programme provide provision for apprentices to achieve level 2 English and Maths prior to undertaking EPA? |
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| **Learning Experience** |
| Does the programme provide apprentices who are undertaking it with equal opportunities for a high-quality learning and training experience; for example, is there evidence that the range of working contexts and the variety of employment settings within which the apprenticeship will be undertaken have been considered.  This should include:   * the relationship between the structure of programme, * approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in relation to work patterns, * geographical location(s), * and the specific requirements of work required. |
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| **Off and On the job training** |
| The integration of on and off-the-job learning and training is fundamental for delivery of a high-quality apprenticeship. This integration, and the focus on delivering occupational competence, are what differentiate an apprenticeship from part-time learning while at work.  Has the 20% Off-the-job training time been clearly defined? And is the mode of delivery appropriate?  Is there evidence that on-the-job training is linked to academic content or assessment and vice versa? |
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| **Workplace Mentoring** |
| Do the proposed workplace mentoring arrangements seem effective? For example, the induction processes for workplace mentors and proposed ongoing support for them in undertaking the role by both employers and the University.  Is there evidence of communication strategies between employers, providers, apprentices, etc. e.g. tripartite meetings |
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| **Student Support** |
| Does the proposed student support seem sufficient to enable apprentices the opportunity to succeed? |
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| **Do you have any other comments on any aspect of the documentation?** |
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1. <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)