

**Periodic Review Report Template**

<b>Department and Faculty</b>	<b>Architecture and Built Environment Engineering and Environment</b>
<b>Date of Review</b>	<b>15 and 16 March 2018</b>
<b>Review Panel</b> (approved by Academic Registry)	Sarah Soppitt – Faculty Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) (Faculty of Arts, Design and Social Sciences) (Chair) Sue Jackson, Director of Learning and Teaching (Quality and Review), Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (Non-Faculty Internal Panel Member) Julie Walters, Associate Head of Department, Faculty of Engineering and Environment (Faculty Internal Panel Member) Karl Robson, Vice President Education, Northumbria Students’ Union (SU Sabbatical Panel Member) Dr Scott Burgess, Academic Development Office, Academic Registry (QTE ADO Panel Member) Ian Hicklin, Director of Learning and Teaching, University of Sheffield (External Panel Member (Architecture)) Robert Stott, Assistant Head of Department, Glasgow Caledonian University (External Panel Member (Built Environment)) Muriel Theillere, Quality and Teaching Excellence Manager Carol Cullen, Quality and Teaching Excellence Coordinator
<b>Method of Review</b>	This review was conducted using the periodic review procedure defined in Northumbria’s Review Framework available from <a href="https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/central/ar/qualitysupport/reviewframework/">https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/central/ar/qualitysupport/reviewframework/</a>

**Notes:**

- Review reports are expected to be short and succinct, typically 3 to 4 sides of A4
- Sections highlighted in blue below, together with the header above, make up the published summary of this review. This will be published on the University’s Teaching Quality Information web pages (<https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/central/ar/qualitysupport/PQI/> )

<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Department Context</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short summary of scope of review – programmes or programme areas included, total student and staff numbers</li> <li>• Short statement of the main aims of the department</li> <li>• Short statement of any necessary contextual information (e.g. physical and organisational location, any recent restructuring etc.)</li> </ul> <p>The Department of Architecture and Built Environment was originally called the School of the Built Environment, until 2011 when it briefly joined Geography to become the School of the Built and Natural Environment. During an institutional-wide restructuring in November 2012, it merged with the School of Computing, Engineering and Information Sciences into the Faculty of Environment and Engineering, adopting its current identity as the Department of Architecture and Built Environment (ABE). Historically, ABE’s taught disciplines originated with Estate Management (now Real Estate) and Quantity Surveying - which have been offered by Northumbria University since 1967 (hence celebrating its 50th anniversary during 2017/2018 academic year); these two first programmes gained professional accreditation in 1973 from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), one of the leading global professional bodies for Built Environment disciplines. The Building Surveying programme developed from these two original subject areas, achieving RICS accreditation in the early 1990s. Subsequently, RICS accredited Masters level programmes (MSc Real Estate/ International Real Estate) were introduced, followed by the distance-learning programme MSc Surveying in the early 2000s. Architecture was added to the Department in 1997/98, securing professional accreditation in 2004 for BA (Hons) Architecture and 2009 (MArch). Both programmes are prescribed by the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and validated by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Interior Architecture courses followed, with the establishment of the BA (Hons)</p>	

Interior Architecture, and the Postgraduate Certificate in Interior Architecture programmes. In summary, the department is currently teaching full-time, part-time, distance-learning and blended learning modes across a comprehensive suite of programmes. This offering includes full programmes and pre-PFNA modules being phased out; new programmes being developed, divested modes of delivery and new location delivery environments. From a research perspective, the Faculty has continued to expand its research presence and output – the most recent benchmarks being acknowledged in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and Research Assessment Framework (REF) 2014. The development and strengthening of research in ABE was evidenced by a 42% increase in the number of academics submitted in 2008, and a GPA increase of 2.86% (from 2.45 in 2008, to 2.52 in 2014). The proportion of 4\* outputs have also doubled in line with this investment. This momentum is now being aligned to further support activities for REF 2021.

**Staffing** (as at 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018, changes have occurred since)

ABE has 53 permanent academic staff (5 Professors; 6 Associate Professors; 2 Principal Lecturers; 34 Senior Lecturers; 5 Lecturers; and one Senior Vice Chancellor's Multi-Disciplinary Research Theme (MDRT) Fellow. Staffing for the start of the 2017/18 academic year commenced with deficit of 5.8 FTE vacancies, and as of January 2018 this shortfall was 3.4 FTE. The majority of staff are engaged in a mixture of teaching, research/enterprise and administration, with a nominal distribution of 40:40:20 between these activities. 77% of staff have either HEA membership (including 2 PFHEAs), or are in the process of applying for membership; and 45% of staff members hold a doctorate. ABE's gender balance is the best in the Faculty, but its ethnic diversity is below average.

**Learning Resources**

ABE's physical learning environment has benefitted from considerable investment over the past few years. The current architecture design studios have been cited by the Director of Education for the Royal Institute of British Architects as amongst the best in the country, and these facilities have been consistently praised in External Examiner reports. The Zone in Ellison building, is a shared facility used by all Faculty students, and provides 24-hour availability to computing, printing and workspace facilities and equipment. All Faculty students share the digital prototyping and manual workshop facilities. This provision has benefitted from a recent £6.7m investment, co-funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the operationalization of which is supported by a Technical Support Manager and a dedicated team of 12 technicians. During the 2018/19 academic year, ABE will be moving into new Architecture Studios (designed by the award-winning architects Page & Park), and supported by the new Student Hub as a core 'drop-down' space for Built Environment students.

**Overview of the Student Body**

ABE's current learner provision includes 1076 full-time students (852 home students); 498 part-time students (468 home students), 204 distance-learners (30 international). This combined provision of 1574 students (68% of whom are full-time, and 84% of classified as home students) is a significant portfolio. The department's BE subjects are principally a home market for Northumbria, representing around two thirds of campus-based and new students (which is also delivered Distance Learning via the London Campus). Architecture is principally a home undergraduate market for Northumbria, representing over three quarters of new students. The remaining are international undergraduate students and a small postgraduate provision. Whilst ABE's international student numbers and partnership provision is relatively low compared with other departments in the faculty (i.e. MPEE), there are some encouraging signs of improvement in this regard. For example, the Malaysian Board of Quantity Surveyors has recently re-accredited BSc (Hons) Quantity Surveying Programme [which should result in additional students from Malaysia], the success of which will be followed up by an application to secure accreditation from the Malaysian Board of Architecture (2018/19). ABE is also currently negotiating collaborative ventures with Seoul Tech (Korea) and City University (Hong Kong), and are in advanced franchising discussions with Kaplan Singapore regarding its Real Estate Masters programme.

Section 2	Judgement Criteria	
Focus of judgements	Judgements	Outcome
The setting and maintenance of threshold academic standards	• meets UK and NU expectations,	X
	• requires improvement to meet UK and NU expectations,	
	• does not meet UK and NU expectations.	
The quality of students' learning opportunities	• commended,	X
	• meets UK and NU expectations,	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requires improvement to meet UK and NU expectations or,</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not meet UK and NU expectations.</li> </ul>	
Information about higher education provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>commended,</li> </ul>	X
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meets UK and NU expectations,</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requires improvement to meet UK and NU expectations or,</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not meet UK and NU expectations.</li> </ul>	
The enhancement of students' learning opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>commended,</li> </ul>	X
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meets UK and NU expectations,</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requires improvement to meet UK and NU expectations or,</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not meet UK and NU expectations.</li> </ul>	

<b>Section 3</b>	<b>The setting and maintenance of threshold academic standards</b>
<p><b>The Panel identified the following strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceptional commitment from staff through the provision of an excellent and genuine student experience</li> <li>• Outstanding pedagogy and high student attainment</li> <li>• Exceptional academic standards maintained across programmes, comparable with other institutions</li> <li>• Clearly articulated teaching and learning focus of all subject areas</li> <li>• Clear strengths also include BIM academy, <i>THE</i> 2017 award, Degree Apprenticeship provision</li> </ul> <p><b>The Panel made the following recommendations and timescales for further development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To consider opportunities to share good practice within the department, and wider faculty</li> <li>• To continue to reflect on the assessment and feedback strategy, specifically its impact on staff and students as evidenced by inclusion onto the Faculty Enhancement Week schedule due to take place in June 2018</li> </ul>	
<p><b>The Panel made the following observations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This has been, as identified by the staff, a period of rapid change - change to staff base and resilience building is ongoing</li> <li>• The Panel commends the Faculty on the depth of its commitment to the Department in relation to the existing and planned resources.</li> <li>• Judgements were made with limited exposure to Quantity and Building Surveying students and employers, therefore in this context needs to be considered throughout.</li> </ul>	
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>The quality of students' learning opportunities</b>
<p><b>The Panel identified the following strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive investment and support from Faculty Executive Group to the Department in relation to physical resources</li> <li>• Strong support from the student body to the staff team.</li> <li>• Cohesive and supportive studio culture was evident.</li> <li>• Demonstrable commitment to student wellbeing, in the learning context of Architecture specifically.</li> <li>• Commendable integration of the Architecture Society into the life of the Department</li> </ul> <p><b>The Panel made the following recommendations and timescales for further development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review the effectiveness of communication throughout and beyond the Department for implementation by September 2018, evidenced by providing a copy of the Enhancement Week agenda to confirm discussions</li> </ul>	
<p><b>The Panel made the following observations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore connections between Real Estate and Construction (feedback from employers and students)</li> <li>• To promote opportunities for additional employer engagement through Employer Advisory Board/s</li> <li>• The Panel noted the value of the 'open door' policy and would like the Department to consider its effects on key staff wellbeing.</li> </ul>	
<b>Section 5</b>	<b>Information about higher education provision</b>
<p><b>The Panel identified the following strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong Industry involvement in academic awards and prizes</li> </ul>	

- High levels of graduate employment
- Diversification of programme portfolio to respond to market demand (eg. sandwich programme (Built Environment), Year Abroad and Degree Apprenticeships)
- Widening of higher education provision to increase number of active industry partners

**The Panel made the following recommendations and timescales for further development:**

- No recommendations

**The Panel made the following observations:**

- Good gender balance within the Department
- Faculty's engagement with Athena Swann acknowledged

**Section 6**

**The enhancement of students' learning opportunities**

**The Panel identified the following strengths:**

- Excellent collaboration with external practitioners / Strong employer support
- Strengths in innovation (one of the first institutions in the country to design and deliver the new Degree Apprenticeship (DA) (vehicle for authentic learning and professionalism of students))
- Strong engagement with HEA recognition
- Wealth of field trips and site visits, real-world learning, opportunities to work with stakeholders/partners
- Research-rich authentic learning well embedded (links to community of learning opportunities)

**The Panel made the following recommendations and timescales for further development:**

- No recommendations

**The Panel made the following observations:**

- Possible further signposting of existing training opportunities (eg. software) to the Student Body and consider working with Student and Library Services to propose new opportunities
- To consider mechanisms for co-production and dissemination of research with employers/external collaborators

**Section 7**

**Further Quality Assurance Monitoring**

*This section is copied from the self-evaluation document to acknowledge actions which the Department/Faculty has already identified and is already actioning.*

**Affirmations<sup>1</sup>**

Please list any affirmations identified and accompanying actions (*add extra rows as needed*)

**Issue**

**Action**

Student employability

Departmental Employability Action Plan

International recruitment

Includes Seoul Tech, City University Hong Kong and Kaplan Singapore. Also looking at International professional body accreditation (following on from BQSM in 2017).

NSS Action Plan

NSS improvement is more critical for Quantity and Building Surveying than for the other programmes in ABE. The current Departmental NSS Action Plans have been drawn up with this focus in mind.

Assessment

Professor Rosie Parnell has successfully secured funds from the institutional Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund (TQEF) to run workshops on assessment literacies, challenging students to

<sup>1</sup> examples of developments, planned or in train which seek to address issues previously identified

		develop their understanding and application of assessment and feedback as a key tool in their academic progression.
Audit Trails		
Compliance Checks		
Additional Comments	Difficulties in securing a breadth of student voice in spite of the most engaged student body throughout the whole Periodic Review process	

Section 8	Department Response to Report
<p><b>Short summary response by Department on follow up action for inclusion in published report:</b></p> <p><i>No details added.</i></p>	