

Periodic Review Report Template

Department and Faculty	Psychology Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
Date of Review	28th and 29th January 2019
Review Panel (approved by Academic Registry)	<p>Internal Membership Chair – Sarah Soppitt Non-Faculty Internal Panel Member – Peter Harrington Faculty Internal Panel Member – Sue Jackson Student Union Sabbatical Panel Member – Simon Noble QTE Panel Member - Sue Mathieson</p> <p>External Membership Prof Kenny Smith, Edinburgh University</p> <p>Quality and Teaching Excellence Support Facilitator – Jimmy Milligan Coordinator – Kirsty Ferry Support – Scott White</p>
Method of Review	This review was conducted using the periodic review procedure defined by Northumbria University Review Framework
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Quality and Teaching Excellence web pages (Periodic Review Reports) 	

Section 1	Department Context
	<p>The Department of Psychology sits within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, the Department being created following the University's restructure in 2012.</p> <p>The student population has increased significantly since the last periodic review, with approaching 1000 students on undergraduate programmes consisting of: 150 Foundation Year students; the majority of undergraduates on single honours Psychology, which uses framework options to provide student choice of specialisms; joint provision with Criminology (100 students; and a small cohort of students with Sports Sciences currently running out. There are over 160 students on taught across five Postgraduate programmes. There is also a PhD community of around 38 research students.</p> <p>The Department has 48 permanent academic staff (increasing to 54 in 2019), and further research-focused staff (one permanent staff, three VC research fellows and 18 externally funded fixed term research fellows and associate). The Department also has a team of 30 hourly paid demonstrators that support programme delivery. Technical and administrative support are provided by centralised faculty teams.</p> <p>The provision includes accreditation by the British Psychology Society (BPS), and undergraduate programmes and the MSc Psychology 'conversion' programme can provide students with the British Psychological Society's Graduate Basis for Chartered membership (GBC).</p> <p>The Department aims (taken from the Self-Evaluation Document) to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A first class portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes that maximises student choice and integrates world leading research with an employability focus. • World leading, highly impactful research in the areas of Brain, Nutrition and Performance, Applied Health Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Psychology and Communication Technologies, and

Evolution, Perception and Behaviour.

- A developing international portfolio embracing the St Georges medical programme, Amsterdam Campus, Franchised programmes in Singapore (Kaplan), and dual awards in Malaysia.
- The development of a Centre of Excellence in Occupational Psychology, already offering British Psychological Society accredited stage 1 and stage 2 training, a professional doctorate, and a CPD /consultancy stream supporting local and national organisations.

The Department is located within Northumberland Building across three floors, including specialist teaching space (a Psychology Lab which incorporates 18 bookable cubicles), although it is noted that the size of the accommodation has been increasingly difficult with the increase in staff and student numbers.

Section 2	Judgement Criteria	
Focus of judgements	Judgements	Outcome
The setting and maintenance of threshold academic standards	• meets UK and NU expectations,	✓
	• requires improvement to meet UK and NU expectations,	
	• does not meet UK and NU expectations.	
The quality of students' learning opportunities	• commended,	
	• meets UK and NU expectations,	✓
	• requires improvement to meet UK and NU expectations or,	
	• does not meet UK and NU expectations.	
Information about higher education provision	• commended,	✓
	• meets UK and NU expectations,	
	• requires improvement to meet UK and NU expectations or,	
	• does not meet UK and NU expectations.	
The enhancement of students' learning opportunities	• commended,	
	• meets UK and NU expectations,	✓
	• requires improvement to meet UK and NU expectations or,	
	• does not meet UK and NU expectations.	

Section 3	The setting and maintenance of threshold academic standards
<p>The Panel identified the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic standards are met in full, with very positive reports from BPS accreditation and external examiners. • Staff are clearly committed to providing high quality teaching to students. The induction of new staff and mentoring linked to increasing HEA fellowship available is commended. • The research rich learning and teaching is strong. <p>The Panel made the following recommendations and timescales for further development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the assessment strategy inclusive of the workload for both staff and students, and to make the feedback to students more efficient. 	
<p>The Panel made the following observations:</p> <p>It is recognised that the department is well supported by the Faculty of HLS allowing to maintain academic standards and SSRs through use of demonstrators, and the recruitment of new academic staff. Space consideration to support new staffing were highlighted as important throughout the periodic review.</p>	

Section 4	The quality of students' learning opportunities
<p>The Panel identified the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commitment to providing students with the ability to self-select project titles, and the availability of defined pathways within the undergraduate degree programme. • The opportunity for students to take placement activity. <p>The Panel made the following recommendations and timescales for further development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department need to develop plans for the Foundation Year and successive degree programmes to ensure that the assessment strategy supports students and staff; and choice open to students through pathways and projects are maintained. • To ensure that joint programmes are delivered in partnership across the two departments, and that the assessment and feedback schedule works across all levels. • To consider closer collaboration and consultation with placement providers, on research based activity, curriculum development and, teaching delivery and student support and guidance. Information to students must be clear, and the Department needs to solicit feedback from placement providers, and to ensure equivalence of comparability in the range of placements in enabling students to meet the module learning requirements. 	
<p>The Panel made the following observations:</p> <p>The Panel recognise the significant growth in student numbers through the introduction of the foundation year, and strategic developments in the portfolio (Kaplan, distance –learning provision with Pearson, Amsterdam). The Department, while clearly fully committed and excited about these developments are mindful of the growth in activity, and the potential impact on academic and other resource issues, including challenges for staff development. There are also space considerations, that the academic team highlighted, that may become more of an issue, require careful planning and support from the University (for example the impact of the role through of the FY numbers into level 4-6).</p>	
Section 5	Information about higher education provision
<p>The Panel identified the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong performance against all benchmarks <p>The Panel made the following recommendations and timescales for further development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
<p>The Panel made the following observations:</p> <p>The Panel note that whilst it seemed that the NSS results indicated an issue with regards to the student community, this was not evident through discussions. Academic staff are urged to flag with students how the student community is present within the Department in relation to the NSS question. It is recognised that the Department are thinking about a 'college' approach to strengthen the sense of community. The department should endeavour to make the foundation year part of the broader undergraduate community.</p>	
Section 6	The enhancement of students' learning opportunities
<p>The Panel identified the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commitment of the Department to embedding employability within programmes. • The opportunity for PGT students to develop academic teaching skills and experience. <p>The Panel made the following recommendations and timescales for further development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To recognise the student mentors within the HEAR, and to better promote the mentoring to students. 	

The Panel made the following observations:

It is noted that the Department has started to offer the year study abroad, and the Panel would like to encourage the Department to continue to promote this opportunity to students.

Section 7	Further Quality Assurance Monitoring	
	<i>This section is copied from the self-evaluation document to acknowledge actions which the Department/Faculty has already identified and is already actioning.</i>	
Affirmations ¹	No items required.	
	Issue	Action
	None	N/A
Audit Trails	Department audit trails provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in contact hours on Foundation Year as a result of student feedback 2. Approved absences to take caring for dependents into account 3. Training provided for new staff / those new to module tutor role 	
Compliance Checks	Received as complete.	

Section 8	Department Response to Report
Short summary response by Department on follow up action for inclusion in published report:	

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