

University of Essex
Partner Institution - Annual Review of Courses Policy

1. All Partner Institutions are required to write and submit to the University an Annual Review of Courses (ARC) report for all levels of provision that the Partner Institution offers.
2. The ARC is the focus for a reflective evaluation of curriculum, delivery, student experience and the achievement of students. ARC reports also look forward to the next delivery of the curriculum, building on the experience and evidence.
3. ARC reports draw on a variety of data sources including the National Student Survey (NSS); progression, retention and success statistics; employability information and the student voice.
4. The ARC report enables the Partner Institution to:
 - a. Reflect on course(s) and modules with respect to key internal and external metrics.
 - b. Develop action plans that ensure the enhancement of the courses and modules under review.
 - c. Ensure excellence in the quality of education.
 - d. Identify and share good practice.
5. ARC reports allow the University to have oversight of themes that are emerging across Partner Institutions that need to be acted upon, and to share good practice across the institution.
6. Undergraduate ARC reports are submitted in the Autumn term and Postgraduate ARC reports are submitted in the Spring term for consideration at the Partnerships Education Committee. The Deputy Dean review the reports and provide an oral report to the Committees, followed by a written report to the next Academic Quality and Standards Committee. Feedback will be provided to each Partner Institution through Partnership Quality and Development Committees.
7. ARC reports are key supporting documents for PERIODIC REVIEWS and EXTERNAL REVIEWS and demonstrate to external auditors the currency, validity and security of the University's awards.

GUIDANCE: ANNUAL REVIEW OF COURSES (ARC)

1. SUBMISSION OF REPORTS

<i>Level</i>	<i>Submission Date</i>	<i>Email</i>
Undergraduate	15 November 2017	quad@essex.ac.uk
Postgraduate Taught	31 January 2018	quad@essex.ac.uk
Postgraduate Research	31 January 2018	pgresearch@essex.ac.uk

2. RELEVANT COMMITTEES

<i>Level</i>	<i>Partnerships Education Committee</i>
Undergraduate	29 November 2017
Postgraduate Taught	28 February 2018
Postgraduate Research	28 February 2018

3. DATA AND EVIDENCE

3.1 COURSES AND MODULES

- 3.1.1 Reports should cover all courses and any modules that are not part of a course within a level.
- 3.1.2 Suspended or discontinued courses should be included if there are still students on “teach out”. Reflection on these courses is likely to be focussed on the student experience.
- 3.1.3 Courses with no students due to a failure to recruit should be highlighted as part of SECTION 2:2.
- 3.1.4 Administering departments should liaise with other department(s) about the management of joint courses in the ARC report.
- 3.1.5 Partner Institutions may wish to produce reports at course level for internal purposes. Where this is done, these should be combined into relevant groups or departments in line with the institution’s structures before sending on to the University. If you require an exception from this (as a result of an accrediting body, for example) please contact your Partnership Manager for advice.

3.3 PARTNER INSTITUTION DATA SOURCES

Partner Institutions will hold the following evidence to inform the ARC report:

- Entry Profile - demographics
- Entry Profile – Highest qualification on entry
- Student progression (all and split by mode)
- Degree classifications
- Student numbers
- Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) report
- National Student Survey (NSS) results
- Partnership Performance Indicators (PPI) report
- Student module evaluation outcomes
- External Examiner reports Student Staff Liaison Committee minutes (or equivalent)
- Departmental Employability Action Plan or equivalent (if applicable)

3.4 ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE PARTNER INSTITUTIONS SHOULD CONSIDER

Partner Institutions should also consider any action plans, minutes from meetings or action taken in response to the following areas:

- Internal influences (such as the institution’s strategic plan)
- University of Essex influences (such as Curriculum Review)
- External influences including the [QAA Subject Benchmark Statement\(s\)](#)
- Requirements of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

- How issues of disability are addressed and integrated in the Partner Institution
- Any Partner Institution monitoring systems in place.

4. WRITING THE ARC REPORT

The Head of Higher Education at the Partner Institution will agree the arrangements for writing the ARC report. Sections may be delegated to relevant staff and then combined and discussed at an internal meeting which should include student representation.

4.1 SECTION 1: ACTION PLAN UPDATE SINCE LAST YEAR'S ARC

Partner Institutions should make clear that:

- All actions from last year have either been completed or will be carried forward and included in SECTION 4: ACTION PLAN (see also 4.4).
- The responsibility for completing or progression objectives and actions is clear.
- Issues raised in the action plan are cross-referenced in the later sections of the report as appropriate.
- Objectives and actions should be given a unique ID to allow progress to be clearly highlighted and tracked across reports. This should be in the form SERIAL NUMBER/YEAR OF ORIGIN. The ID for the first action during 2017 would be 1/17. Where there are multiple actions linked to an objective these should be referenced as 1A/17 and 1B/17. The unique ID should be used where the action or objective are referred to in other documents.

4.2 SECTION 2A: STRENGTHS AND ENHANCEMENTS

Partner Institutions should reflect on the evidence sources listed above (and on the report proforma) to complete this section.

- **OVERVIEW OF STRENGTHS AND ENHANCEMENTS**
Please describe solutions to issues that have been identified and indicate where good practice has been implemented from other departments.
- **EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT**
This is an opportunity to show the level and variety of external engagement and influence on course changes and developments and how external feedback has been acted upon.
- **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**
This is a new question for 2017/18 and is an opportunity to demonstrate how student feedback on the course(s) and modules under review has been considered and acted upon.
- **EMPLOYABILITY AND WORK-BASED LEARNING (If applicable)**
Using the Employability Action Plan (if applicable) and DLHE results, reflect on the effectiveness of all the employability activities relevant to the level of course(s) and modules under review. Ensure that work-based learning arrangements are summarised and evaluate the effectiveness of their contribution to the student learning opportunities.
- **RESPONSE TO PERIODIC REVIEW AND NEW COURSE APPROVALS**
Where Partner Institutions have undergone periodic reviews or new course approvals in the last 12 months, the ARC should include an update on action taken in response to any conditions or recommendations set, or issues raised.

SECTION 2B: STAFFING AND RESOURCES

This section asks for information about facilities and resources, staffing, and staff development and scholarly activity, setting out any impact these have had on the course design and delivery.

4.3 SECTION 3: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT PROCESSES

This is a checklist to ensure the Partner Institution continues to comply with the University's expectation for quality assurance and enhancement. Partner Institutions should ensure that any supporting evidence cited is available on request to the Deans of Partnership, Quality and Academic Development, Postgraduate Research Education team or Partnerships team as appropriate.

4.4 SECTION 4: ACTION PLAN

The ACTION PLAN should summarise all the activities the Partner Institution needs to do over the coming year to address areas identified in the report as requiring enhancement. This section should also include any objectives or actions which have been carried over from the previous year (see also 4.1).

Actions must have:

- An effective way of measuring impact
- A realistic timescale
- Someone responsible for ensuring the action is progressed and completed.
- Unique ID.

5. AGREEING THE ARC

Before submission Partner Institutions should seek feedback on the draft ARC report from:

- Students via STUDENT STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEES (or equivalent) and internal meetings (there should be at least one representative from each course under review and the total number of student representatives should not outnumber academic staff)
- External Examiners
- Academic staff
- Additional academic staff involved in the delivery of joint courses where there are more than 10 students registered (including student representation).

6. USEFUL CONTACTS

While working on the ARC report, Partners may wish to contact the following staff or teams for additional information, advice or support:

- Deans of Partnerships (via dop@essex.ac.uk)
- Partnerships (via partnerships@essex.ac.uk)
- Quality and Academic Development (via quad@essex.ac.uk)
- Postgraduate Research Education team (via pgresearch@essex.ac.uk)

7. CONTINUAL REVIEW

Progress reports and updates against actions in the ARC action plan should be considered at relevant Partnership Quality and Development meetings. This will inform the next academic year's ARC report.

8. RECORD KEEPING

Partner Institutions should ensure that:

- Copies are kept of all papers forming part of the ARC report, including any feedback from the Deans. Evidence cited in the ARC should be available on request.
- Copies of the ARC report and any follow-up activity should be kept by the Partner Institution for 6 years.