

# HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY STRATEGY AND POLICY

<b>POLICY VERSION NUMBER</b>	01
<b>MEMBER OF STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY</b>	Head of Department responsible for Higher Education

RECORD OF REVISIONS TO POLICY		
DATE	DETAILS	APPROVED BY

<b>Date of current policy</b>	
<b>Date of corresponding Impact Assessment</b>	
<b>Policy review date</b>	
<b>Review to be approved by</b>	

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## Introduction

The Higher Education quality cycle operates in three stages;

- The Programme and Curriculum design Stage
- The Operational Stage
- The Strategic review stage.

Each part reflects the nature and annual academic cycle in terms of design, delivery, assessment and review. It takes a multi-dimensional approach to quality, drawing together several performance and quality indicators that ensure that each programme is monitored systematically both throughout the academic year and annually. It seeks to give due regard to the UK Quality Code as an essential set of external reference points.

Barnfield College seeks to create excellent learning opportunities for all students the college recognises the unique learning needs of student cohort and that they are likely to be drawn from non-traditional higher education backgrounds. This may include students who have few traditional academic qualifications, substantial work and or family commitments or may be returning to study after some years in employment. All students and their experiences are valued and are seen to make a positive contribution to the programme.

Higher Education is resourced using the same model as the college's core curriculum; each year strategic targets are set and agreed with HEIs, in consequence to this Heads of Department allocate resources to ensure that the programmes are delivered securely and with academic rigour.

The resourcing of support services is implemented through a cross college model where need is identified both annually and on an ongoing basis and is met by the Head of the individual service area.

## **Programme and Curriculum Design Stage**

The purpose of this stage is to ensure that the higher education strategy is implemented, ensuring cohesive and systematic development of higher education provision.

### Persons responsible

This stage of the Quality Process is managed by the Higher Education Steering group including the Vice Principal (Curriculum), Heads of Department, Support Service Heads and the nominated student representative(s)

In most circumstances the following process is followed:

1. Market need is identified through liaison with existing level three provision, local employers, subject sector organisations, the local authorities and local/national fora
2. Existing local and national provision is considered both in terms of its capacity to meet the identified demand
3. The learning needs of the likely students are identified and considered in terms of curriculum design and pedagogy
4. Partnerships with HEIs are considered and existing provision and progression routes are explored
5. Resourcing implications

On completion of the above steps the HE Steering Group make a decision whether or not to pursue a given programme of study.

### Operational Stage

The purpose of this stage is to ensure that there are the best possible learning opportunities for students, that all assessment takes place in compliance with the academic regulations of the awarding body and the in recognition of the FHEQ and that all information made available to students and employers is full and accurate.

### Persons Responsible

This stage of the Quality Process is managed by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Head of Department responsible for Higher Education.

The focus for this stage of the quality cycle is to ensure the quality of student opportunities, academic standards and full and accurate public information.

## Key Documents

1. The HE Learning and Teaching Policy
2. The Assessment Strategy
3. The Public Information Publishing Policy

The operation and effectiveness of each policy and/or strategy document is managed by the Head of Department responsible for Higher Education.

The operation and effectiveness of these strategies and procedures is monitored constantly through the college's quality reporting system. These are used to methodically inform the content and actions of the individual Programme Annual Reviews and ultimately the whole college Self-Evaluation Document.

This report is then used at a strategic level for the purposes of reflection and to inform future direction.

## The Quality of Learning Opportunities

The quality of learning opportunities is managed in several ways;

### Key Document

- Learning and Teaching Strategy for Higher Education
- The expectations and ethos of teaching are laid down in the Learning and Teaching Policy for Higher Education; the effectiveness of this is measured through the college's Observation of Teaching Schedule.
- The relevance of the programme content, quality of teaching and assessment methods is gained through feedback from students throughout the year. This occurs on the completion of each module and annually through the student feedback mechanism this is augmented by the student annual course evaluation.
- A similar model is used for employer/mentor feedback where a range of employers are specifically targeted for feedback.
- The resourcing of the curriculum, both in terms of staffing and learning centre resources, is systematically managed at a strategic level and student and staff views are sought with reference to the adequacy of this provision.

Process	First informs	Then informs	Final reference document
Observation of teaching schedules		Programme Annual Review and Staff Development	Self-Evaluation Document
Module student evaluations	Annual Module Review	Programme Annual Review and Staff Development	Self-Evaluation Document
Annual Student Course Evaluations		Programme Annual Review and Staff Development	Self-Evaluation Document
Employer Feedback	Annual Module Review	Programme Annual Review	Self-Evaluation Document

## The Quality of Standards

### Key Documents

- **The Assessment Strategy**
- **The HEI Moderation Reports**
- **The External Examiners' reports**

The academic standards are managed in several ways; internally academic standards are primarily managed through the **Assessment Strategy**, this document details the underlying philosophy and processes of assessment, and it provides a consistent framework for assessment decisions and ensures they are recorded fully and accurately.

There are self-checking systems in place to ensure that the integrity of assessment is efficiently monitored. It details the requirements of second-marking and awarding body moderation and periodic cross college sampling. Reports generated from the Assessment Strategy systematically generate robust information for staff development and self-assessment purposes.

The Assessment Strategy is augmented by tutor led module reviews which generate useful critical information that informs long and shorter term information. Externally they are managed through the **HEIs moderation** processes which generate written reports on the quality and standards of assessment judgments.

The **External Examiners'** reports are received at least once each year and its findings are considered in the PAR.

Method	Informs	Strategic document
Whole college standardisation	Staff development	Self-evaluation document
Periodic Sampling	Programme Annual Review Staff development	Self-evaluation document
Second Marking Report	Module Review Programme Annual Review Staff development	Self-evaluation document
HEI Moderator Report	Module Review Programme Annual Review Staff development	Self-evaluation document
External Examiner report	Module Review Programme Annual Review	Self-evaluation document

## ***Public Information***

### **Key Document**

Higher Education Publishing Policy

Public information is considered to be an essential aspect of the students' college experience, it enables the students and employers to make informed decisions and participate in the programme effectively by the use of full and accurate information that is published in a timely way.

To this end the college has developed a publishing policy which seeks to manage the quantity and nature of publications. Any judgements made with regard to the effectiveness of the information made available needs to have the students' perception at its centre.

The effectiveness of the public information is managed through the learner voice which is collected periodically (See learner voice strategy) and annually through the use of annual student feedback. This is further commented on by the course tutor using the Module Evaluation and the information from this document it taken forward into the Programme Annual Review.



## ***Strategic review stage***

### **Persons responsible**

This stage of the Quality Process is managed by the Governors, Principal, Vice Principals, Head of Cross-College Higher Education and Heads of Department where Higher Education courses operate or are likely to operate.

### **Key documents**

Programme Annual Reviews  
Self-Evaluation Document  
Documents in relation to Market Intelligence

This is the point at which the delivery of Higher Education programmes are considered holistically; based on the information available from the key documents the following issues are considered;

- issues with regard to the programme as a whole,
- changing or merging markets focusing on local, regional and supra-regional need
- resources
- College's strategic plans for Higher Education

The College Higher Education forum considers this information carefully and uses it to inform subsequent decisions.