

Programme Evaluation Guidance

Introduction

This guidance is for Programme Directors. It aims to outline what Programme Evaluation is, why it is important and how you can put the [Policy on Student Evaluation of Teaching and Learning](#) into practice for your Programme. This guidance, whilst not mandatory, is recommended as good practice and will help you to align your evaluation with [University strategic priorities](#) and provide evidence to meet the needs of other internal and/or external Quality Assurance processes.

What is Programme Evaluation

Programme Evaluation is a way to evaluate programmes holistically from the student perspective once they have had sufficient time and experience to reflect upon their programme as a whole. It aims to obtain feedback from a diverse range of students on the Programme.

Modular and Mid-modular evaluation enable us to understand students' experience of specific modules, and NSS/UKES/PTES results enable us to understand students' broad experience of studying at UoR. Programme Evaluation goes beyond these processes to understand students' experience at the level of the programme.

Why is Programme Evaluation important?

Programme Evaluation provides an opportunity to **meaningfully enhance practice by listening and responding proactively to the student voice**. It provides a formal means to:

- **Engage students in dialogue**
- **Identify and celebrate success**
- **Promote best practice and learn from each other**
- Reflect and **consider areas for enhancement**
- Use the **student voice** as a powerful **driver** for **change**
- **Communicate** how feedback has been acted on
- **Articulate impact** of any curricular and co-curricular activities/enhancements

Putting policy into practice

| | What the policy says (getting the basics in place) | Putting it into practice (top tips to help you achieve this) |
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| When to evaluate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually, towards end of each programme (to be determined by the Programme Director) When students will have had sufficient experiences to reflect In time to report to the final Board of Studies of the academic year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise student engagement by utilising existing, or creating new, timetabled opportunities (e.g. a lecture, a dissertation showcase event) Be mindful of NSS/UKES/PTES windows and avoid barriers to engagement (e.g. exams/assessment deadlines) Consider the T&L Operational Timelines in terms of implementing enhancements |
| Who to involve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Directors are responsible for ensuring their programme/s are evaluated Oversight rests with the SDTL Students must be involved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather feedback that captures the views of a diverse range of students Empower Student Reps to take an active role in the process to maximise the diversity of student voice Involve your wider programme team for greater collective ownership of the process Work collaboratively with staff and students from combined programmes, programmes with shared teaching and/or branch campuses where appropriate |
| What to evaluate | <p>The focus should be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> coherence & integration across modules progression through the programme inclusivity e.g. range & balance of pedagogic approaches and assessment degree of flexibility students have to tailor their programme (where appropriate) impact of activities such as placements, field trips and study abroad development of graduate attributes how programme learning outcomes have been met for all students extent to which the programme meets the needs of all students | <p>Capitalise on the process to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sense of existing student feedback (e.g. NSS, PTES, UKES) Reflect how individual initiatives/activities contribute towards impact at a programme level and connect to University strategic priorities (e.g. Curriculum Framework Review) Establish a baseline from which you can monitor and systematically evaluate ongoing enhancement activities Provide evidence to meet the needs of other internal and/or external Quality Assurance processes (e.g. AQAR, TEF) |
| How to evaluate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structure and method of evaluation of programmes is flexible depending on the nature of the information and feedback to be ascertained, and the form of student engagement that is most appropriate | <p>Recruit a group of students who could support and work with you and your programme team to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify themes arising from existing student feedback and prioritise where further exploration/feedback is needed Co-design an approach to engage the diverse student body in dialogue with the identified themes <p>Working in partnership with a wider sample of students on your programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather further feedback from a diverse range of students to identify strengths and areas for enhancement Problem solve and co-create recommendations to feed into the action plan Discuss and agree plans for closing the feedback loop |
| Reporting/ Closing the feedback loop | <p>Programme Directors must prepare a short Summary Report for wider circulation. This will be reviewed at the final Board of Studies (BoS) of the academic year and an Action Plan agreed to feed into AQAR and SBTL. Action plan should be shared with students to keep them updated on progress.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Closing the Feedback Loop Guidance Co-present action plan to relevant stakeholders (e.g. School leadership group, SSLCs, BoS, SBTLSE) Communicate the Impact with the wider team, students and beyond (e.g. 'Together we have', CoPs/ T&L Exchange) |

Making use of Existing Student Feedback

Before gathering new data, you should draw on student feedback that already exists. Doing this in partnership with your students will help you begin to make sense of existing data, identify areas for further exploration, and prioritise areas in which to gather further student feedback.

In partnership with students you could ask the following questions:

- What do we know already about our programme?
- How do we know this? What is the evidence?
- What else do we need to know?
- How can we find out?

You could facilitate and capture the outputs from this using a [dialogue sheet](#).

As part of your conversation, synthesise and explore existing sources of student feedback to provide rich insights regarding students' experiences of a programme. The following table outlines existing student feedback and details where they can be accessed as appropriate:

| Source of Student Feedback | How it may help |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-module • Module Evaluation | Identify trends and themes arising across cohorts |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSLC • RUSU's Rep • Online Student Impact Evaluation (ROSIE) tool • BoS/SBTLSE | Recent insight towards issues and best practice within your programmes as reported by student reps |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKES Results- See Annex 1 to identify relevant questions. | <p>UKES questions capture the extent to which students have engaged with the Curriculum Framework Graduate Attributes.</p> <p>Given the low response rate, there is currently no dashboard for UKES. You can, however, view the summary UKES report here. This gives you information about the headline results as well as a breakdown of response rates by School.</p> <p>If your area has a particularly high response rate you could consider making use of the rich qualitative comments. These can be requested from PSO. Note if your area has a response rate below the publication threshold, they will be unavailable.</p> <p>Anonymised qualitative comments are already sent to your Head of School and School Director for Teaching and Learning so you could also ask them for access.</p> <p>Raw comments must not be discussed with students to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, but you could use themes within comments to shape discussions or topics explored when gathering further data.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSS Results- See Annex 1 to identify relevant questions. | <p>In addition to the core questions, each year the University asks a range of optional questions which can be particularly relevant to Programme Evaluation.</p> <p>NSS optional questions currently capture coherence and integration across modules, range and balance of pedagogic approaches, degree of flexibility students have to tailor their programme and impact of placements where appropriate.</p> |

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| | <p>Core and Optional survey data is available at School/Department level on the NSS Results Dashboard. If your area currently has a high response rate, you may wish to view the results to the optional questions at Programme level. If so, contact PSO.</p> <p>From July 2020, the dashboard will include the break-down of optional responses at Programme/Course level where the publication threshold has been met.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PTES Results- See Annex 1 to identify relevant questions. | <p>PTES questions can help you explore postgraduates' experience of their programme. Data is available at School/Department/Programme level where the publication thresholds have been met.</p> <p>You should note that for some programmes where minimum response rates have not been met, there will be no data to display.</p> <p>The PTES Results Dashboard is available here.</p> <p>Whilst noting the typically low response rates, this can provide an indication of feeling across a programme and may provide a useful starting point for areas to consider further.</p> <p>Anonymised qualitative comments are already sent to your Head of School and School Director for Teaching and Learning so you could also ask them for access.</p> <p>Raw comments must not be discussed with students to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, but you could use themes within comments to shape discussions or topics explored when gathering further data.</p> |

Gathering new data

Having identified themes arising from existing data, prioritise areas for further exploration in partnership with your students to enhance your understanding and inform your action planning.

It is recommended to co-design your methodology in partnership with students and work together to identify which method will be best to gather the data needed. You could utilise existing opportunities e.g. themed SSLC meetings, focus groups, workshops, online surveys, surveys in class, or a combination of methods. You could also create opportunities for student-led methods. For example, student moderated focus groups and use of the Rep Online Student Impact Evaluation tool ([ROSIE](#)) for Student Reps to collate feedback from peers.

For more information, see the methods tab on the [E&I website](#).

You should also consider the [Principles of Evaluation](#) and bear these in mind when planning your methods.

Top Tips for Engaging Students 'CREATE'

- **Communication**- utilise lecture shout-outs, emails to students, Student Rep networks, Academic Tutoring meetings, Academic Societies
- **Reward and incentivise**- provide lunch and offer hours towards the RED Award. If making payment for focus group/workshop attendance, this can be made by [Campus Jobs](#)
- **Embed**- underpin your approach to Programme Evaluation using the [Principles of Partnership](#)
- **Accessibility**- gather views that capture the diversity of experience of students in your cohort, create opportunities with which all students can engage. e.g. an online workshop or timetabled activities for when students are already on campus
- **Transparency**- articulate how Programme Evaluation will benefit students and set clear expectations for what their involvement will be
- **Engagement**- active collaboration with the wider programme team can foster a sense of belonging

Action Planning and Next Steps

As part of Programme Evaluation, you are required to create an action plan. This will include the steps you are putting in place to enhance provision within your programme. You should ensure that you make the actions within your plan specific, achievable and time-bound, and ensure that you will be able to measure impact following the actions taken.

Action plans are best when co-created with students. This encourages colleagues and students to work together towards shared goals, creating positive change that is meaningful and sustainable. Having shared responsibility and accountability for monitoring progress ensures students' views and opinions about the course are valued and makes it clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted upon. See [Closing the Feedback Loop Guidance](#).

To monitor and evaluate the success of planned changes, it is important to consider evaluation at the design stage of the action plan and any changes/initiatives, before they are implemented. This will enable you to put an evaluation plan in place and thus make it easier to assess impact of actions upon completion.

The institutional [Evaluation and Impact Framework website](#) contains a suite of resources and guides to help you plan and conduct successful evaluation.

The Evaluation and Impact Team are available to meet or speak with you either individually or as a group to discuss your approach towards evaluation and provide advice and guidance as required.

For Teaching and Learning please contact [Mr Ed White](#).

For Student Support and Development please contact [Dr Winnie Wu](#).

This resource is updated annually. If you find any broken links, please notify cqsd-ade@reading.ac.uk.

Version 1.0

Annex 1

Programme Evaluation: Relevant questions in already existing student surveys.

| Area of focus | NSS | UKES | PTES | |
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| Coherence and integration across modules | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSS Core 6. My course has provided me with opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics. NSS Optional B4.1 All of the compulsory modules are relevant to my course. NSS Optional B4.3 The modules of my course form a coherent integrated whole. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UKES 8a. During the current academic year, about how often have you... Combined ideas from different modules when completing assignments | | |
| Progression through the programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSS Core 10. Feedback on my work has been timely. NSS Core 11. I have received helpful comments on my work. | | | |
| Inclusivity e.g. Range and balance of pedagogic approaches and assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSS Core 8. The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance. NSS Core 9. Marking and assessment has been fair. NSS Optional B7.2 The range and balance of approaches to teaching has helped me to learn. | | | |
| Degree of flexibility students have to tailor their programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSS Optional B4.2 There is an appropriate range of options to choose from on my course. | | | |
| Impact of activities such as placements, field trips and study abroad | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSS Optional B5.1 I received sufficient support and advice from my institution about the organisation of my placements. NSS Optional B5.2 My placements were valuable in helping my learning. NSS Optional B5.3 My placements have helped me to develop my skills in relation to my course. NSS Optional B5.4 My placements have helped me to develop my general life skills. NSS Optional B5.5 The taught part of my course was good preparation for my placements. NSS Optional B7.5 Practical activities on my course have helped me to learn. | | | |
| Extent to which all students have demonstrated Programme Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Framework Graduate Attributes | Mastery of the discipline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSS Core 7. My course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt. NSS Optional B7.4 My learning has benefited from modules that are informed by current research. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UKES 8b. During the current academic year, about how often have you... Connected your learning to real-world problems or issues UKES 8f. During the current academic year, about how often have you... Connected ideas from your course to your prior experience and knowledge | |
| | Skills in research and enquiry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSS Optional B7.4 My learning has benefited from modules that are informed by current research. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UKES Optional 13a. During the current academic year, how much has your course emphasised... Learning about the methods of research and analysis in your subject UKES Optional 13b. During the current academic year, how much has your course emphasised... Learning about the outcomes of current research in your subject | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PTES G3. My research skills have developed during my course PTES G5. I have been encouraged to think about what skills I need to develop for my career |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKES Optional 13c. During the current academic year, how much has your course emphasised... Formulating and exploring your own questions, problems or scenarios • UKES Optional 13d. During the current academic year, how much has your course emphasised... Doing research (such as working on your own research project, or working on a research project with staff) • UKES Optional 17a-d. How much has your overall student experience contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in... (17a) Writing clearly and effectively, (17b) Speaking clearly and effectively, (17c) Thinking critically and analytically, (17d) Analysing numerical and statistical information | |
| | Personal effectiveness and self-awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSS Optional B1.1 The course has helped me to present myself with confidence. • NSS Optional B1.2 My communication skills have improved. • NSS Optional B1.3 As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKES 8c. During the current academic year, about how often have you... Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue • UKES 10. During the current academic year, how much has your course emphasised taking responsibility for your own learning? • UKES Optional 17e-i. How much has your overall student experience contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in... (17e) Acquiring employability skills (e.g. skills to help you get a job such as CV writing or career planning), (17f) Becoming an independent learner, (17g) Being innovative and creative, (17h) Working effectively with others, (17i) Developing or clarifying personal values or ethics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTES G1. As a result of the course I am more confident about independent learning • PTES G2. My confidence to be innovative or creative has developed during my course • PTES G4. My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my course • PTES G6. As a result of the course I feel better prepared for my future career |
| | Global engagement and multi-cultural awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSS Core 21. I feel part of a community of staff and students. • NSS Core 22. I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKES 8d. During the current academic year, about how often have you... Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective • UKES Optional 17j-l. How much has your overall student experience contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in... (17j) Understanding people of other backgrounds (economic, racial/ethnic, political, religious, nationality etc.), (17k) Exploring complex real-world problems, (17l) Being an informed and active citizen | |
| Extent to which the programme meets the needs of all students | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSS Core 3. The course is intellectually stimulating. • NSS Core 4. My course has challenged me to achieve my best work. • NSS Core 23. I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course. • NSS Core 24. Staff value students' views and opinions about the course. • NSS Core 25. It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on. • NSS Core 27. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKES Optional 15b. During the current academic year, how much have you been encouraged to... work with staff to make improvements to your course • UKES Optional 15c. During the current academic year, how much have you been encouraged to... work with staff to evaluate teaching and assessment practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTES A3. The course is intellectually stimulating. • PTES A4. The course has enhanced my academic ability • PTES E5. I am encouraged to be involved in decisions about how my course is run |