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| MEMORANDUM | | | |
| To: | Chairs of Boards of Studies  Chairs of Graduate School Boards  Members of the Coordinating Group for Supplementary Programmes | FROM: | **Professor John Robinson**  **Chair of Teaching Committee**  Direct Line: (01904) 323487  E-mail: john.robinson@york.ac.uk |
| CC: | Departmental Administrators  Members of UTC |  |  |
| July 2013 | |  |  |

**Annual Programme Review**

***APR 2012/13***

Please find enclosed the APR pro forma and guidance for reflecting on academic year 2012/13. An electronic version of all the documents is available on the Academic Support Office web pages at: <http://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/monitoring-and-review/apr/>).

**Timing**

The APR process reflecting on the 2012/13 academic year will be completed in the Autumn Term, with departments submitting APR documentation to UTC by 29 November 2013, so that it can be considered by UTC members. This will enable us to provide departments with feedback from UTC early in the Spring Term.

***Key features of the APR***

I would like to stress some of the key features of the APR at York:

* The principal objectives of the APR are to ensure that academic standards are maintained and to improve programme quality through the engagement of staff and students in reflection and action planning. This is a continuing process, and should not be confined to the APR meeting. The role of the APR meeting should be to serve as a focal point for (i) consolidating the various discussions on programme quality that take place in different fora in a department, and (ii) formulating a programme of action to address identified issues and build upon identified strengths. It should be useful for the department and not just an exercise required to comply with University Policy.
* APR has a quality assurance function, in that it enables UTC to ensure that all departments are properly reviewing their programmes and addressing issues that could affect learning and teaching quality. This includes discussion of External Examiner views, as noted below, and of student feedback.
* Student representatives should be fully involved in the APR process. The Chair of Board of Studies should meet the student representatives prior to the APR meeting(s) to allow them an opportunity to identify the particular issues that they would like to see discussed at the meeting and to ensure that they feel prepared and able to contribute. Student representatives (covering all provision) should attend the relevant meeting(s). Last year YUSU and the GSA were able to support departments in forming student focus groups. Unfortunately, this service cannot be provided this year.
* The APR covers undergraduate, taught postgraduate and postgraduate research programmes of study and we expect to see reference to all levels. In particular, I would draw your attention to the need to refer to postgraduate research programmes of study, as it was noted by UTC members that few responses made reference to these programmes last year.

**External Examiners’ reports**

The external examiner reports should inform the APR reflections, with any significant issues being included in the APR report**.** Please note that while the undergraduate external examiners reports will be available to inform an early autumn APR meeting, the reports from the PGT externals may not yet have been received. In this case, the **minutes of externals’ comments from the PGT Boards of Examiners meetings should be used**. If your postgraduate boards take place after the APR meeting, then please remember to carry forward discussion of any points raised to the following year’s APR meeting with appropriate updates on the actions taken in the meantime to address these issues. Please do share the PG Externals’ reports with your student representatives when they become available.

**Logs of Issues raised by External Examiners**

All departments are required to maintain a ‘log’ of all issues raised by external examiners, how they have responded to them, and how feedback on these responses was provided to the external examiners. Blank logs are enclosed with this memo, and can be found on the Monitoring and Review website. The logs for undergraduate programmes should be sent to the Academic Support Office by the APR deadline of **Friday** **29 November 2013** (end week 9 Aut). Logs for postgraduate programmes should be sent to the Academic Support Office by **Friday 28 February 2014** (end week 8 Spr). The External Examiners logs are checked and reported on to University Teaching Committee.

**Your completed APR pro forma and undergraduate external examiner logs should be submitted to the Academic Support Office (**[**david.clarke@york.ac.uk**](mailto:david.clarke@york.ac.uk)**) by Friday 29 November 2013. Please contact your departmental Teaching Quality Support Officer for further information or advice.**