

## **Faculty Review**

In what follows 'Faculty' is taken to include any academic Faculty, Department, School and Centre in the University.

### **WHAT IS A FACULTY REVIEW?**

A Faculty Review is a rigorous, systematic, objective, impartial, expert-based examination, evaluation and self-evaluation of how effectively a Faculty is working, as part of the ongoing pursuit of higher levels of achievement and quality in the university, and in the service of Faculty improvement. A Faculty Review includes:

- Preparation and submission of a self-evaluation document;
- Review of the self-evaluation document by the Faculty Review Panel;
- Collection and submission of additional documentation to the Faculty Review Panel;
- Scrutiny of the documentation by the Faculty Review Panel;
- A visit by the Faculty Review Panel to the Faculty and its officers;
- The production of a report that comments on judgements about the Faculty, the strengths of the Faculty, areas for improvement, and recommendations for further action.
- Following the receipt of the report, a follow-up action plan for the Faculty's development.

Faculty Review addresses questions such as:

- What are we doing, why, how and how well?
- How high is the quality of the Faculty?
- How do we know?
- How can the Faculty be improved and the improvement sustained?

It addresses major questions such as:

1. What does the Faculty say it is doing and values about its work?

2. What *procedures* does the Faculty have for planning, monitoring, reviewing, developing what it says it does and values about the work of the Faculty?
3. What *processes* does the Faculty have for planning, monitoring, reviewing, developing what it says it does and values about the work of the Faculty?
4. How does the Faculty know and inform itself and stakeholders if these procedures and processes are *working/being used*?
5. Are the procedures and processes in place, operating and *effective* in meeting the Faculty's stated mission, values, purposes, policies, self-evaluation contents and criteria for the effectiveness of the Faculty?
6. How does the Faculty *inform itself and stakeholders* about the procedures and processes for planning, monitoring, reviewing, developing what it says it does and values about the work of the Faculty?
7. How does the Faculty inform itself/stakeholders about how these procedures and processes for the Faculty are effective in terms of *outcomes and quality* (i.e. impact analysis)?
8. How high is the quality of the Faculty and its elements?
9. What benchmarks and benchmarking does the Faculty operate?
10. How has the Faculty *improved* its quality over time, and how do we know?
11. What recommendations can be made for needed *interventions and developments*?
12. *How and where* can the quality of the Faculty be improved and enhanced, *by whom* and in what *time frames*?

The intention is to show that the Faculty has proper procedures and processes for quality assurance, that these are actually operating, that they are making a positive difference, and that they are impacting on the work of the Faculty. Within Faculty Review, self-evaluation has a primary purpose of bringing about improvement, to ensure that a Faculty is meeting its goals, and has procedures for informing itself of this, and that its statements of quality are evidence-based. It is designed to identify and diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of the Faculty in a way that can bring about improvement, i.e. its intention is constructive and formative. The Australian Universities Quality Agency (2008: 5) indicates other several possible intended outcomes of self-evaluation within Faculty Review:

- 'Verifying that processes are in place, and whether these are operating effectively
- Determining whether existing policies and procedures are effective in meeting institutional goals, and identifying any gaps
- Providing information that may not normally be evident (such as localised innovative practices in teaching and learning)
- Enhancing understanding (across staff, student and/or other stakeholders) of organisational processes and outcomes
- 'Reality testing' achievements toward strategic goals Increasing engagement with change
- Disclosing weaknesses and forcing confrontation
- Promoting honest communication
- Encouraging benchmarking, internally and/or externally
- Providing a base for ongoing comparison and benchmarking
- Identifying activities that are misaligned with organizational goals/objectives
- Providing evidence of quality processes in place
- Promoting empowerment and engagement of participants
- Promoting an evidence-based culture
- Promoting learning
- Enabling self-identification of improvement gaps and development of associated strategies to address these prior to external audit.'

(Adams, R., Strong, J., Mattick, L.E., McManus, M.E., Matthews, K.E. and Foster, J. (2008) *Self-review for Higher Education Institutions*. Melbourne: Australian Universities Quality Agency)

A Faculty Review is conducted by internal members of the university and by external reviewers. It comprises a self-evaluation by the Faculty and the Faculty committee(s), together with a review by members of the university who are not from the Faculty, and who include senior officers of the university.

A 'Faculty' Review encompasses, amongst other areas:

- (a) The mission, goals, targets and objectives of the Faculty;
- (b) Programs and courses in the Faculty;
- (c) Leadership and management of the Faculty;
- (d) Teaching, learning and supervision;

- (e) Research and publication in the Faculty;
- (f) Staff development in the Faculty;
- (g) Student-related matters;
- (h) Staffing and staff-related matters;
- (i) Internal and external relations with partners, the community and stakeholders;
- (j) The resources in the Faculty;
- (k) Strategic planning and implementation in the Faculty;
- (l) Challenges, opportunities and directions; quality assurance in the Faculty; and
- (m) Improvements and developments for actions planning in the Faculty.

A 'program' is defined here as an entire set of courses leading to an award.

A 'course' is defined here as a single element of a program to which an identifying code has been assigned.

'Examination' is defined here as any formal assessment, examination, and/or evaluation of performance which contributes to the grading of students in a course or Faculty.

'Assessment' here is defined as the process of reaching a decision on the marks/grades to be awarded to students. It also includes the provision of formative feedback to students where appropriate (see also below: releasing marks).

An 'award' here is defined as the degree/certificate/diploma awarded, together with its classification (where appropriate).

A Faculty Review involves: evaluation and self-evaluation; internal peer review; the involvement of external parties with the appropriate disciplinary expertise; and student, alumni, faculty and administrative input.