UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

POLICY ON PROFESSIONAL, STATUTORY AND REGULATORY BODIES

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Policy on Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies

1. Definition

1.1 Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) is a general term used to refer to the bodies that set and monitor the standards and outcomes of programmes leading to professional accreditation.

1.2 PSRB 'accreditation' or 'approval' is a 'kite mark' which demonstrates a professional standard. Moreover

- it may be the only means of obtaining a licence to practise a particular profession; and/or
- it can confer full or partial exemption from professional qualifications, demonstrating the attainment of a particular range of occupational and professional skills.

2. Policy

2.1 The University encourages Colleges/Schools to seek and maintain all appropriate PSRB accreditation or similar recognition for its programmes.

3. Records

3.1 Academic Services maintains an institutional record of all programmes accredited or recognised by PSRBs. The records identify the details of the bodies by which the programmes are accredited or recognised, dates of reviews and other relevant material.

4. Procedures

General

4.1 The accreditation of a programme by a PSRB is time delimited, with review and re-accreditation for the next period. Colleges should inform Academic Services on an annual basis of reviews in the forthcoming academic year so that the central record is maintained, including reporting mechanisms.

4.2 The University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (UQAEC) receives, on an annual basis, a summary of expected engagements with PSRBs for the forthcoming academic year; monitors progress and receives a final report at the end of the year.

4.3 Due to the differing nature of processes and procedures operated by PSRBs, the responsibility for the preparation of the review documentation will lie with the Colleges. The Head of College will sign off the documentation, unless an institutional signature is required. Colleges will seek advice from Academic Services on quality assurance and enhancement issues and for other institutional support as appropriate.

4.4 Confirmation, using the Academic Services pro forma, that the accreditation

documentation has been submitted to the PSRB should be completed.

Accreditation Visit

4.5 Most PSRBs publish detailed guidance notes and those personnel involved from the College must ensure that they are completely familiar with the PSRB requirements for accreditation, in particular in relation to curriculum and resources.

4.6 All staff who are taking part in the review must be adequately briefed and clear about their role.

Reports

4.7 The relevant School committee, eg Education or Learning and Teaching Committee, considers the PSRB report following a visit, including the areas for further consideration and/or recommendations, and agrees a response/action plan.

4.8 The report, including the areas for further consideration and/or recommendations, and a response/action plan must be submitted to the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC) for consideration. The College QAEC confirms that it is content with the School's responses/action plan, and if not engages in dialogue with the Head of School to resolve issues.

Note: Any serious concerns arising from the reports, where accreditation is anything other than full approval or where accreditation is withdrawn following a PSRB visit should be reported to the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality and Students) immediately.

4.9 The full PSRB report, together with the School's written response/action plan, is submitted to the University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

4.10 UQAEC maintains institutional overview of PSRB activity, identifying good practice for dissemination, ensuring any issues are dealt with appropriately, and monitoring any action taken in response to PSRB reports.

4.11 Where there is a PSRB follow up visit, the response must be checked against the previous submission and report to ensure consistency in the information provided.

4.12 PSRB outcomes and recommendations should be reflected in College/School annual monitoring and periodic review. Full documentation should be retained so that it forms part of the evidence base for these and other quality and monitoring activities.

Legal Agreements

4.13 Should accreditation visits result in a legal agreement between the University and the PSRB, this must be handled through Academic Services and Legal Services.

Complaints

4.14 Complaints, made by a PSRB or complaints which relate to or arise out of an accreditation issue or some contractual obligation into which the University has entered, will be handled by the Academic Quality Unit.