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 of study 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 of study.

3. Records

3.1 Academic Services maintains an institutional record of all programmes of study 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. On an annual basis, Academic Services will provide Colleges with a spreadsheet setting out the expected accreditation visits for the forthcoming academic year for update and to ensure that the central record is maintained.

4.2 The University's Quality Assurance Committee receives, on an annual basis, a summary of engagements with PSRBs for the past academic year in order to monitor quality and standards.

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 College will sign off the documentation, unless an institutional signature is required. Colleges may seek advice from Academic

Services on quality assurance and enhancement issues and for other institutional support as appropriate.

Accreditation Visit

4.4 Most PSRBs publish detailed guidance notes and those staff 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.

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

Reports from Accreditation Visits

4.6 As soon as the report following the PSRB accreditation visit has been received by the College or School, a copy should be sent to the Academic Policy and Standards Team, Registry which will forward it to the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) in order to support the University's oversight of PSRBs. This is especially important should any serious concerns arise from the report, where, for example, accreditation is anything other than full approval or where accreditation is being withdrawn following a PSRB visit

4.7 The relevant School committee, e.g. Quality 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 Committee, which has responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement matters, for consideration. The College Committee 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.

4.9 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.

4.10 PSRB reports will form an appendix to the School Self Evaluation Document prepared for the Vice-Chancellor's Integrated Review. The School will be expected to provide actions in response to areas identified for improvement through such reviews, and an evaluation of the processes in place to assure the maintenance and enhancement of academic quality and students, for example, including the effectiveness of procedures for considering and responding to PSRB reports. Full documentation should be retained so that it forms part of the evidence base for this and other quality and monitoring activities.

Legal Agreements

4.11 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

4.12 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 Services.