



University of  
St Andrews

# Annual Academic Monitoring handbook

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<b>Purpose</b>	This handbook provides guidance on the academic monitoring process, including the AAM report, dialogues and the dissemination event.

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1.4	AAM handbook reviewed for 2023/24	Published	Academic Policy Officers (Quality)	April 2024

# Annual Academic Monitoring Handbook

April 2024

## 1. Introduction

This handbook provides guidance to colleagues preparing for and participating in Annual Academic Monitoring (AAM). AAM meets the requirements set out by the following external reference points:

- [SFC Guidance to colleges and universities on quality AY 2022-23 and AY 2023-24](#)
- [The UK Quality Code](#)
- [Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European HE area](#)

Feedback on this handbook is welcomed. Please send your comments to [academicmonitoring@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:academicmonitoring@st-andrews.ac.uk)

## 2. Purpose and scope of Annual Academic Monitoring

AAM is an important element of the University's approach to quality assurance and enhancement. It is a light touch process designed to:

- a) Provide assurance of the quality and standard of the learning and teaching provision.
- b) Encourage and support critical reflection.
- c) Promote dialogue on opportunities for enhancement.
- d) Identify good practice for dissemination within the institution and beyond.

All Schools and Departments participate in AAM. Each department within the School of Philosophical, Social Anthropological and Film Studies submits an AAM report. The School of Modern Languages produces a single report that covers all departments. Reflection covers all undergraduate (UG), taught postgraduate (PGT) and research postgraduate (PGR) provision including collaborative programmes, accredited and non-accredited short courses and online programmes with a commencement date pre-2023/24. The MA Combined Studies programme also falls within the scope of AAM.

Schools/Departments offering new PGT programmes from 2023/24 are required to submit an additional report for the first three years of the programme's start date and should follow the process in the handbook: [Review process for new taught postgraduate programmes](#).

AAM comprises:

- a) Completion of a report pro forma.
- b) Participation in a supportive dialogue with a subset of Academic Monitoring Group (AMG) on a three-year cycle.
- c) Attendance at a dissemination event which highlights good practice and provides an opportunity for participants to consider if/how these could be introduced within their own School/Department.

### 3. Frequency and timing of Annual Academic Monitoring

AAM operates on an annual cycle and is supplemented by a more thorough review via a six-year cycle of [University-led reviews of learning and teaching](#)

The timeline for AAM is summarised in the table:

Jan	AMG considers a summary of the previous year's AAM
Feb/Mar	AMG discusses and finalises arrangements for the AAM process including the design of the report pro forma
Mar	Academic Policy Officers (Quality) prepare documentation and liaise with colleagues in Planning
Apr	Academic Policy Officers (Quality) issue report pro forma and information on the AAM process.
Apr/Jun	School/Department hold discussions to assist in the production of the report. Reports should be approved by the Head of School and Teaching Committee. Reports should also be discussed with the School President and PG student representative(s).
Jul	Schools/Departments are provided with UG and PGT data via dashboards. Outlook invitations will be sent to the Director of Teaching, Head of School and School President for the dialogues and dissemination event.
Mid-Aug	Deadline for submission of reports. Approval of reports by the Teaching Committee can by email, if necessary.
Sept	AMG will consider the reports. As part of this analysis, the group will identify themes common across the reports and any action required to address these themes, and this will be shared with Schools/Departments via email. Topics for the dialogues and dissemination event will also be identified.
Oct	A subset of AMG holds dialogues with a selection of Schools/Departments. Any actions arising from the dialogues will be circulated to Schools/Departments. An update on any actions will be provided by Schools/Departments in the following year's AAM report.
Nov	Dissemination event held to share examples of good practice arising from the AAM reports
Feb/Mar	Good practice and any University-level actions/developments arising from the AAM process will be shared with the University's Learning and Teaching Committee and the Postgraduate Research Committee

### 4. Report

The report pro forma (Appendix 1) will be shared with Schools/Departments in April to provide ample time for consultation and completion. The report should be a focused and concise evidence-based reflective evaluation of the School/Departments learning and teaching experiences over the last academic year in relation to UG, PGT and PGR

provision including collaborative programmes, accredited and non-accredited short courses and online programmes with a commencement date pre-2023/24. The report should refer to the relevant sources of evidence referred to in this handbook. The use of bullet point format is encouraged.

## **Sources of evidence**

The Scottish Funding Council guidance states that, 'Annual monitoring should consider: themes arising from and responses to external examiner reports; internal and external student survey data; performance data on recruitment, progression and achievement; and data trends. Data is likely to be benchmarked against other areas of the institution's activities as well as equivalent provision in other institutions.' Schools/Departments are encouraged to evidence practice throughout their AAM report using the sources and data listed and/or other relevant sources of evidence. Support on the contextualisation of the data can be sought from Planning at [planningstats@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:planningstats@st-andrews.ac.uk) or from the Associate Deans/Provost Education.

## **UG and PGT data**

The following data is available in the [Information hub](#):

- Recruitment data in the [Student and entrant populations](#) file under the [School Information](#) tab.
- [NSS data](#) for 2022/23
- [Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey data](#) for 2022/23.
- Module Evaluation Questionnaire data for 2023/24 via MMS.

The following data will be available to Schools/Departments via dashboards in mid-July. Schools/Departments will be notified when the data is available.

- Module results for current year and benchmarked against previous years.
- Degree outcomes by School, Faculty and University.
- Module grade distributions, deferrals, and reassessments.
- Progression and retention data (e.g., Entry to Honours).
- Data benchmarked against equivalent provision in other institutions.

## **PGR data**

A PGR snapshot in PDF format for each School/Department is available in the [Learning and Teaching](#) tab of the [Information hub](#). This includes PGR student numbers, completion rates, outcomes of first examinations, final outcomes, progress review outcomes and completions.

The [Postgraduate Research Experience Survey data](#) for 2022/23.

## **Consideration of reports**

AMG will consider the reports in September. As part of this analysis, the group will identify themes common across the reports and any action required to address these

themes, and this will be shared with Schools/Departments via email. Topics for the dialogues and dissemination event will also be identified.

Reports are uploaded to the [Education SharePoint](#) site and are available to all University staff.

## 5. Dialogues

Each School/Department is invited to meet with a subset of AMG once every three years unless the group requests an earlier meeting. The subset of AMG will comprise: Assistant Vice-Principal (Dean of Learning and Teaching) and Provost; Associate Provost (Education); the relevant Associate Dean (Education); and Academic Policy Officer (Quality). The Students' Association Director of Education will be invited to attend the dialogues.

The three-year dialogue schedule can be found in Appendix 2. Notification of the date and time of dialogues will be communicated over the summer. Schools/Departments will be asked to confirm their attendance and to discuss the report with their School President. Once a date and time has been set for the dialogues, those unable to attend their allocated slot should email [academicmonitoring@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:academicmonitoring@st-andrews.ac.uk) at the earliest opportunity.

The 45-minute dialogues are held in October/November with four relevant School role-holders (Head of School, Director of Teaching, School President and one other colleague, e.g., Director of Taught Postgraduate Studies, Director of Research Postgraduate Studies, Exams Officer, etc.). The dialogue for the MA Combined Studies programme will be attended by the Associate Dean Students (Arts and Divinity), Access Manager from Admissions and a student representative.

Actions arising from the dialogues will be confirmed to Schools/Departments via email. An update on these actions will be requested in the following year's AAM report.

## 6. Dissemination event

The dissemination event was first introduced in response to requests that the AAM process include an opportunity for Schools/Departments to share ideas. The intended outcomes are the dissemination and adoption of good practice across the University.

AMG will identify potential topics for the dissemination event from the AAM reports. Colleagues responsible for the examples of good practice selected by AMG will be asked to deliver a five-minute presentation at the dissemination event to share their practice. Attendees will explore the topics further via group discussions.

The dissemination event will be held in November. Additional information will be shared with Schools/Departments by email.

## Appendix 1: Report pro forma

### Annual Academic Monitoring Report: AY 2023-24

School/Department:

The Annual Academic Monitoring report should be a focused and concise evidence-based **reflective** evaluation of the School/Department's learning and teaching experiences over the last academic year in relation to UG, PGT and PGR provision including collaborative programmes, online programmes and credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing short courses. **The report should refer to relevant sources of evidence.** Schools/Departments offering new PGT programmes that first commenced during 2023/24 are required to submit an additional annual report for the first three years after the programme's start date and should follow the process in the handbook: [Review process for new taught postgraduate programmes](#).

- 1. What is working well?** Please provide 2-3 concrete examples of good practice (including, where applicable, an indication of their alignment with the [Education and Student Experience Strategy](#)), that can be shared with colleagues across the University. [max 200 words]

Undergraduate  
Taught postgraduate  
Research postgraduate  
Short courses

- 2. Please provide some reflections on the main challenges the School/Department faced in terms of teaching, learning and assessment, taking into account the sources of evidence referred to in the AAM handbook.** [max 200 words]

Undergraduate  
Taught postgraduate  
Research postgraduate  
Short courses

- 3. Please detail what measure(s) the School/Department and University could jointly put in place to address these challenges** [max 200 words]

Undergraduate  
Taught postgraduate  
Research postgraduate  
Short courses

- 4. Please provide some reflections on how the School/Department receives, responds to, and acts upon student feedback. This may include feedback received through MEQs, individual feedback, SSCCs, annual progress reviews for PGR students, etc.** [max 200 words]

Undergraduate  
Taught postgraduate  
Research postgraduate  
Short courses

**5. Please provide a summary of actions that have been taken forward as a result of last year's AAM process (including any challenges referred to in your report, dialogue, if applicable and dissemination event). [max 150 words]**

- Report discussed with, and approved by, the Head of School and Teaching Committee (including the DoPG).
- Report discussed with the School President and/or PG student representatives.



## Appendix 2: Dialogue schedule: AYs 2022, 2023 and 2024

Dialogues will be held in October/November in each year.

### AY 2022

<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Classics	Computer Science
International Education Institute	Geography and SD
International Relations	Physics & Astronomy
Management	

### AY 2023

<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Economics & Finance	Chemistry
History	Graduate School
Modern Languages	Mathematics & Statistics
Music Centre	Medicine
Social Anthropology	

### AY 2024

<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Art History	Biology
Divinity	Earth & Environmental Sciences
English	Psychology & Neuroscience
Film Studies	MA Combined Studies
Philosophy	

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1.1	AAM Dialogue schedule removed from handbook. Updated dialogue schedule to be posted separately.	Published	Administrative Officer, Proctor's Office	18 March 2022
1.2	AAM handbook reviewed and refreshed for 2022/23	Published	Academic Policy Officers (Quality)	8 March 2023
1.3	AAM handbook reviewed, refreshed and reformatted for 2022/23	Published	Academic Policy Officers (Quality)	March 2023