



University of
St Andrews

Annual Academic Monitoring handbook

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Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.3	AAM handbook reviewed, refreshed and reformatted for 2022/23	Published	Academic Policy Officers (Quality)	8 March 2023

Annual Academic Monitoring Handbook

March 2023

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

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. The MA in Combined Studies also falls within the scope of AAM.

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 overleaf.

Jan	AMG considers a summary of the previous year's AAM
Feb	AMG discusses and finalises arrangements for the AAM process including the design of the report pro forma
Feb/Mar	Academic Policy Officers (Quality) prepare documentation and liaise with colleagues in Planning
Mar	Academic Policy Officers (Quality) issue report pro forma and information on the AAM process. PGR data becomes available on the Information hub.
Apr/Jun	School/Department hold discussions to assist in the production of their report
Jul	Schools/Departments provided with UG and PGT data in PDF format. 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
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 dissemination event will also be identified during the AMG meeting
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 March 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 online programmes, collaborative programmes and accredited and non-accredited short courses where applicable. The report should refer to relevant sources of evidence to support the School/Department's reflection. 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 or from the Associate Deans/Provost Education.

UG and PGT data

The following data will be provided to Schools/Departments in PDF format in mid-July:

- 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

The following data is available online:

- Recruitment data in the Student and entrant populations file on the [Information hub](#)
- [NSS data](#) (NSS data for 2022 is not available until August 2023. Schools/Departments are asked to reflect on 2021 data)

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.

Given the low response rates for Module Evaluation Questionnaires, the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey for 2021/22, Schools/Departments will not be required to reflect on this data.

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 dissemination event will also be identified during the AMG meeting.

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); Head of Education Policy

and Quality; Students' Association Director of Education; and Academic Policy Officer (Quality).

The Schools/Departments scheduled for a dialogue in 2023 and 2024 are shown in Appendix 2 of this handbook. Notification of the date and time of the dialogue 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 at the earliest opportunity.

The 45-minute dialogues are held in October/November with four relevant School role-holders (the Head of School, Director of Teaching, the School President plus one other colleague, e.g., the Director of Taught Postgraduate Studies, Director of Research Postgraduate Studies, Exams Officer, etc.). The dialogue for the MA in Combined Studies 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 2022-23 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 online programmes, collaborative programmes and accredited and non-accredited short courses, where applicable. The report should refer to relevant sources of data.

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 Strategy](#)), that can be shared with colleagues across the University.* [max 150 words]

Undergraduate
Taught postgraduate
Research postgraduate

2. Please provide some reflections on the main challenges the School/Department faced in terms of teaching, learning and assessment. [max 150 words]

Undergraduate
Taught postgraduate
Research postgraduate

3. Please detail what measure(s) the School/Department and University could jointly put in place to address these challenges [max 150 words]

Undergraduate
Taught postgraduate
Research postgraduate

4. Please briefly summarise the School/Department's reflection on the data provided regarding each of the following groups. [max 150 words]

Undergraduate
Taught postgraduate
Research postgraduate

5. Please provide some reflections on how the learning culture reset (transition from dual mode to largely in person teaching) has been received in the School/Department and how any challenges have been addressed. [max 150 words]

6. Please provide a summary of actions that have been taken forward as a result of last year's AAM process (including the 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: 2023 and 2024

October/November 2023

Economics & Finance	Chemistry
History	Graduate School
Modern Languages	Mathematics & Statistics
Music	Social Anthropology

October/November 2024

Art History	Biology
Divinity	Earth & Environmental Sciences
English	Medicine
Film Studies	Psychology & Neuroscience
Philosophy	MA Combined Studies

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
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