



**Internal Action Plan with reference to
QAA HER (AP) Review June 2019**

Reviewed by students	25 September 2019
Reviewed by Quality Action Panel	29 November 2019
Approved by Management Committee	30 September 2019
Agreed by Faculty	2 October 2019
Published on College website	12 December 2019
Updated by Quality Action Panel	29 November 2019

This document sets out Union Theological College's response to the QAA report published on 13 August 2019 - <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/quality-assurance-reports/Union-Theological-College-Belfast>

This Action Plan outlines Union Theological College's internal quality assurance process and responds to QAA recommendations considering how they will be implemented and outlining how QAA points of good practice and affirmation can be maintained and developed.

QAA HER Report June 2019 Recommendations	Action to be taken	Completion Date	Action by:	Reporting to:	Success indicators/evaluative procedures	Progress (with date) including notes of completion
1. Ensure that the lines of reporting in the governance structure are aligned with responsibilities for academic authority (Expectation A2.1)	1. Review and revise governance structure with terms of reference (ToR) for: Management Committee (MC) Teaching and Learning Panel (TLP) Quality Assurance Panel (QAP)* Academic and Student Affairs Panel (ASAP)* Higher Education Advisory Panel (HEAP)* *new committees	End of Sept 2019	MC and Faculty	Faculty and Council for Training in Ministry (CTM)	Agreement that lines of reporting for Faculty, MC and TLP clearly described ToR and membership of TLP and QAP, ASAP, and HEAP clearly described and approved Preparation of Academic Governance paper	Discussion at Faculty (12 June 2019) Discussion with Clerk and Deputy Clerk (20 June and 12 Aug 2019) Completed: Academic Governance Paper received by MC and new structure approved (30 Sept 2019)
	2. Schedule meetings for the TLP, QAP, ASAP, and HEAP	End of Sept 2019	Principal	TLP, QAP, ASAP, and HEAP	Schedule of meetings for 2019-20 prepared (13 Aug 2019)	Completed: (13 August 2019)
	3. Update as necessary all policies and procedures to	Oct 2019	QAP	Updated policies and procedures to be approved by Faculty	Updated Policies and Procedures on the Policies and Procedures section of website.	Ongoing: 29 Nov 2019

	reflect new structure				Maintaining the database of policies.	Ongoing: 11 Dec 2019
	4. Review the ToR after 18 months of operation	April 2021	MC and Faculty		Evidence that the lines of reporting in the governance structure are aligned with responsibilities for academic authority Agree any adjustments which may be required	
2. Ensure that the approval of new programmes includes scrutiny by independent external academic expertise (Expectations A3.1, A3.4)	1. Appoint Higher Education Advisory Panel (HEAP) with clear terms of reference	Sept 2019	Management Committee and Faculty	Faculty	Fully constituted HEAP which includes external expertise	Completed: HEAP membership established and approved by Faculty (19 Sept 2019).
	2. Revise the Programme Design and Review Policy (PDRP) and procedures to reflect the establishment of the HEAP	Oct 2019	Quality Assurance Panel	Revisions to be approved by Faculty	Revision of PDRP completed, approved and published on website	To commence after approval by MC on 30 September Completed: approved by Faculty and published on website (2 Oct 2019)
3. Ensure that the process for approval of new programmes and of changes to programmes	1. Create checklist template as an appendix to the PDRP in order to confirm that the	Sept 2019	Faculty (Michael McClenahan)	PTFI	Checklist completed and considered by Faculty which will review the extent to which the	Completed: Checklist completed, approved by Faculty, and added as appendix to PRDP (2 Oct 2019)

is consistently applied (Expectation B1)	procedures have been applied				processes were correctly followed	
4. Establish, implement and ensure staff and student awareness of processes for the prevention, detection and consequences of academic misconduct (Expectation B6)	1. Apply existing online academic integrity policy to all PTFI programmes	Sept 2019	Faculty	All staff and students	Policy updated, published on website, and included in all modules on the Virtual Learning Environment Clear explanation of academic integrity at Student induction	Completed: 19 Sept 2019 Completed: orientation for first years (14 Sept 2019)
	2. Academic Misconduct Procedures to be drafted and approved outlining penalties and appeals procedures	Sept 2019	Faculty and MC	PTFI, all staff and students	Academic Misconduct Procedures drafted and approved by Faculty and MC The performance of the academic integrity policy and the academic misconduct procedures will be reviewed and any necessary amendments will be made	Completed: Academic Misconduct procedures prepared (25 Sept 2019). Approved by Faculty and published on website (2 Oct 2019)
	3. Academic Integrity Policy to be updated to refer to Academic Misconduct Procedures			All staff and students	Policy updated and published on website Clear explanation of academic misconduct procedures to all staff and students	Completed: Academic Integrity Policy updated and approved by Faculty and included in all modules on VLE (2 Oct 2019)
	4. Implement use of academic integrity	Sept 2019	Prof McClenahan	Faculty and All staff and students	Acquire software and integrate with VLE	Completed: Unichack activated on VLE (18 September 2019)

	software for PTFI programmes					communicated to new students at orientation.
			Faculty	MC and ASAP	Staff training session on prevention and detection of academic misconduct	Completed: Good Practice session on VLE and Unicheck (6 Nov 2019)
			Faculty	MC and ASAP	Student session on academic misconduct to be held during first two weeks of semester	Completed: Session at meeting of student body (25 Sept 2019)
5. Establish and implement effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and review of programmes (Expectation B8, B7)	1. Ensure that periodic review timetable is clearly laid out	Sept 2019	QAP and MC	Faculty, CTM, PTFI	Approve timetable for periodic review (TLP has recommended that this be every three years)	Completed: Management Committee approve Periodic Review in June 2021 (30 Sept 2019)
	2. Establish clear dates and deadlines for each part of annual review process as a means to capture and address actions	Sept 2019	QAP	Faculty	Meeting schedule arranged and flow chart updated in PDRP	Completed: Draft schedule of meetings circulated (22 Aug 2019) Timetable for module reviews and annual programme review agreed (2 Oct 2019)
6. Establish, implement and effectively manage secure arrangements for the delivery of learning opportunities in student placements (Expectation B10)	1. Prepare a work based learning (WBL) opportunity policy	Sept 2019	Dean of Ministerial Studies and Development	Faculty and CTM, and supervising ministers	Approve the work based learning opportunity policy	Completed: WBL Policy approved by Faculty (19 Sept 2019) Approved by MC (30 Sept 2019) and published on website (1 Oct 2019)

	2. Implement and manage the WBL	Sept 2019 and ongoing	Dean of Ministerial Studies and Development	Faculty and CTM	<p>Publish on website and links in relevant modules (Homiletics and Worship) on VLE</p> <p>Communicate the policy to supervising ministers</p>	<p>Completed: 2 Oct 2019</p> <p>Completed: 19 Sept 2019</p>
	3. Implement the review policy contained with the work based learning opportunity policy.	June 2020	Dean of Ministerial Studies and Development	Faculty and MC	<p>Students achieve the said learning opportunities</p> <p>The work force development needs of PCI are achieved</p> <p>Supervisor experience taken into account with appropriate changes being made</p> <p>Student experience and support provider feedback used to review and revise placement arrangements to ensure students are supported</p>	
7. Take steps to embed the strategy for enhancement in the college's planning processes (Enhancement)	1. Clarify and make explicit the priorities for enhancement to staff, students, and all stakeholders	Sept 2019	Principal and Faculty	PTFI, MC, and Student body and other stakeholders	Annual College Report and Strategic Enhancement Action Plan prepared and approved in order to communicate the College's enhancement priorities, explicitly linking strategic decisions to quality	Completed: Annual College Report and Enhancement Plan reported to TLP (16 Sept), student body (25 Sept), QAP (27 Sept) and MC (30 Sept 2019).

					assurance processes and initiatives to support student learning.	
	2. Embed the strategy for enhancement in the College's planning process	Ongoing	Principal, Faculty, QAP, ASAP, TLP, and MC		Senior staff are committed to implement the strategy. Staff and students are engaged in the strategy of enhancement. Staff and students are involved in the review of the strategy for enhancement.	Ongoing: Strategic Enhancement Plan approved by Faculty (27 Nov 2017). Strategic Enhancement Timetable reviewed by TLP (11 Nov); MC (25 Nov); Faculty (27 Nov); QAP (29 Nov).
8. Establish and systematically implement the learning and teaching strategy (Expectation B3)	1. Finalise and approve the Teaching and Learning Strategy	Oct 2019	Faculty	PTFI and MC	Faculty grant outline approval of the T&L policy and procedures.	Completed: Draft T&L Policy approved by Faculty (10 Sept 2019)
					Faculty seek student involvement in the T&L policy and procedures before the policy receives final approval.	Consultation on Draft TLP with student bodies (GSC and MSC) (15 Nov 2019)
					Final T&L Policy with student input approved by Faculty	Completed: draft approved by ASAP (11 Oct 2019) and approved by Faculty (16 Oct 2019)
	2. Set 2019-20 objectives, measures, and timescales against	Oct 2019	ASAP	Faculty	Assess and review implementation of strategy	Completed: T&L Strategy 2019-20 agreed by ASAP (11 Oct 2019) and

	each of the strategic priorities					approved by Faculty (16 Oct 2019)
9. Ensure the appointment of full-time academic staff takes account of the diversity and needs of all students in order that individual students are able to develop and achieve their academic, personal and professional potential (Expectation B4)	1. Propose to MC that a task group be appointed to address this issue.	June 2020	The Principal and Secretary of the MC	Faculty and MC	Task group established to report by June 2020	Task Group appointed by MC (30 Sept 2019) Task Group met (8 Nov) and reported to MC (25 Nov 2019)
	2. Faculty and MC consider how applicants may be attracted in order to take account of the diversity and needs of all students		Faculty and MC		Role models visible for women students and potential female teaching staff Highlighting role of Assistant Chaplain Scholarship policy for women approved	Blog post (9 Dec 2019)
10. The steps being taken to formalise and implement the process for consideration of and responding to external examiners' reports	1. Ensure that externality policy is fully implemented and reviewed each year	October and June annually	The Principal and QAP	Faculty	External Examiners' reports received in a timely fashion, considered by Faculty and responses made. External Examiners' reports made available to student body together with responses	Ongoing: Reports circulated to all PTFI students (5 November 2019); All QUB reports available through IOT sharepoint

11. Build on good practice in supporting students' personal and professional development	1. Provide additional space for study and access to coffee	October 2019	The Bursar	Student body	Study and Coffee Space available in seminar room 3a	Completed: 26 Sept 2019 Update to Faculty on uptake (27 Nov 2019)
		By May 2020	The Bursar and Faculty	FPA, GSC and MSC	Include specific questions about this in College survey	
	2. Provide quiet space for prayer and meditation		The Bursar	Student body	Rooms made available for booking	Completed: 26 Sept 2019 Update to Faculty on uptake (27 Nov 2019)
	3. Arrange employability event for students	End of Sept 2019	ASAP	Faculty and Student body	Run event in first semester	Completed: Link provided to QUB students for QUB employability information on 19 September 2019 Student session on QUB Degree Plus (16 Oct 2019) "How to Enhance Your CV" event (13 Nov 2019)