

CONTINUOUS ASSURANCE FOR ENHANCEMENT CYCLE (CAEC): REVIEW OF 2018 IMPLEMENTATION AND PLANS FOR OPERATION IN 2019

COVER SHEET

*In attendance to present: Mrs N Bartholomew*

Action is required of the Committee as indicated below.

To consider a paper.

CONTINUOUS ASSURANCE FOR ENHANCEMENT CYCLE (CAEC): REVIEW OF 2018 IMPLEMENTATION AND PLANS FOR OPERATION IN 2019

Following the first year of implementation of CAEC for full-time undergraduate provision, this paper reviews the process as implemented in 2018/19. It also outlines some process developments for 2019/20 and proposes a methodology for the extension of CAEC to part-time and postgraduate taught provision and reviews the relationship between CAEC, the Integrated Curriculum Design Framework and the revalidation schedule.

Summary of key changes proposed:

- Change of name from Continuous Assurance for Enhancement Cycle to Continuous Assurance of Quality Enhancement (CAQE);
- Process for FT UG courses in Active Monitoring. Courses in Active Monitoring (but not in Supportive Measures) will be discussed by the PVC (Ed) and Associate Dean (Ed) and will inform the revalidation schedule;
- Continued application of Supportive Measures process unchanged;
- Extension of CAQE to part-time and postgraduate taught provision: a review of course data will inform an annual discussion between the PVC (Ed) and Associate Dean (Ed) for each Faculty.

## **REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF CAEC IN 2018/19**

The Committee received a report on the outcomes of the process introduced in 2018/19 and reviewing provision delivered in 2017/18 at its meeting on 13 March 2019 (paper ASQEC/19/6).

### **ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES**

There were six objectives to the introduction of CAEC.

<i>To have a clearer focus on areas of risk</i>	Following the implementation of CAEC for 2017/18 provision, four courses were identified as Academically Excellent and a further 20 as Local Enhancement. For these 24 full-time undergraduate courses, no additional University or Faculty oversight is required. However, a further 130 courses require Active Monitoring of one or more metrics by the Faculty, or in the case of courses in Supportive (previously 'special') Measures, University monitoring. It is anticipated that, as course teams address areas of concern, the number of courses in Supportive Measures or requiring Active Monitoring will reduce.
<i>To enable deliberate, targeted and supported enhancement activity with measurable outcomes</i>	Of the 33 courses placed in Supportive (then, Special) measures in 2017, 21 of the 25 for which NSS results were received in 2018 showed significant improvement in results. Following the extension of Supportive measures to courses with poor retention, in 2018, Supportive measures have resulted in a total of over 800 planned interventions across 69 courses.
<i>To recognise and reward areas of excellence</i>	Courses identified as Academically Excellent received direct additional funding from the Learning and Teaching Strategy fund. Programme teams have chosen to use this to further enhance the student experience.
<i>To strengthen the embedding of good practice within Faculties</i>	The key groups of actions adopted during 2017/18 by those courses showing the most significant improvement in their NSS scores (+10% or more) in the 2018 survey were detailed in the CAEC report to ASQEC in March 2019. These actions focused on enhanced information provision to students, greater clarity around assessment arrangements and good course organisation and management.
<i>To provide evidence to strengthen assurances in the Annual Accountability report to Council/DfENI</i>	The outcomes of CAEC will provide quantifiable evidence of actions taken to address issues raised by the metrics and, as the cycle progresses, evidence of impact through trend data. This information is included in the annual assurance report to Council to enable it to provide its assurance reports to DfENI.
<i>To provide a clearer differentiation between this process and the Faculty Accountability Process and avoid duplication.</i>	The focus of CAEC is on the quality of individual course provision. The Faculty Accountability process looks at the overall Faculty performance against University metrics. The purpose of CAEC is to improve the quality of provision and the student experience which should then be reflected in improved teaching metrics.

## **OPERATION OF CAEC IN 2019/20**

### TITLE

It is proposed to retitle the Continuous Assurance for Enhancement Cycle as the Continuous Assurance of Quality Enhancement (CAQE).

### DATA PROVISION

The metrics and parameters used for categorisation of FT UG courses will remain the same as for 2017/18 (Annex 1).

To enable more informed discussions, additional data will be included as context but will not form part of the metrics used in the categorisation of courses. From 2019, in addition to widening participation data the following additional data will be included:

- Academic planning and actual intake numbers
- Employment and employability journey data

### ANNUAL CYCLE OF MEETINGS WITH ASSOCIATE DEANS (EDUCATION)

In 2018/19 the annual cycle of meetings was held according to the schedule and discussing the planned agenda items and other items as they have arisen. In particular, the degree algorithm change has been regularly discussed. In addition, the following standing items have been added to the meetings: Data Analytics; Academic Planning (with particular focus on non-MaSN and collaborative provision); Staff exposure to new learning spaces and development needs. These items have been included in the updated schedule included at Annex 2. Issues arising are progressed through appropriate committees.

In addition, meetings with ADs (Education) also consider similar data and reports in relation to collaborative provision. The monitoring processes for these have also been revised.

### SUPPORTIVE MEASURES

Following feedback from staff, 'Special' Measures has been retitled 'Supportive' Measures. This change in title is intended to reflect more accurately the nature of the process without diluting the importance of reviewing practice which has not met a minimum threshold. The focus and process will remain the same. The basis for placing courses in Supportive Measures for 2019 is as detailed below and has been amended to enable monitoring of the impact of the change to the degree algorithm.

NSS results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall satisfaction result (Q27) of 5% or more below sector average for the subject.</li><li>• Large number courses with result significantly below University overall outcome.</li></ul>
AND/OR	
Attrition / Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attrition of +2% over Faculty target (this figure will lag by one year)</li><li>• Progression of less than 70% at first sit (year 1)</li><li>• Progression of less than 80 % (year 2)</li><li>• Completion of less than 90% at first sit of those entering final year</li></ul>

Notes: Resit data will be provided as additional context.

In both cases courses with very low numbers (N= 15 as minimum number) are discounted as percentages are skewed and these would have a minimal impact on University statistics.

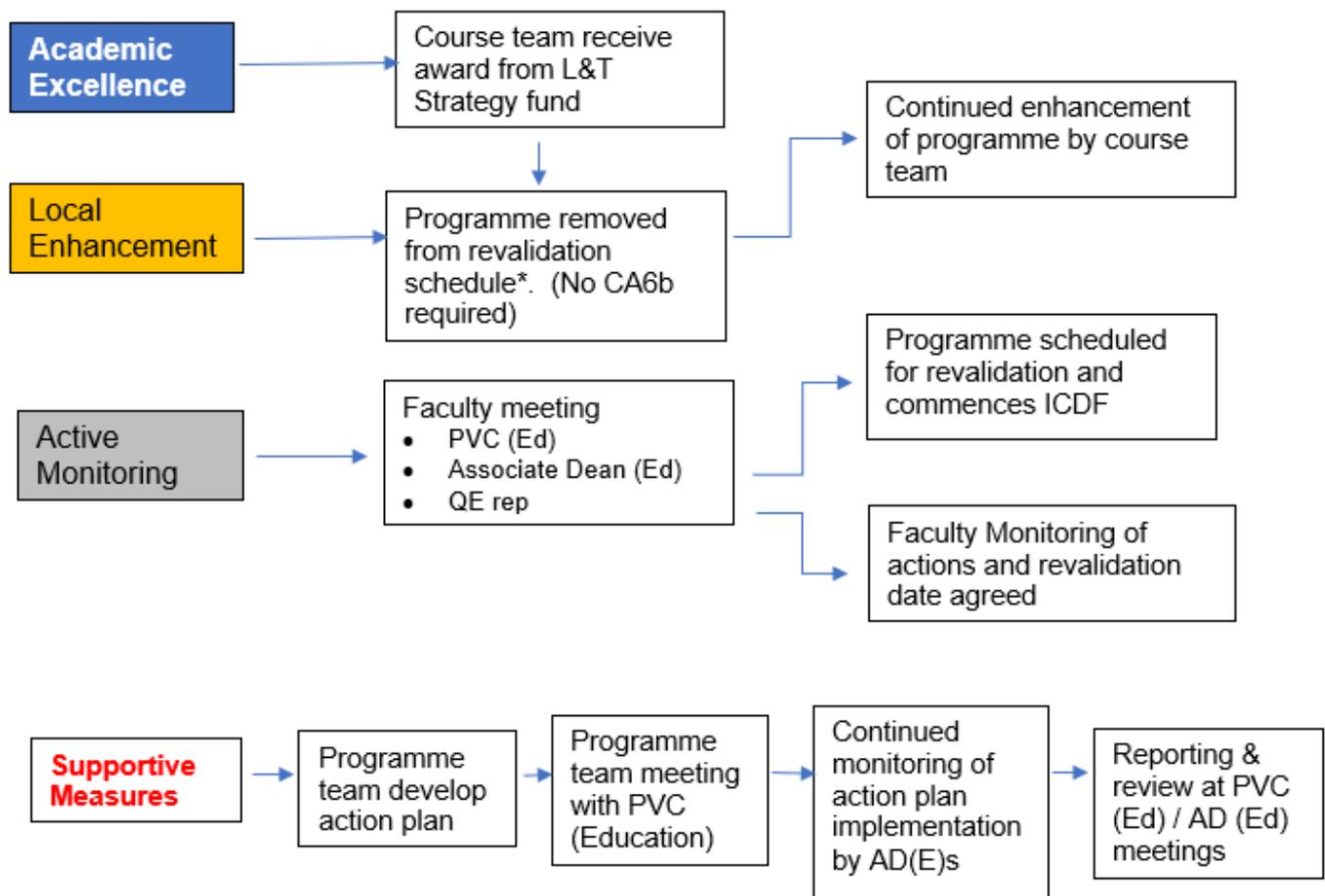
Supportive measures will continue to apply to full-time undergraduate provision only.

## OUTCOMES OF CAQE CATEGORISATION

It is proposed that courses which fall into the Academic Excellence or Local Enhancement categories are not automatically scheduled for revalidation except where Joint PSRB revalidation arrangements exist (see next section).

The courses in the Active Monitoring area will be discussed and outcomes determined at a meeting between the PVC (Ed), AD (Ed) and Quality Enhancement representative(s). This will include consideration of when the course should next be revalidated. Courses will either be monitored by the Faculty and/or will have their revalidation date brought forward and may commence the Integrated Curriculum Design Framework process. The following chart shows the outcomes for each categorisation.

### FT UG programmes: CAQE outcomes



\* Except courses with Joint PSRB arrangements for which the revalidation schedule will be maintained.

## RELATIONSHIP TO REVALIDATION AND THE INTEGRATED CURRICULUM DESIGN FRAMEWORK (ICDF)

It is proposed that for undergraduate provision, there should be a link between the outcomes of the CAQE process and the revalidation schedule. A more joined-up process would prevent duplication or unnecessarily dispersed activity and enable interventions and reviews to be targeted and proportionate to need/risk.

FT UG courses (together with their part-time versions if appropriate) which are categorised as Academically Excellent or for Local Enhancement will therefore **not** be required to be revalidated by the University for as long as they remain within one of these categories.

FT UG courses in the Active Monitoring category will be discussed at a meeting between the PVC (Ed), AD (Ed) and Quality Enhancement representative(s). At this meeting, outcomes for all courses in Active Monitoring will be agreed.

Being in Supportive Measures would **not** automatically lead to an earlier revalidation date as interventions to address issues would already be in place.

### Transition from current to new revalidation schedule

The existing revalidation schedule would be used as the starting point for discussions and any agreed extensions will be honoured (CA6b process).

The schedule for courses with Joint PSRB/Ulster revalidation events and PGT provision will remain unchanged.

Other FT UG courses in the Academically Excellent or Local Enhancement categories would be removed from the schedule for subsequent years following CAQE categorisation in November (together with any part-time versions). FT UG courses in Active Monitoring may be rescheduled depending on the outcome of the Faculty meeting in November. The following principles will apply:

- No changes will be made to the revalidation schedule for 2019/20 as programme teams will be well advanced in their preparations by the time that Active Monitoring courses are discussed in December.
- Programmes in Active Monitoring listed for revalidation from 2020/21 will be appropriately scheduled based on the outcomes of the Faculty meeting which will also consider the merits of making interim CA3 changes.
- Programmes categorised as Academic Excellence or Local Enhancement will have automatic right to have their revalidation deferred as long as their data remains in one of these categories. Where joint PSRB arrangements exist revalidation dates will be maintained. In these cases no CA6b form will be required.
- Programmes will only be brought forward in the revalidation schedule where:
  - a systemic review is deemed the appropriate action; or
  - there is a need to review fitness for purpose; or
  - the programme has undergone substantial minor revisions over a period of years and requires review to ensure continued coherence and assurance that programme learning outcomes will continue to be met.
- Exceptionally, Faculties may still request deferrals outside this process using the CA6b form and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

PT UG courses may be rescheduled either as a result of the associated FT UG course revalidation date being moved or after the review of part-time provision in February (see below).

#### EXTENSION OF CAQE TO PART-TIME UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT COURSE PROVISION

In the first iteration of CAQE during 2018/19, full-time undergraduate provision was reviewed. The dataset is more limited for part-time and postgraduate taught provision (FT and PT) and the focus of this review will be on failure/resit/repeat rates rather than progression recognising that part-time students may wish to progress at different rates. As courses often have low numbers, courses will not be categorised on the basis of data percentages.

In January, the previous year's progression and award data for part-time undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes will be reviewed by course and School. In the limited number of courses where it is available, PTES or NSS results will also be considered. Additional available information may be scrutinised (eg External Examiner reports, PSRB reports, marks distribution and module data). A draft agenda will be compiled based on this review and provided to the Faculty and the Faculty invited to add to the agenda.

In February meetings, chaired by the PVC (Education), will be held with each Faculty represented by the Associate Dean (Education) to discuss the items identified. In the first year (2019/20) there will be an initial discussion around the Faculty's approach to, and priorities for, PT and PGT provision (expansion/contraction of scale of activity, delivery styles and priorities for development).

Following the review of PT UG provision, further changes may be made to the revalidation schedule if appropriate. The revalidation schedule for PGT provision and courses with joint PSRB revalidation events will be maintained to ensure currency of curriculum and to meet external requirements.

ANNEX 1: UNDERGRADUATE FULL-TIME PROVISION CAQE CATEGORISATION

In all cases the information used will be the most recent complete data set available.

METRIC/TARGET	Requires ACTIVE MONITORING	Responsibility for LOCAL ENHANCEMENT	Demonstrates ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE												
Retention of first year students. University benchmark set by HESA and subject to annual review.	<p>2% or more worse than the Faculty target. <b>Courses in this category will be placed in Supportive Measures.</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Faculty Attrition Target</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>AHSS</td> <td>7.25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CEBE</td> <td>10.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LHS</td> <td>6.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UUBS</td> <td>6.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>University overall</td> <td>7.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Faculty Attrition Target		AHSS	7.25%	CEBE	10.5%	LHS	6.5%	UUBS	6.5%	University overall	7.5%	Not worse than 2% over Faculty target (and less than 2% better)	2% or more better than Faculty target
Faculty Attrition Target															
AHSS	7.25%														
CEBE	10.5%														
LHS	6.5%														
UUBS	6.5%														
University overall	7.5%														
NSS. University benchmark set by HEFCE and subject to annual review. 5&50 KPI – consistently in top 10 institutions for student satisfaction	Worse than sector average for overall satisfaction in subject. <b>Courses in this category will be placed in Supportive Measures.</b>	At or above subject sector average in overall satisfaction (or above sector average in overall satisfaction but not in all sections of the survey).	Better than the sector average in all elements of the survey.												
NSS TEF Data	Worse than sector subject average by >2% in any of the three TEF categories	< 2% below sector subject average in all TEF categories	>2% better than the sector subject average in all TEF categories												
Student Engagement as measured by NSS Student Voice	Worse than University average by >2% in Student Voice element	<2% below University average in Student Voice	5% or more better than University average in Student Voice												
Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A first sit pass rate of less than 70% (excluding students on leave of absence).</li> <li>Progression of less than 80 % (year 2)</li> <li>Completion of less than 90% at first sit of those entering final year</li> </ul> <p><b>Courses in these categories will be placed in Supportive Measures.</b> This data is available at the end of each semester. ADs (Education) to review.</p>	A first sit pass rate of between 70% and 85% (1 <sup>st</sup> year)	A first sit pass rate of 85% or more (1 <sup>st</sup> year)												
Classification data	Less than 60% of graduating students achieve 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2.1 awards. ADs (Education) to review	60 – 70% of students achieve 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2.1 awards	More than 70% of students achieve 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2.1 awards and External Examiner does not												

METRIC/TARGET	Requires ACTIVE MONITORING	Responsibility for LOCAL ENHANCEMENT	Demonstrates ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
			highlight concerns regarding marking
External Examiner / PSRB reports**	Significant concerns identified which require urgent remediation. ADs (Education) to review	Satisfactory reports with minor recommendations only	Report identifies consistent high or above sector practice or outcomes
Ongoing engagement with curriculum development as evidenced through CA3 activity, Revalidation participation / report **	Approval refused or granted with conditions*. ADs (Education) to review	Approval secured with no conditions*	Approval secured with no conditions* and evidence of innovative learning and teaching practice.

\* with the exception of the Annex on documentation corrections.

\*\* only checked for courses potentially in the academic excellence category

ANNEX 2: CYCLE OF ASSOCIATE DEAN (EDUCATION) MEETINGS (Updated for 2019/20)

Date of Meeting	Data available since last meeting	Agenda Items	Other Related Activities
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First sit undergraduate course-level data for out-going academic year (4 years' data) (available mid-July)</li> <li>• First sit Semester 2 &amp; 1/2 Module data by School and programme (available mid-July)</li> <li>• NSS results (available August)</li> <li>• PTES results (available late July)</li> </ul>	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	Supportive Measures meetings commence late Sept
		Identification of NSS / Retention Supportive Measures courses	
		Review of 1 <sup>st</sup> sit data (course and module)	
		Standing Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analytics</li> <li>• Academic Planning</li> <li>• New Learning Spaces</li> <li>• Issues raised by ADs</li> </ul>	
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Module Feedback Survey Semester 3 module results available through survey webpage to all staff (available September)</li> </ul>	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	Supportive Measures meetings to be completed  October/November – Faculty DLHE/Learning Gain/ EDGE workshops
		PTES response rate and results	
		Standing Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analytics</li> <li>• Academic Planning</li> <li>• New Learning Spaces</li> <li>• Issues raised by ADs</li> </ul>	
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resit Semesters 1, 2 &amp; 1/2 Module data by School and Programme (available early October)</li> <li>• Year-end undergraduate course-level data for previous academic year (4 years' data) (available mid-October)</li> </ul>	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	October/November – Faculty DLHE/Learning Gain/ EDGE workshops in conjunction Employability department staff
		Review of course level end of year progression data (UG)	
		CAQE categorisation of FT UG courses (analysis by Quality Enhancement)	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First sit Semester 3, 1/3, 2/3 &amp; full-term Module data by School and Programme (available late October)</li> </ul>	<p>Standing Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analytics</li> <li>• Academic Planning</li> <li>• New Learning Spaces</li> <li>• Issues raised by ADs</li> </ul>	
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year-end postgraduate course-level data for previous academic year (4 years' data) (available mid-November)</li> <li>• Faculty/School summary data (UG&amp;PG course level data for previous academic year only) (available mid-late November)</li> </ul>	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	Funding provided to Academic Excellence courses.
		<p>Standing Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analytics</li> <li>• Academic Planning</li> <li>• New Learning Spaces</li> <li>• Issues raised by ADs</li> </ul>	Faculty meetings to consider courses in active monitoring [PVC (E), AD (E), QE].
January	N/A	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	
		Review of NSS Supportive Measures Action Plans	
		<p>Standing Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analytics</li> <li>• Academic Planning</li> <li>• New Learning Spaces</li> <li>• Issues raised by ADs</li> </ul>	
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSS response rates published weekly</li> </ul>	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	Faculty meetings to discuss UG PT and PGT data [PVC (Ed), AD(E)s, QE]
		Semester 1 Module Feedback Survey participation levels and results	
		NSS response rates	
		<p>Standing Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analytics</li> <li>• Academic Planning</li> <li>• New Learning Spaces</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issues raised by ADs</li> </ul>	
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module Feedback Survey Semester 1 module results available through survey webpage to all staff</li> <li>NSS response rates published weekly</li> </ul>	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	
		NSS Response rates	
		Module Feedback Survey S1 participation and results	
		Standing Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analytics</li> <li>Academic Planning</li> <li>New Learning Spaces</li> <li>Issues raised by ADs</li> </ul>	
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSS response rates published weekly</li> <li>Retention data</li> </ul>	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	
		Review of progress against retention targets	
		Review of poorly performing modules	
		NSS response rates	
		Standing Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analytics</li> <li>Academic Planning</li> <li>New Learning Spaces</li> <li>Issues raised by ADs</li> </ul>	
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PTES response rate reports</li> </ul>	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	
		PTES Response rates	
		Standing Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analytics</li> <li>Academic Planning</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Learning Spaces</li> </ul> Issues raised by Ads	
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PTES response rate reports (to mid-June)</li> <li>Module Feedback Survey Semester 2 module results available to through survey webpage for all staff</li> </ul>	Follow-up actions from previous meeting	
		Module Feedback Survey S2 participation and results	
		PTES response rate	
		Standing Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analytics</li> <li>Academic Planning</li> <li>New Learning Spaces</li> <li>Issues raised by ADs</li> </ul>	

### ANNEX 3: CAQE ACTIVITIES

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
July – November	End of Year Statistics and External Examiner reports become available	NSS, PTES and course level data published on QE data website as per usual schedule ( <a href="https://www.ulster.ac.uk/quality/data">https://www.ulster.ac.uk/quality/data</a> )
September/October	Supportive Measures courses identified, and meetings held	Intervention plans by course
November	CAQE categorisation by Quality Enhancement of FT UG courses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Categorisation of all FT UG courses – provided to AD(E)s</li> <li>2. Awards for courses in Academic Excellence category</li> <li>3. Revalidation scheduled updated as appropriate (removal of Academic Excellence and Local Enhancement programmes which do not have Joint PSRB arrangements)</li> </ol>
December	Faculty meetings to discuss courses in Active Monitoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outcomes for all Active Monitoring courses agreed.</li> <li>2. Revalidation schedule updated where appropriate</li> </ol>
January	Review by QE of Part-time UG and PGT provision	Draft agenda for Faculty meetings
February	Faculty meetings to discuss Part-time UG and PGT provision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Actions identified</li> <li>2. Revalidation schedule updated where appropriate</li> </ol>

Review of data and monitoring of interventions continues throughout the year, overseen by Associate Deans (Education) and discussed at monthly meetings between PVC (Education) and AD(E)s