



STUDY WORLD
Global College Malta



The College's Quality and Standards Assurance Framework

An Outline Guide

Global College Malta

Quality and Standards Assurance Framework

Introduction

1. Global College Malta is committed to maintaining high internationally recognised academic standards and enhancing the quality of its learning and teaching provision. The professionalism and creativity of its staff, individually and collectively, makes a vital contribution to the enhancement of its provision, through their attention to their students' experience as learners, to the development of their disciplines, and their engagement with their teaching practice.
2. The College's *Quality and Standards Assurance Framework* provides: an overview of our quality and standards assurance processes and how they relate to each other; provides summary information about our processes; and provides links to more detailed descriptions of our processes and procedures. The operation of the *Framework* is overseen by the College's Academic Dean, who is also responsible for its development and enhancement.
3. **For our students:** the College is committed to providing you with a high quality learning experience. We recognise that the direct contribution that you as students make to this, through providing feedback, advice and suggestions, is absolutely critical. Input from our students is accordingly a key feature of all our quality enhancement and assurance processes: we need our students to give us an honest and clear students' perspective.
4. **For our staff:** The quality and commitment of our staff are critical to maintaining and enhancing the high quality of learning and teaching that we pride ourselves upon. The College fully recognises that all our staff, both academic and support, are continuously reflecting upon and seeking to improve practice in all areas of our work in order to advance learning and teaching and scholarship in their disciplines and the quality of the student learning experience. This *Quality and Standards Assurance Framework* and the processes it outlines are intended to provide a framework within which meaningful reflection is supported and to enable us to capture, recognise and disseminate the excellent practice that is characteristic of our provision.

Definitions

5. The College's *Quality and Standards Assurance Framework* is closely informed by the work of the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA): <https://mfhea.mt/>) and supporting documents such as the *Malta Qualifications Framework* (MQF: a summary document can be found at: <https://ncfhe.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Publications/The%20Malta%20Qualifications%20Framework/The%20Malta%20Qualifications%20Framework.pdf>) and the *National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education*. (<https://ncfhe.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Publications/Quality%20Assurance/National%20Quality%20AssuranceFramework.pdf>)

[0Quality%20Assurance%20Framework%20for%20Further%20and%20Higher%20Education.pdf](#)).

The College also has regard to the Maltese National Commission on Further and Higher Education 2016 *Referencing Report*

(<https://ncfhe.gov.mt/en/Documents/Referencing%20Report/Referencing%20Report%202016.pdf>).

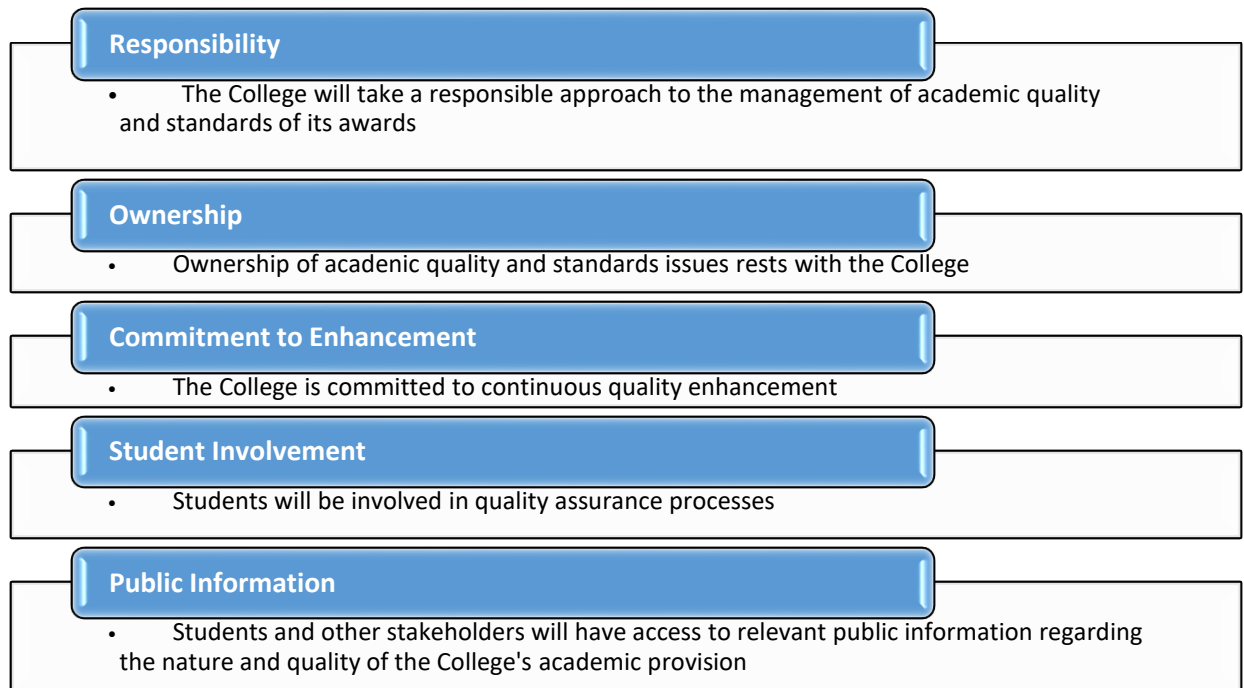
6. The College uses the following key terms based on those used by the MFHEA, who in turn have regard to the internationally recognised quality and standards assurance principles as promulgated by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA):
 - i. *Academic standards* are the level of academic achievement that must be attained by a student studying at the College in order for them to gain an academic award or be awarded academic credit;
 - ii. *Quality Assurance* is the process of ensuring that the quality of learning opportunities provided by the College are appropriate to enable our students to meet the academic standards of the award for which they are studying; and,
 - iii. *Quality Enhancement* is the process of using the College's strategy, systems and information to help improve the quality of the student learning experience.
7. Other key terms used in the College's *Quality and Standards Assurance Framework* include:
 - i. **Module** - a self-contained unit of study on a particular topic with defined level, credit value, aims, intended learning outcomes, mode(s) of delivery, scheme of assessment, and possibly also pre- and co-requisites
 - ii. **Programme** - a set of compulsory and elective modules leading to a defined award, with defined aims, intended learning outcomes, mode(s) of delivery, and scheme of assessment
 - iii. **Award** - the degree, certificate or diploma which is conferred following the successful completion of a defined programme of study

Principles

8. The College's *Quality and Standards Assurance Framework* is based on the following principles:
 - i. The College is responsible for the academic quality and standards of its awards; In exercising this key responsibility, the College will ensure that its academic standards meet external reference points such as the *Malta Qualifications Framework* (and thereby the European Higher Education Area's Qualification Framework) and, where appropriate, the requirements of any professional, statutory and regulatory organisations;

- ii. The College is responsible for assuring itself that the quality of the learning opportunities provided for its students to enable them to meet the standards of the awards for which they are studying;
- iii. The College is responsible for enhancing the quality of the student learning experience by reviewing its systems and the information generated by them to enhance the quality of the student learning experience;
- iv. The College's processes for the assurance of its academic quality and standards should be fit for purpose and must align with extant guidance published by the MFHEA (and thereby the European Higher Education Area's European standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education); and,
- v. All of the College's academic quality and standards processes should actively engage students in the assurance and enhancement of academic quality.

The following diagram seeks to summarise the principles underpinning the College's *Quality and Standards Assurance Framework*:



The College's framework for academic standards

9. The College's academic standards are assured by:
- i. A College higher education outcomes framework, which is aligned with the Malta Qualifications Framework, provides reference points to enable a common understanding of the characteristics and achievements represented by a College award;
 - ii. Procedures for the approval of new programmes and modules that have regard to the College's *Academic Awards Framework* and which, as appropriate, make use of subject specialists external to the College;
 - iii. The use of external examiners to help ensure that academic standards are consistent with academic standards at comparable institutions, the College's *Academic Awards Framework*, and external reference points such as the MQF and ENQA's quality and standards assurance principles; and,
 - iv. An annual review of undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes which includes the consideration of management information on student progression and achievement.

The College's framework for quality assurance

10. In order to assure the quality of learning and teaching, the College has in place a range of quality assurance mechanisms:
- i. Induction and development programmes for all newly-appointed staff involved in the delivery of learning, teaching and research degree supervision, which ensure that they are appropriately prepared for their defined roles in these areas;
 - ii. Processes for the recruitment of all staff who as part of their proposed role will deliver learning and teaching and research degree supervision;
 - iii. A programme approval process that considers the learning opportunities to be provided in proposed new programmes and, where relevant, incorporates the views of appropriate external subject specialists;
 - iv. Procedures for the annual review of programmes that allow delivery teams to reflect on a range of qualitative and quantitative data relating to the quality of their provision, to review the quality of learning opportunities provided in the past and provide a basis for future action to enhance the quality of these learning opportunities;
 - v. An external examiner system which provides reports that are used as a prompt for reflection on quality as well as standards and which are considered formally by the College; and,
 - vi. The involvement of students in the College's quality assurance processes (for example through the use of evaluation questionnaires, student involvement in annual reviews, and

student representation on committees).

The College's framework for quality enhancement

11. In order to enhance the quality of the student learning experience, the College:
- i. Ensures that enhancement of the College's educational provision and the student experience forms part of its programme review and action planning processes which are formally overseen by the College's Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Board;
 - ii. Makes available to all newly-appointed staff involved in the delivery of learning, teaching and research degree supervision with development programmes that seek to ensure that they are appropriately prepared for their roles;
 - iii. Provides established staff involved in the delivery of learning, teaching and research degree supervision with development opportunities that are aimed at helping them to develop their practice in ways that both support the achievement of the College's education strategies and further their own professional development;
 - iv. Provides staff with mechanisms to reflect on the effectiveness and development of their teaching and supervisory practice;
 - v. Undertakes overviews of external examiners' reports and of its processes for programme review so as to allow the College to identify good practice and any issues of strategy, policy or practice emerging from the operation of its processes; and,
 - vi. Considers a range of quantitative and qualitative management information relating to the student learning experience, in order to identify opportunities to enhance the quality of learning opportunities that the College provides.

Responsibilities

12. Responsibility for the academic quality and standards of the College's awards rests with the College's Academic Board, working with the assistance of the College's Quality Assurance Committee.
13. The College also recognises, however, that responsibility for the academic quality and standards of its awards must also be a shared one, between the Academic Board which has formal accountability for academic quality and standards and all staff engaged in the delivery and support of learning, teaching and research degree supervision. The College's *Quality and Standards Assurance Framework* is accordingly based on the following shared understandings.

Individual staff

13. All staff involved in the delivery and support of learning, teaching and research degree supervision in the College are encouraged to:

- i. Reflect on the effectiveness of their practice and the ways in which this might be enhanced;
- ii. Where appropriate, consult with students prior to or following a change being made to their study programmes;
- iii. Evaluate the effectiveness of any changes that are made to programmes; and,
- iv. Share and discuss good practice with colleagues through activities which may include activities such as mentoring, observation of teaching activities and participation in supervisory teams for research students.

Programme Teams

- 14. Programme teams routinely reflect on and review taught and research degree programmes in order to:
 - i. Assure the academic standards of the provision, and that the quality of learning opportunities enable students to attain these academic standards and the defined learning outcomes of their programme;
 - ii. Identify examples of good practice in learning, teaching and research degree supervision for wider dissemination across the College; and,
 - iii. Identify opportunities to enhance the quality of learning opportunities (and thereby the student learning experience), where necessary implement changes, evaluate them, and where they have been effective seek to disseminate them more widely.
- 15. Programme teams report to the Quality Assurance Committee on the outcomes of these reflections.

College Quality Assurance Committee

- 16. The College's Quality Assurance acts as a forum for the discussion and dissemination of good practice in learning, teaching and research degree supervision, and the identification (and where appropriate the implementation) of opportunities to enhance learning opportunities.
- 17. The Committee monitors and reviews the reports of programme teams on the operation of the College's quality management policies and procedures in order to ensure that policies and procedures have been implemented appropriately and to assure the College that academic standards and quality are appropriate.
- 18. More specifically, the Committee:

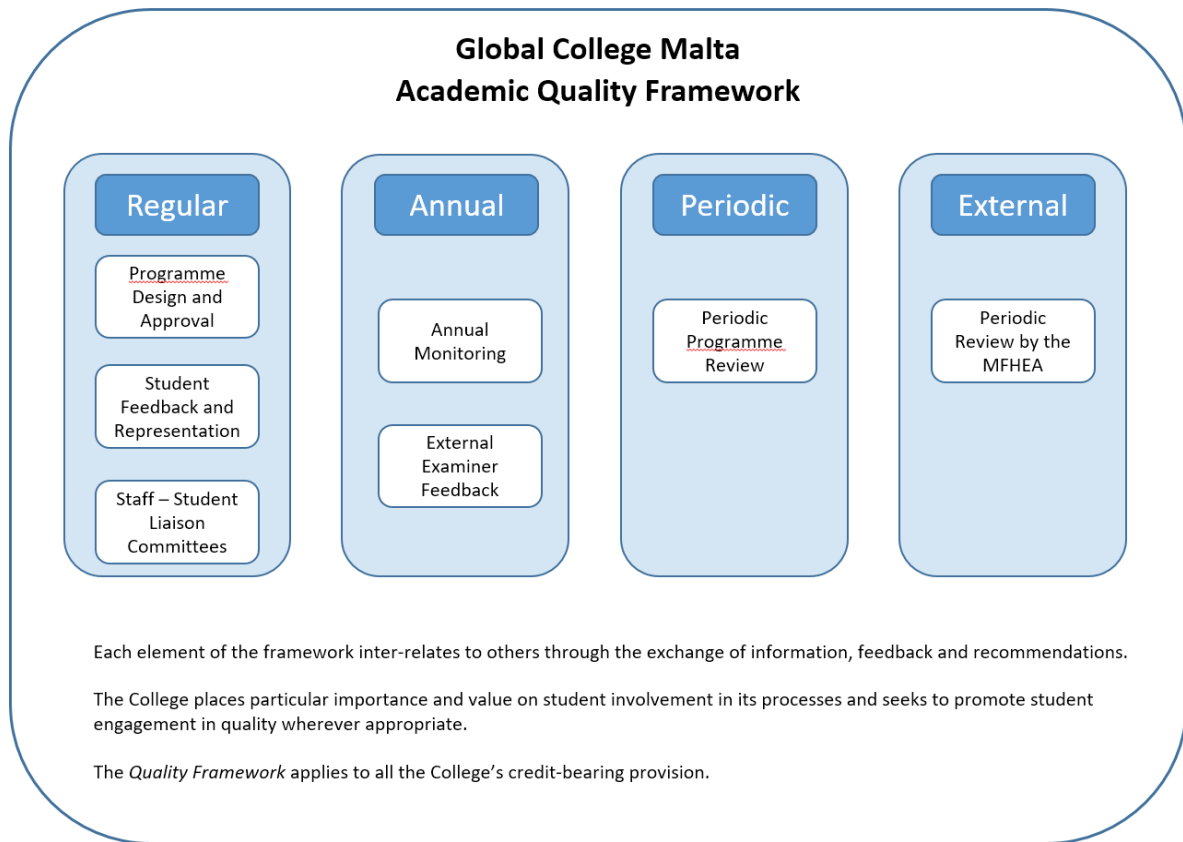
- i. Makes recommendations to the College's Academic Board on policies, procedures and regulations designed to ensure that the academic quality and standards of taught and research degree provision are assured, and that action is taken at all levels of the College to enhance the quality of learning opportunities offered within the College's taught and research degree programmes;
- ii. considers the outcomes of the implementation of policies and procedures for managing academic quality and standards for taught and research degree provision, in order to allow it to assure the College's Academic Board about these outcomes and to inform the development of learning and teaching, and research degree, strategy, policies and procedures; and,
- iii. Reviews the implementation of the College's policies and procedures for managing academic quality and standards for taught and research degree provision, in order to assure the College that these are fit for purpose and, where appropriate, make recommendations for the enhancement of these policies and procedures.

College Academic Board

19. The College's Academic Board ensures that:
- i. A clear framework for academic standards is in place, which ensures consistency in the academic standards both externally (in relation to Maltese and international frameworks) and internally (between all awards at a given academic level across all programmes);
 - ii. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to both assure and enhance the quality of learning opportunities within the College's taught and research degree programmes; and,
 - iii. It is assured by Quality Assurance Committee of the effective implementation of all policies and procedures for managing the academic quality and standards of the College's taught and research degree programmes.
20. The College's Quality Enhancement Framework has a number of inter-related elements: internal review; student involvement; provision of public information; periodic enhancement themes arising from review outcomes; and external review.
21. The Maltese national qualifications framework implicitly places reliance and emphasis on institutions' own review processes to safeguard the quality and standards of higher education awards in Malta, and to promote enhancement. Global College Malta accordingly recognises that it must actively engage with all elements of the MQF and the expectations of the MFHEA. The College's quality management processes are believed to be well matched to the Maltese national higher education framework and are described in the following sections below.

Global College Malta - Academic Quality Framework

22. The diagram below presents a graphical summary of the College's framework of quality assurance and enhancement processes. The processes themselves are described briefly below and further information is available in the College's *Quality and Standards Assurance Manual*.



23. The College's academic quality framework is designed to ensure that each process element is informed by the output of other elements in order to create a coherent, effective and robust framework.

Regular activity

24. The activities of Course and Programme Design and Approval, Student Feedback and Student Representation happen on a continuous basis.

Programme Design and Approval

25. The College's procedures for the design and approval of new courses and programmes exist to ensure that academic standards are set at the appropriate level and have full regard to the

MQF. The College's national and international reputation relies on this and, therefore, it is essential that the College's procedures in this area are both robust and effective.

26. They ensure that appropriate consideration is given to:
- the availability of necessary resources;
 - the coherence and academic standard of constituent elements;
 - the standard and appropriateness of awards offered on completion of proposed study programmes;
 - the relevance and viability of programmes and courses for potential students;
 - compatibility with other programmes offered by the College and the strategic objectives of the College; and,
 - the external context, both within Maltese higher education and internationally.
27. Consideration of new programme proposals is, where appropriate, informed by consultation with key stakeholders in order to provide externality and objectivity: students, employer organisations and external examiners involved with existing programmes, and any relevant professional, statutory or regulatory bodies. The College's marketing unit provide advice on the marketability and marketing of new programmes and, subject to a suitable and sustainable market being identified, the College then confirms whether the proposal fits with existing provision and can be resourced.
28. Programme delivery teams have devolved responsibility for the approval of changes, withdrawal or suspension of programmes, reporting through the College's Quality Assurance Committee to the College's Academic Board.
29. The College's *Quality and Standards Assurance Manual* provides guidance on programme design and review for academic staff, outlining the key steps to take in the design and review of new or existing programmes at undergraduate and taught postgraduate levels. The guidance encourages programme designers to engage with current understanding of good educational practice.

Student Feedback

30. Global College Malta is very firmly committed to the principle of student engagement in quality matters at all levels. We rely on the feedback from our students to guide us and to confirm that the enhancements we continually make to our provision translate to tangible enhancement of the student learning experience. The College and the College's student body work closely to maintain an effective and coherent system of student representation that facilitates the participation of students at all levels.

31. Effective student feedback relies on the active engagement of both staff and students and, as such, the College places a number of expectations on staff and students.
32. Staff are expected to:
- explain clearly the purpose of collecting feedback, the methods that will be utilised, how the feedback will be analysed, how and when the findings will be considered and how actions taken as a result of the findings will be communicated back;
 - encourage students to reflect on their learning experience;
 - communicate responses to students and staff; and,
 - communicate matters of interest and import arising from feedback from students onwards to programme teams and the College.
33. and the College's students are expected to:
- reflect critically on their learning experience
 - provide feedback on their learning experience and other relevant/associated matters
 - engage with their Student Representatives; and,
 - regularly check notice boards, relevant websites, and their College e-mail accounts for communications from staff and Student Representatives.

Programme Evaluation

34. The College encourages its staff to use a variety of mechanisms to obtain student feedback, to promote ongoing active dialogue between students and staff, and to minimise over-reliance on one particular mechanism. Typically, the most commonly used method of gathering student feedback is a programme evaluation questionnaire. To ensure practice is consistent, the College has a number of expectations in respect of the gathering of course evaluation information from students via questionnaires.
35. The key elements of the College's policy on programme evaluation are:
- all programmes must use a questionnaire as one of the methods to solicit feedback from students. All questionnaires issued to students on a study programme must include the following five questions (referred to by the College as the 'Core Question' set) at the top of each questionnaire, in the following order with no interspersed questions. The questions must be graded on a five point scale from 5 'Excellent' to 4 'Very Good' to 3 'Satisfactory' to 2 'Needs Improvement' to 1 'Inadequate'. The five questions are as follows:

Core 1 (a) (Related to individual teaching)	The lecturer explained things well	1-5
<i>or</i>		
Core 1 (b) (Related to team teaching activities)	Teaching staff explained things well	1-5
<i>or</i>		
Core 1 (c) (Related to supervision)	My project/dissertation supervisor was helpful	1-5
Core 2	The programme was intellectually stimulating	1-5
Core 3	I am satisfied with the overall quality of the programme	1-5
Core 4	What was good about the programme?	Open text
Core 5	How could this programme be improved?	Open text

- the minimum requirement for the questionnaire is the inclusion of five core questions. If desired, programme teams can extend the questionnaire by adding further questions. However, programme teams are encouraged by the College not to add a large number of additional questions since doing so may have an adverse impact on student participation levels and response rates (in other words, students may be dissuaded from filling in long and time consuming questionnaires);
- students should be given clear instructions on how to complete the questionnaire and advised when it will be circulated;
- for each programme, the data from the completed questionnaires is summarised in a 'Summary and Response' document and is made available to students; and,
- access to all data associated with individual programmes is restricted with only aggregated data being more widely distributed and used for College development purposes.

36. In order to demonstrate to students that their feedback is valued, closing the feedback loop is an essential part of the College's process. In completing programme Summary and Response documents, College staff are encouraged to reflect on the feedback provided and to follow up on issues identified in more detail and greater depth, if necessary, to ensure that responses are targeted and result in a real improvement to the learning experience. Summary and Response documents should feed into College staff-student liaison meetings but staff and student representatives also have a responsibility to communicate the responses to matters raised more widely to all students and other relevant members of staff.

Student Representation

37. The College believes that the involvement of students in its quality processes should be inclusive at all levels and be embedded. Student representatives are members of the College's Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Board; of relevant College working groups; and for appropriate items at College programme committee meetings. The election of student representatives is organised by the College working in close consultation with students. Classes or other groupings of students are invited to elect representatives, with the process being prompted and facilitated by College staff at the beginning of each academic year.
38. The College seeks to ensure that elections are completed as early as possible to allow those elected to receive appropriate induction into their role. The College believes that the training of student representatives is key to the successful operation of staff-student liaison activities. The training is delivered by College staff and existing student representatives who can pass on their own experience. The College also provides input. Recognising the value and importance of the role of the student representative to the College's community, the College actively encourages students to record their role as a representative on their individual records of achievement.

Staff-Student Liaison Committees

39. Staff-Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) provide a regular, formal route for student representatives to feedback directly to College staff on the operation of the programmes they are taking. The function of the SSLC is important because:
- It allows staff and students to discuss ideas and to solve problems together;
 - It is a formal, qualitative means of consulting students and gauging their opinion on academic matters and getting suggestions from them for improvements/enhancements;
 - It allows students' views within the programme to be communicated and concerns which require consideration beyond the programme to be identified; and,
 - It provides a mechanism for obtaining student feedback and communicating action taken in response to feedback.
40. Programme teams are responsible for operating SSLCs according to the structure that works best for them and their students. The frequency of meetings can also vary depending on the duration of the programme, but a minimum of at least one meeting in each term is expected. SSLC membership includes all student representatives in the relevant group and members of staff with specific remits for Learning and Teaching and Student Support. Where possible, there should be a majority of student members and they should be invited to assume responsibility for convening the SSLC. If so, an identified member of College staff will support them and act as a joint convener, if necessary. The programme team supports the SSLC by producing agendas in consultation with all members (allowing time for student members to consult with the groups they represent), and taking a minute of each meeting.

41. The minutes include actions agreed by the SSLC in response to issues raised, who will take such actions and by when. Approved minutes are made available to all members of the relevant student group and to all members of College staff. Minutes of programme SSLCs are considered at programme team meetings and relevant elements are reported to the Quality Assurance Committee and/or Academic Board. Closing the feedback loop is an important part of the SSLC function and, as such, the SSLC receive update reports on actions at the next meeting. The College recognises that it is also important to report back where it has not been possible to progress an issue along with the reasons why. In doing so, programme teams can demonstrate that they are committed to the process and take students' issues seriously.
42. Student representatives also have a responsibility for reporting back to the wider student body, possibly highlighting or drawing the attention of the wider student group to particular discussions. If a concern cannot be resolved at the SSLC, it should be referred onwards to the Quality Assurance Committee and/or the Academic Board. If no progress is made, unresolved issues which require the attention of the College should be highlighted through the Annual Monitoring process. Student representatives can access additional support from the College Academic Dean or the College Registrar if they feel that an issue is not being dealt with appropriately or quickly enough or with issues that cannot be resolved at the SSLC.

Annual Review Activity

43. These activities take place annually in the College and reflect on the operation of programmes, student feedback, student performance and other measures of the quality of the student learning experience throughout the preceding year. These activities are informed by the regular activities of programme design and approval, student feedback, student representation and SSLCs. The outcomes of annual review activity in turn inform the College's periodic review processes.

Annual Monitoring

44. Annual Monitoring is the building block of the College's quality assurance and quality enhancement processes and the process whereby programme delivery teams and the College can check that programmes meet the expectations of staff and students.
45. The College's annual monitoring arrangements accordingly have a key role in:
- maintaining academic standards;
 - monitoring and enhancing the management of assessment and feedback;
 - monitoring student performance and progression;
 - evaluating the quality of the student experience and identifying possible areas for enhancement;
 - evaluating the effectiveness of learning and teaching resources and identifying matters that may require attention;

- identifying, promoting and disseminating good practice;
 - gathering evidence of local initiatives and progress in relation to College Plans and the College's *Learning and Teaching Strategy*;
 - where appropriate, having regard to any relevant developments from professional and statutory bodies; and,
 - informing the College of any matters that may require broader consideration.
46. Responsibility for the Annual Monitoring process is a devolved responsibility to programme teams and is managed locally. Programme leaders conduct a review of the programme and its modules following the completion of teaching and assessment.
47. There are four main elements that are monitored and reported. To begin with, various forms of data are considered: student numbers; student performance; feedback from students, staff and any external organisations; and any other performance indicators that have been identified. Secondly, good and innovative practices are highlighted for sharing and enhancing the College's practice. There is then a critical reflection on the information gathered and plans proposed for improvement to respond to any issues or aspects of the provision that can be developed.
48. The outcomes of the reviews are reported through the College's formal deliberative structure by means of monitoring reports. The report is important for documenting that quality and standards are being assured and enhanced and that good practice is being promoted. The monitoring reports are formally considered by the College's Academic Board. The Academic Board reviews the monitoring reports to: identify any trends and common themes across the programmes; identify good practice with potential application across the wider College; and to ensure a timely response and action, where appropriate, to issues raised for resolution at College level.
49. The College's reporting procedure is designed to ensure that issues arising from monitoring are properly considered, reflected on and acted upon at each stage and at relevant committees. Importantly, responses are also provided at each stage: closing the feedback loop and ensuring that actions and outcomes are reported back to students and staff is a crucial element of the College's Annual Monitoring activity as well as other processes.
- External Examining**
50. The College's External Examiners provide a crucial element of objectivity and externality in helping the College to maintain our academic standards at the appropriate level and to ensure that the performance of our students is properly and fairly judged. Accordingly, the role of the external examiner is a vital element in the College's quality assurance framework and contributes greatly to quality enhancement.
51. External examiners are appointed for all taught programmes (undergraduate and postgraduate) and for research degree candidates. They are formally appointed for a three-year term of office by the College's Academic Board on the recommendation of programme teams and the College

Academic Registrar following scrutiny by the College's Academic Dean. The College only appoints examiners who have the appropriate seniority and experience and have no conflicts of interest.

52. The College's external examiners are full members of the relevant Board of Examiners and are invited to all meetings of the Board for the programmes which they examine. They should attend, at least, the main meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners, if not in person then virtually via a secure network. Where attendance either in person or virtually is prevented by exceptional circumstances, then the external examiner must provide a written report on the examination prior to the meeting of the Board.
53. In carrying out their full role, External Examiners are expected to:
- comment on the syllabus, learning objectives and assessment scheme of the programme and its delivery mechanism in the light of experiences of students' learning outcomes, comparable courses and awards that they are familiar with elsewhere and developments within the discipline or field;
 - comment on, in advance, all summative assessment instruments (or, in cases involving a high volume of continuous assessment, a sample may be provided for advance comment);
 - report on the overall standards achieved by students and, in particular, on the comparability of these standards with those of candidates on similar courses or programmes in other higher education institutions that they are familiar with;
 - report on the relationship between these overall standards and the expectations set out in the *Maltese Qualifications Framework*;
 - assess the soundness and fairness of the implementation of the assessment process;
 - adjudicate where necessary, subject to the authority of the College's Academic Board, over the grade or class to be awarded to any particular student;
 - certify contentment with the assessment outcomes prior to their publication; and,
 - provide an annual written report to the College Principal.
54. To enable the College's external examiners to carry out their duties, the College's Academic Registrar provides them with induction information pertinent to their role and programme leaders supplement this with information on the particular programmes being examined. The College's Academic Dean is also available to provide guidance and support, as necessary.
55. The external examiners' annual written reports are received and reviewed by the College's Academic Registrar and categorised according to the type of response an examiner's comments require. Where comments have been made that require attention, the programme area is asked to discuss the issue and to report to the College Academic Registrar within three months on any
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action taken, or with the reasons for not taking action. Provided the response is satisfactory, the response is recorded and forwarded to the external examiner.

56. External examiners' reports and the follow up correspondence are used by the College in its annual monitoring and periodic review processes as well as in any external process of review.
57. In addition to their role in assessment, the College's external examiners may be consulted on proposals for the introduction or modification of a programme in their area of expertise as part of the College's programme design and approval processes.

Periodic Review Activity

58. The College operates a periodic internal review process which seeks to provide credible evidence that standards and quality of undergraduate and postgraduate provision at the College are being maintained. The College's periodic review process accordingly seeks to:
- cover all provision on a cycle of not more than six years;
 - review of the learning experience of all College students, including postgraduate research students;
 - make use of externals on review teams;
 - take account of the Maltese Qualifications Framework and extant guidance from the MFHEA;
 - review the effectiveness of the College's annual monitoring arrangements; and,
 - take full account of student feedback, including obtaining student views of the provision being reviewed.
59. The periodic review process provides a formal opportunity for a programme area to reflect on and critically evaluate its provision and to benefit from a constructive dialogue with colleagues outwith that area. The process is intended to be positive and constructive, supporting College staff in the enhancement of their activities. The periodic review process covers the following aspects of provision:
- teaching, learning and assessment;
 - the student experience;
 - quality assurance and enhancement procedures; and,
 - academic management, research and resources as they relate to teaching, learning and assessment.

60. Each review is carried out by a small panel of College staff that includes a student representative and an external member. The Panel includes a member of staff from the College's central administration, who has expertise in the process and is responsible for preparing the report.
61. The format of the review can be summarised as follows:
- the preparation of a self-evaluation document by the programme area being reviewed;
 - review of the documentation by the Panel;
 - discussions with delivery staff and students;
 - production of a report which is submitted to College's Quality Assurance Committee;
 - the preparation of an action plan based on the recommendations made in the Panel's report; and,
 - a report on the progress that has been made in respect of the recommendations to the College's Quality Assurance Committee six months from the receipt of the final report and further follow-on progress reports as deemed necessary by the Committee.
62. Engagement with, and the participation of, students are vital components of the College's periodic review process. Student engagement takes place prior to the review through briefings on the process; during the review through meetings and discussion with the Panel; and following the review through receipt of summary reports and discussion of the recommendations at SSLCs. There is also indirect engagement with students' views and feedback gathered in previous years and supplied as part of the documentation for the review.
63. The outcome of the College's periodic review process is a report that highlights strengths and achievements and includes recommendations for change that are aimed at strengthening provision and further enhancing learning and teaching provision and the student experience.
64. The final agreed report is submitted to the College's Quality Assurance Committee which endorses or amends the report and the recommendations and forwards them to the programme area and any others named in the recommendations for action. The Quality Assurance Committee reports any issues that may have an impact beyond the programme area or have more far reaching academic or resource implications to the College's Academic Board or College senior managers, as appropriate.
65. The College's Quality Assurance Committee monitors progress in addressing any recommendations arising from periodic reviews through update reports requested six months from the date that the Committee confirms the final agreed version of the report. The programme area is expected to provide feedback to students on the outcomes of the review and on the actions that have, or will be, taken. The Quality Assurance Committee may request further follow-up reports in certain specific circumstances, for example where progress in completing agreed actions has been limited or delayed.
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66. As well as using annual monitoring reviews, external examiner reports and SSLC minutes as part of the core set of documentation, periodic reviews also feed back into the annual monitoring process through the expectation that programme areas will comment on the impact of the periodic review process on provision in their area in the next round of annual monitoring.

The College's public information on quality and standards

67. The College seeks to ensure that the information it publishes about its academic provision, through whatever media, is: accurate, honest and complete; is not misleading to members of the public, prospective students, and employers, as well as current students; and is accessible to the intended users.
68. The College's approach is to openly share online, as far as possible, relevant reports, guidance and other documentation concerning our provision and our quality processes, their outcomes and follow-up.