Ulster Integrated Curriculum Design Framework: A Guide for Students

Introduction

This is a quick guide for students who have volunteered to be, or are thinking about becoming, part of the team reviewing their course in preparation for revalidation.

It will explain key terms used throughout the process, and a provide a quick overview of what will be involved.

Key Terms

Before we begin talking about *why* you should get involved in this process – we will unpick some of the language that will be used:

Ulster Curriculum Design Framework: this framework has been developed to help course teams structure the process of reviewing their programmes – it is an eight-stage approach to curriculum design and provides toolkits and resources to facilitate the process.

Revalidation: *'The primary purpose of revalidation is the re-affirmation of the standards set for the awards and the courses within the unit and their continuing currency and relevance to the University.'* Basically: this means that all courses taught at Ulster University will be subjected to a full review every five years. The curriculum and teaching methods are reviewed and refreshed and are presented to a panel of reviewers.

Curriculum: *'the subjects comprising a course of study in a school or college'* – this is *what* you will be taught.

Pedagogy: *'the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept'* – this is *how* you will be taught.

The Role

The main function of this process is to ensure your course is fit for purpose and providing students with the best academic and University experience. As the people who have experienced this first hand, your input is essential to this process.

Depending on the timeline for the process and your time commitment, there are several ways in which students can be involved:

- face-to-face engagement between staff and students in the form of a workshop exploring all aspects of the subject area;
- A dedicated survey (online or hardcopy) – students could be involved in helping to design this, as well as encouraging participation;
- Focus groups involving a range of students at different stages of the student lifecycle;
- Co-creating modules with staff.

Who will else will be part of the process?

The team will ordinarily be led by a member of staff – the 'Subject-Lead'. This person will be responsible for setting the timeline for each stage and organising the component parts of each. They will also pull together the final document.

As with students, other members of staff will be involved at different stages of the review – module coordinators, course directors and your Head of School.

Why be Involved?

This is a great opportunity to influence the future direction of your course. You will gain invaluable experience of the curriculum design process, and the inner workings of putting together a full programme.

You will also be meeting with staff and discussing important issues, which will develop your networking skills and your ability to communicate with a range of different people.

It's a fantastic opportunity to get more involved with your course team and contribute to the development of your subject!