

LSHTM main Action Plan in response to QAA Review 2012



Most recently updated 8 June 2016

The below action plan constitutes a formal response by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine to an Institutional Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency in December 2012 (official [review report](#) published in March 2013, ISBN 978 1 84979 819 8). QAA's report confirmed that LSHTM meets national expectations in all four review judgement areas, and made five recommendations and three affirmations which are addressed below. This action plan will be kept updated and re-posted on the LSHTM website as actions are completed.

This action plan has been jointly agreed between the institution and the Students' Representative Council. In parallel to this, a supplementary action plan has been agreed and published – aiming to address other comments from the report which were not formal recommendations, and to recognise and disseminate the seven features of good practice plus other positive points identified by QAA.

May 2014

The action plan has been updated with actions taken since the plan was published in May 2013. The School will continue to update the action plan on an annual basis until all the action points are closed.

April 2015

The action plan has been updated with actions taken since the revised plan was published last year. The School will continue to update the action plan annually, until all action points are closed.

June 2016

The action plan has been updated with actions taken since the revised plan was published last year. The School will continue to update the action plan annually, until all action points are closed.

#	Item from QAA report (inc. report paragraph references)	Lead responsibility	Action proposed	Deadline
			<p><u>Update May 2015</u> The School has introduced a new Code of Practice for Identifying, Designing & Managing Collaborative Provision. The new Code, along with its appendices, is available on the School's website.</p> <p>With the publication of this new Code, the School has decided to review again the legal documentation for existing collaborative courses to ensure that this is robust and in line with the principles of the new Code. This review will take place over the coming twelve months.</p> <p><u>Update June 2016</u> The School's review of its collaborative provision procedures has continued in 2015/16, with a Task & Finish group being formed to review and develop procedures around due diligence activities. The Task & Finish Group will make its final report to Senate Quality & Standards Committee later this month, and agreed recommendations will be delegated to relevant colleagues for action. An update on the outcomes of the Group, and progress on recommendations, will be provided in the 2016/7 update of this action plan.</p>	<p>End of April 2016</p> <p>End of March 2017</p>
2.	<p>Recommendation: LSHTM to satisfy itself that ultimate responsibility for all of its quality assurance processes is clearly identified. (paragraphs 1.2.3, 1.4.2, 2.1.4 and 3.1.2 – see sub-recommendations below relating to each of these) <i>QAA deadline:</i> By the start of the academic year 2013-14.</p>	ADoS for QSC	<p>Four specific sub-recommendations to be followed up as set out below. On a more overarching level, review clarity of regulations and quality-related policies and codes of practice regarding ultimate oversight and responsibility for all QA processes – to ensure that the School “is secure in its knowledge of the outcomes of all its quality assurance processes”.</p> <p><u>Update – May 2014</u> The School has appointed a new Associate Dean for Quality Management & Enhancement (QME). Along with the Dean of Studies and the new Head of the Quality &</p>	<p>End Sept 2013</p> <p>Action Point Closed</p>

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			<p>Management Team, the Associate Dean QME (who chairs the School's Quality & Standards Committee) will have oversight and responsibility for all QA processes. The Associate Dean QME reports to the Dean of Studies and has two peers (the Associate Dean for Student Experience & Programme Support and the Associate Dean for Technology-enhanced Learning & Teaching) who are also involved in quality assurance and enhancement activities.</p>	
2a.	<p>Sub-recommendation: The School may wish to establish a process to assure itself that the induction of new external examiners has taken place. (paragraph 1.2.3)</p>	ADoS for QSC	<p>Develop, agree and put in practice a clearer policy on how new External Examiners are to be inducted into their role, and how this will be supported and monitored centrally. Will pilot with new Externals for 2012-13, prior to putting full new procedure in place for the 2013-14 academic year.</p> <p>Update – May 2014</p> <p>Having given careful thought to this point, the School has decided to implement a number of action points to ensure that the induction of external examiners takes place and is fit for purpose. Chairs of Boards of Examiners have been tasked with inducting new examiners (approximately six new appointments per year) on an individual basis. The School's Exam Board Handbook includes a <i>Checklist for Examiners</i>, which will be used by Chairs of Boards of Examiners and external examiners to establish the level of induction required. This may range from receipt of all necessary documentation for experienced examiners, to a visit to the School to meet with key staff and discuss processes for those with less experience or who are interested to learn more about the School and its procedures.</p> <p>Induction arrangements will be monitored by the School's Faculty Taught Course Directors who will report to School-level committees on the type of inductions being provided. New examiners will be asked to comment on</p>	<p>End Sept 2013</p> <p>Action Point Closed</p>

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			induction arrangements in their annual report and at Board of Examiners meetings. New examiners will also be asked to contact the Associate Dean for Quality Management & Enhancement if they believe their induction to be in anyway lacking or inadequate.	
2b.	Sub-recommendation: The School plans to modify [the Course Approval and Review] regulations to ensure an external representative is always included in future validation panels. (paragraph 1.4.2)	ADoS for QSC	Amend course approval regulations and procedures to require External input as part of new course approval processes. Update – May 2014 The School has updated its Course Approval & Amendments Policy and Procedure to state that an external representative forms part of the constitution of a validation panel.	End Sept 2013 Action Point Closed
2c.	Sub-recommendation: Access to support for teaching can vary between research degree students who hold a staff contract with the School and those who do not. The School may find it helpful to implement an institution-wide mechanism for ensuring all research degree students involved in teaching or supporting teaching know of, and have access to, the relevant staff development support. (paragraph 2.1.4)	DoS for RDC and LTC	Improve clarity of guidance to Research Degrees Students, especially in the RD handbook, about both opportunities to teach and access to ‘training for teaching’ activities available through the TED Programme (incl. elements of PGCILT). Update – May 2014 The School has updated its Research Degrees Handbook to include a section on teaching opportunities and training available through the Talent and Educational Development programme (Section 4.7).	End Sept 2013 Action Point Closed
2d.	Sub-recommendation: Responsibility for checking the currency and accuracy of programme specifications and handbooks lies with Course Directors, and with Module Organisers for module specifications. The Registry is responsible for the accuracy of the prospectus information which is drawn from the programme specifications. It was not clear however that there is a formal sign-off process for ensuring that there was consistency between programme specifications and the published web information, and	ADoS for QSC, working with AR(SA&F)	Revise and integrate procedures for annual updates and sign-off of both Programme Specifications and prospectus/web course information, to secure consistency and reliability. Note: since the review, responsibility for the publication of prospectus information has moved from the Registry to the Student Recruitment team in External Relations.	End Sept 2013

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	it was acknowledged that such a mechanism would secure the reliability of the information. (paragraph 3.1.2)		<p><u>Update – May 2014</u></p> <p>The School has developed a revised policy for updating and approving Programme Specifications and prospectus/web course information. The revised policy has been disseminated to the relevant staff.</p>	<p>Action Point Closed</p>
3.	<p>Recommendation: LSHTM to introduce more systematic and effective support for student representatives at all levels to enable them to understand and fulfil their duties (paragraph 2.3.4). QAA deadline: By the start of the academic year 2013-14.</p>	DoS for SEG, working with SRC Exec	<p>Initiate a task-and-finish working group, comprising both students and staff, to review and make recommendations on student engagement and representation mechanisms. Should link with plans to update the SRC Constitution.</p> <p><u>Update – May 2014</u></p> <p>In 2012/13 School formed a Student Representation and Engagement Working Group, comprising membership from the student body and staff from across the School. The Working Group made a number of recommendations, which resulted in the Student Charter being updated and the constitution of the Student Representatives Council being revised. The School will continue to work closely with its student representatives to ensure that the purpose and role of student representation is understood by those taking on these roles.</p>	<p>End Sept 2013</p> <p>Action Point Closed</p>
4.	<p>Recommendation: LSHTM to ensure that the voice of research degree students in the School is heard more effectively at the institutional level. (paragraph 2.3.5) QAA deadline: By the start of the academic year 2013-14. Also: “The Student Representative Council (SRC) is predominantly centred on face-to-face MSc students... Senior managers in the School recognise the challenge of encouraging coordination and leadership for research degree student representation”.</p>	DoS for SEG, working with SRC Exec and RD reps	<p>Initiate a task-and-finish working group, comprising both students and staff, to review and make recommendations on research degree student engagement and representation mechanisms. This should feed in to plans to update the SRC Constitution.</p> <p><u>Update – May 2014</u></p> <p>The Student Representation and Engagement Working Group (mentioned above in response to point 3) included representation from the research degree student cohort. The recommendations from this group helped to inform</p>	<p>End Sept 2013</p> <p>Action Point Closed</p>

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			the update of the SRC Constitution, subsequently the Council's Executive now includes provision for an elected Officer from the research degree student cohort. ▽	
5.	<p>Recommendation: LSHTM to introduce an effective institutional mechanism to monitor the formal meetings between all research degree students and their supervisors. (paragraph 2.10.4)</p> <p><i>QAA deadline:</i> By the start of the academic year 2013-14.</p>	Pro-Director (Learning & Teaching)	<p>RDC to review and consider updates to standard supervision monitoring mechanisms. Relates to mechanisms for progress monitoring and (UKBA-prompted) attendance monitoring.</p> <p>Update – May 2014 The School is investigating possible approaches for online progress monitoring. An e-Progress Monitoring System Working Group has been established to consider options and is in the process of arranging demonstrations of potential platforms for online progress monitoring.</p> <p>Once a platform has been identified, the School will consider the current mechanisms for progress monitoring and how these could translate to an online system. It is likely that consideration of this workflow could lead to changes in practice to achieve a fully effective institutional mechanism for monitoring formal progression.</p> <p>Update May 2015 Following on from the findings of the e-Progress Monitoring System Working Group, at its meeting in April 2015 the School's IT Service Board approved a request from the Research Degrees Committee that an online system be purchased to help support and modernise progress and supervision monitoring within the institution.</p> <p>Whilst this decision now awaits formal budgetary approval, it is anticipated that a group will be set up shortly to investigate options and bring the new system</p>	<p>End Sept 2013</p> <p>End April 2015</p> <p>End April 2016</p>

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			<p>online. An update will be provided in the next version of this action plan.</p> <p>Update June 2016</p> <p>The School has acquired Skills Forge to manage and monitor research student progress. A Working Group was formed at the start of 2015/16 to manage the design and implementation of the system (to be known as Student Journey Map), which is scheduled to go live at the start of 2016/17. The success of the new system will be monitored, and necessary developments will take place as and when identified. An update on the implementation of the Student Journey Map will be provided in the updated version of this action plan in 2016/17.</p>	<p>End March 2017</p>
6.	<p>Affirmation: The School is continuing to implement its online application system to improve the efficiency of applications to the institution and, where applicable, the process of applying for a visa to the UK Border Agency. (paragraph 2.5.2)</p>	AR(A&SF) for the Registry	<p>Action already in train to introduce online applications and admissions for all F2F provision by start of academic year 2013-14.</p> <p>Update – May 2014</p> <p>The new online application system was introduced for the 2014/15 admissions cycle for all face-to-face MSc and research degree applicants to the School. Additionally the School has appointed a permanent <i>Student Immigration & Compliance Officer</i> to assist with the visa application process. This is supplemented with a temporary Summer support post to aid with CAS issuance.</p>	<p>End Sept 2013</p> <p>Action Point Closed</p>
7.	<p>Affirmation: There is a continued focus on enhancing the quality and timeliness of pre-registration information ... there is still some progress to be made especially with timetables. (paragraph 2.5.4) (Comment about properly advising international students about visa processes etc. also given at paragraph 2.9.3, and ties in to</p>	AR(A&SF) for the Registry, with Student Recruitment	<p>Action ongoing by the Registry and by the Student Recruitment team (now based in External Relations) to improve the quality and accessibility of information on the website, the quality and clarity of direct email communications to applicants, and to ensure a regular flow of information to applicants from their earliest</p>	<p>End Sept 2013</p>

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	preceding affirmation about admissions processes supporting international students in applying for a UK visa).		<p>contact with the School. Clarity of information about applying for a UK visa is a key part of this. Enhancements expected to be substantively in place for peak of the 2013-14 admissions cycle.</p> <p>Update – May 2014</p> <p>Pre-registration information was updated in Summer 2013 through a collaborative project led by Registry and External Relations. The updates to the website also enhanced the use of social media platforms to aid recruitment processes. The School web pages are reviewed annually to ensure that material is current and appropriate.</p>	Action Point Closed
8.	<p>Affirmation: A new complaints and appeals policy is being introduced, alongside actions to increase awareness and transparency. (paragraph 2.6.3)</p> <p>Also: “there is little awareness amongst staff or students of the formal procedure which acts as a safety net in the absence of satisfactory informal resolution, and there is no recording or monitoring of the number or nature of informal complaints to inform enhancement” (paragraph 2.6.2; latter point also at paragraph 2.4.3)</p>	DoS for SEG	<p>Action already in train to revise Complaints and Appeals procedures. Input has been provided by an external consultant and the School’s solicitors, and the newly-revised chapter of the QAA Quality Code on this will be carefully reviewed to inform the final new procedures. We will also consider whether it may be possible to more systematically record informal complaints which do not progress to a formal stage.</p> <p>In publishing new procedures, it will be made clear how ongoing student awareness of these will be ensured.</p> <p>Update – May 2014</p> <p>The School has introduced new complaints and appeals procedures and these have been highlighted to students via the Research Degrees Handbook and MSc Course Handbooks. The School’s Registry web pages also contain information on complaints and appeals procedures with links to relevant policies.</p>	<p>End Sept 2013</p> <p>Action Point Closed</p>

For any queries on the above, please contact [Kate Marshall](#), Head of Quality & Academic Standards