

QAA HER Action Plan January 2017

While the process of undergoing the Higher Educational Review was onerous, it provided a good opportunity to ensure that our structures and procedures are in line with the Quality Code for Higher Education as we continue to offer theological education at ETS.

There are four main areas on which the review is focused. These are listed below together with appropriate action points.

1. The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered on behalf of degree-awarding bodies.

This met UK expectations. Thus, the Seminary has secure frameworks to ensure that standards are maintained at appropriate levels and that the definitive record of each programme is used to govern the award of academic credit and qualifications.

Action

Continue to maintain the frameworks in line with the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education, applying these standards rigorously to our present programmes: B.Th, and M.Th (by Taught Courses) and M.Th (by Research); and to the proposed postgraduate degree – Master of Theology in Missiology.

2. The quality of student learning opportunities.

The review team concludes that the quality of student learning opportunities at the Seminary meets UK expectations.

There are **two features of good practice** in this judgement area, relating to the innovative use of information technology within the distance-learning programme and to the collegial nature of the student experience.

Action

Continue to ensure that our use of information technology is effectively used within our distance learning programme to deliver the same student learning experience for all our students, on and off campus.

Continue to maintain a collegial ethos at ETS where all students are able to develop academically, personally and vocationally. We commend the student initiative in introducing a 'buddy' system for all new students, and the variety of social functions which help to build collegiate bonds which will often follow through into future areas of employment and service.

The review team made **three recommendations** in respect of the quality of student learning opportunities.

The first recommendation relates to the need to strengthen the process for internal moderation of marks.

Action

The Senate have updated their General Assessment Policy ensuring that the process of internal moderation is clearly laid out. All Course Organisers will take note of the updated policy. This will also be reported to the Board of Studies at its next meeting.

The second recommendation follows from the lack of formal oversight of placement provision.

Action

Professor Akroyd has drawn up an updated Placement Policy which has been agreed by the Senate. Following consultation with the student body, this will be implemented in the second semester of the 2016-17 session. This will also be reported to the Board of Studies at its next meeting.

The third recommendation is in respect of the development of an annual cycle of professional development opportunities for staff.

Action

While the Senate regularly discuss and take action on professional development opportunities for staff, the Senate agreed that it would be appropriate to draw up a formal ETS Staff Development Policy. This will also be reported to the Joint Board and to the Seminary Board.

3. The quality of the information about learning opportunities.

The review team found that managing the needs of students in respect of the provision of information is a clear focus of the Seminary's policies.

It concluded that the quality of the information produced about learning opportunities at the Seminary is commended.

There is one feature of good practice in this judgement area, relating to the comprehensive and detailed information provided to staff and students which effectively underpins the student learning experience.

Action

The Senate agreed to ensure that the information provided is constantly updated and accessible to all staff and students as appropriate.

4. The enhancement of student learning opportunities.

The review team concludes that the enhancement of student learning opportunities at the Seminary meets UK expectations.

Action

The Senate agreed to ensure that students are included in any proposed enhancement of student learning opportunities, the Vice-Principal to ensure that the SRC President is informed of all developments, and invited to all committee meetings as appropriate in order that he, in turn, might communicate providing a means by which administrative and academic staff may benefit from and communicate with the student body.