



## **Open University Validated Partnerships (OUVP)**

### **Programme Monitoring**

#### **Guidance Notes for Partner Institutions completing Programme Monitoring Reports for Open University Validated Programmes**

#### **Academic Year/Cycle**

**2023 – 2024**

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## 1. Introduction

Institutional and Programme Monitoring is an integral part of the OU's quality assurance processes for validated provision and enables institutions to demonstrate that their OU validated programmes continue to meet the quality and standards requirements defined by the University.

This document provides guidance on how to complete the Programme Monitoring Report and you should use these guidance notes when completing the Programme Monitoring template.

All institutions must submit a Programme Monitoring Report for all validated programmes each year. If the award is split, with both an FD and a Top-up (or as a nested award), **the programmes should be reported as one.**

Programme Monitoring reports consist of two main components:

- A MS Excel spreadsheet to record the various data and statistics as requested
- A MS Word template to provide commentary on the above data, narrative and reflection on the various themes included.

All sections requiring commentary must be completed in full. Please note that you are being asked to provide data, comments and reflection for the current academic year: 2023-2024. The intention is that you will update and work on this document throughout the course of the academic year.

## 2. Submissions

OUVV have created an individual Microsoft Teams site for each Partner, which is a dedicated space for all Institutional and Programme Monitoring templates to be edited and saved. At each submission point, you must ensure that the Programme Monitoring Reports are saved in the designated location on the MS Teams site. Once saved, **please email to: [OUVP-monitoring@open.ac.uk](mailto:OUVP-monitoring@open.ac.uk)** indicating that your report has been submitted and copying in your SQPM.

The Programme Monitoring Report is a cumulative document, which can be dynamically updated throughout the Academic Year/Cycle. Deadlines for each submission point must be agreed with your Senior Quality & Partnerships Manager (SQPM) ahead of the Academic Year/Cycle.

Typical timeframes are listed below:

Submission	Date
<b>A – Student Recruitment</b>	Within eight weeks following each registration deadline.
<b>B – Progression and Achievement</b>	Within two weeks of each progression and awarding Board of Examiners.
<b>C – Reflection and Feedback</b>	within eight weeks following the end of the Academic Year (submitted alongside the Institutional Overview).

Institutions may have varied submission points throughout the Academic Year/Cycle depending on their size, recruitment patterns and academic calendars. These should be agreed with your SQPM and reviewed on an annual basis prior to the commencement of a new Academic Year/Cycle.

Meeting deadlines is critical for the Institutional and Programme Monitoring cycle and institutions are required to plan ahead to ensure that these are met. If you know that your templates will not be complete by the deadline date, you must contact your SQPM **at least two weeks in advance of the deadline** for further instructions. Please note that any extension requests must be approved at Senior Management level or equivalent within your institution.

If you have any questions about Institutional & Programme Monitoring, please contact your SQPM.

### 3. OUVP Feedback

OUVP will provide their initial feedback on this section within 4 weeks of the prescribed submission deadline date and may include the following:

#### Commendations

These are areas for commendation as identified in the information provided in the report. No further action is required by the institution.

#### Items for Next Year's Report

These are actions that may require further reflection and planning, and institutions are required to respond to these items in next Academic Year's report. All items for next year's report arising throughout the report should be listed on the respective field.

#### Items from Last Year's Report

These are actions recorded in last academic year's report as items for next year's report. You are required to provide a response to all such actions. Missing or incomplete responses will automatically trigger immediate actions to be addressed as described in the relevant section above.

#### Immediate Actions

These are items that require immediate resolution. It is a requirement that institutions provide satisfactory responses to immediate actions to allow the monitoring cycle for each programme to be concluded. All immediate actions arising throughout the report are listed in the Immediate Actions field. Institutions are advised to provide their responses underneath each immediate action, indicating so by different font colour.

You are required to respond to Immediate Actions within 6 weeks of receiving feedback from OUVV. Please email [OUVP-monitoring@open.ac.uk](mailto:OUVP-monitoring@open.ac.uk) to indicate that your responses have been submitted into your designated IPM MS Teams site, and copying in your SQPM. OUVV will provide their initial feedback for each submission within 4 weeks of the submission deadline (or 4 weeks after the submission is received if a later date has been agreed). Feedback may indicate that further information is required, in which case the above sequence is repeated until all immediate actions have been addressed.

### Other Reportable Items

These are items arising during the academic year that are not discussed in the report. Such items may have been recorded through interaction with Academic Reviewers and/or External Examiners, as well as scheduled events and routine meetings with OUVV. They may include an exceptional achievement by a member of staff or student, an issue revealed during a validation event, or feedback from staff or students on a specific matter, amongst others.

This section may also be used to provide generic feedback on the content of the report and the overall quality of reporting.

Reportable items may also require further response and will be designated accordingly where appropriate, i.e., commendation, immediate action, etc, and may also be informing the OUVV feedback in the Institutional Overview for the current cycle.

## **4. General Guidance on Reporting**

When providing commentary, please critically reflect on the data or area in question and give in-depth responses in your commentary. One-word answers, or too brief sentences, do not convey enough detail to draw meaningful analysis for either your institution or OUVV.

### **4.1 Current Plan**

The Current Plan must list all actions recorded in the Forward-Looking Plan of the respective report from the previous academic year/cycle. You are required to provide any update on progress for each action, also indicating whether the action has been successfully completed.

A separate field is also provided where you may reflect on the impact of the actions taken as part of the programme action plan e.g., how successful were the actions taken to meeting the target, what impact did the target completion have on the programme? Please comment on individual actions separately where appropriate.

Please note that the Current Plan must be updated with every submission as appropriate.

### **4.2 Submission A: Student Recruitment**

This section requires reporting on your recruitment data for the new academic year/cycle.

#### Student Recruitment – Data tables

Please populate the tables under the Submission A tab in the Excel Spreadsheet with your programme recruitment figures for the new academic year, for each programme. Please note, separate columns are available for the recording of the different levels of awards – see cells B3, C3 and D3, where drop-down boxes should be selected to choose the appropriate programme level.

Please ensure all tables are complete. Information in the table above is designed to help with this.

<b>Recruitment Figures</b>	
<b>Title</b>	<b>Description</b>
Target	Target number of students set by institution to recruit for the intake this academic year/cycle.
Applied	Total number of applicants who had applied for a place this academic year/cycle.
Offered Place	Total number of applicants who subsequently were successful and offered a place to study at the institution this academic year/cycle.
Enrolled	Total number enrolled this academic year/cycle.
Staff	Total number of the institution's staff that have enrolled for this programme.
Standard Admissions	Total number of students enrolled through standard admission for this programme.
Enrolled with RPL	<p><b><u>Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)</u></b></p> <p>We are requesting information regarding three types of RPL:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Recognition of Experiential Learning (RPEL)</li> <li>5. Recognition of Certificated Learning (RPCL)</li> <li>6. Direct Entry via Stage Exemption</li> </ol> <p>Data recording the total number of students who have applied for RPL (broken down by RPEL/RPCL/Direct Entry) should be captured.</p>
Students enrolled as part of an apprenticeship programme	Total number of students studying the award as part of an apprenticeship programme.
Highest Qualification on entry	Please use the drop-down menu to provide statistics on the highest qualification obtained by enrolled students.

**Please note:** All cells designated as “difference to total enrolled” must equate to zero (0), as this will ensure that all enrolled students are accounted for.

#### A1 Student Recruitment – Commentary

Please provide a detailed overview in the respective section of the Word Template, of the patterns and trends you can see in the data set. These should be compared with the previous year's recruitment data (if available), including commentary on any trends.

Please note that with smaller cohorts of under 20 students, quantitative analysis (reflected as percentages) is not meaningful. You may prefer to comment on qualitative data and trends instead.

Please comment on any changes that have been applied to the entry criteria. Please state what these changes were, when they were made, and whether they have had any impact on these statistics or this student intake. **Please note** changes to entry criteria should always be approved by OUVV in advance of them being implemented. If no changes have been made, then this should be clearly stated.

Please ensure you comment on any changes to recruitment strategies. This can include everything from changes to marketing strategies, to the use of agents. If your recruitment strategy has been recently reviewed, please provide reflection on the resulting changes. If no changes have occurred, then this should be clearly stated.

Please provide information regarding any potential conflicts of interest such as, where a member of the institution's staff is a student on the programme or has a close professional or personal relationship with a student. Please explain what mitigations will be used to manage any conflicts.

### A2 Student Profile – Commentary

Please provide a detailed analysis of the student profile for the programme, noting the trends or patterns in comparison to previous cohorts.

- Is there anything unusual in the profile of this cohort? If so, this should be explored and discussed.
- Are the profiles as you would expect?
- Are there areas that could be improved, for example could strategies be introduced to improve diversity in the student body?

When providing commentary, please provide detailed analysis of underrepresented groups, such as disabled students and those who are Black or from Minority Ethnic groups (BAME).

### A3 RPL – Commentary

Please provide detailed commentary on the RPL process, explaining how it has been applied for each student. Please report on any trends which have been identified in relation to RPL. These students should be tracked separately, to monitor any specific issues which may emerge in relation to RPL entry.

Please also include any commentary applicable to direct entry students.

### OUVP Feedback on Submission A

OUVP will provide their initial feedback on this section within 4 weeks of the prescribed submission deadline date. It may include immediate actions to be addressed by the institution. These will be listed within the Immediate Actions field.

## **4.3 Submission B: Progression and Achievement**

This section collates data and commentary relating to the retention, progression and achievement of students for this academic year/cycle. This submission should be submitted **within two weeks** of each assessment board. You are only asked to complete Submission B for award and progression boards (there is no requirement to comment on module boards). The spreadsheet provides fields for two such boards by default; if you are reporting on more than two award and progression boards within a single academic year/cycle, you may copy and paste the relevant rows below "Exam Board 2 Data" as appropriate.

Re-sit boards

Please add data and reflection from any re-sit boards to section B, prior to completing your next scheduled submission as agreed with your SQPM. Please ensure that your additional reflections are recorded in a different text colour, for ease of consideration. This can then be submitted at the same time as your next scheduled submission.

B1 Progression and Retention - Data Table

Definitions of the terms used within the table can be found in the Glossary on page 13.

B1 Progression and Retention – Commentary

A full commentary relating to the data should be provided. Patterns and trends relating to previous years should be included where appropriate.

Please feel free to use existing commentaries produced for other external bodies (eg. OfS) if applicable.

Institutions must provide a detailed analysis of underrepresented groups in their commentary as applicable to their region, e.g., Black or from Minority Ethnic groups (BAME) for institutions based in England.

B2 Achievement – Data Table

This table is split for different types of awards, honours and others (e.g., postgraduate awards). Exit awards should be captured under 'other'. The "total" column will populate automatically.

B2 Achievement – Commentary

A detailed overview of the patterns and trends emerging from the data set, including comparisons with previous years, must be provided where appropriate.

- Do these trends align with your expectations? If not, please discuss further.
- If students are exiting prior to achieving the qualification they enrolled for, what are the reasons for this?

Please note that with smaller cohorts of under 20 students, quantitative analysis (reflected as percentages) is not meaningful. You may prefer to comment on qualitative data and trends instead.

UK-based institutions must provide a detailed analysis of underrepresented groups such as, disabled students and those who are Black or from Minority Ethnic groups (BAME) in their commentary.

B3 Appeals, Complaints and Disciplinary – Data Table

Please include the relevant data for all appeals, complaints, disciplinary cases and extenuating circumstances (mitigations).



B3 Appeals, Complaints and Disciplinary – Commentary

Please provide reflective commentary on all appeals, complaints and disciplinary cases and extenuating circumstances (mitigations). Please highlight any identified trends and actions taken as a result of these trends. You should include a summary of how cases were dealt with through the institutional processes (a diagram or flow chart outlining the process may be added). Please outline any action planned to encourage good academic practice, or to address issues identified.

B4 Destination Data – Data Table

Please make every effort to complete the destination data table where information is known of the destination of graduates. If the data is unknown at the time of submission, please add when you complete your next scheduled submission.

B4 Destination Data – Commentary

Comment on any trends which may emerge regarding graduates from the award.

OUPV Feedback on Submission B

OUPV will provide their initial feedback on this section within 4 weeks of the prescribed submission deadline date. It may include immediate actions to be addressed by the institution. These will be listed on the Immediate Actions field.

There may be feedback in this section from specific queries raised by MRAQCP regarding the exam board paperwork.

**4.4 Submission C: Reflection and Feedback**

This section requires an overall evaluation of your validated programmes.

C1. Comment/Reflect on outstanding recommendations from most recent (re)validation

All recommendations must be listed, whether or not they have been met. OUPV feedback from Programme Monitoring will indicate when further reporting on recommendations is no longer required.

C2. Comment/Reflect on engagements with PSRB's (include / attach any reports received)

It is recognised that not all partners will engage with PSRBs. If the programme is recognised by other accrediting bodies (including overseas), please report on any recent interactions with such bodies.

**Sections C3 – C8.** As well as describing the processes undertaken, please demonstrate how and why you have acted upon feedback.

C3. Please reflect upon External Examiner feedback received and any resulting actions

Please respond to all External Examiner comments, including positive and negative feedback, and ensure that all recommendations have been addressed and/or translated into an Action embedded in the Forward-Looking Plan. Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

**Please ensure a copy of the formal response to the External Examiner's report is included within this submission.**

C4. Please comment and reflect upon engagement with, and feedback received from, your Academic Reviewer

In this section, please report on feedback/actions following the annual meeting between your Academic Reviewer and students and any other Academic Reviewer support you have received through the year (please include Actions in the Forward-Looking Plan). Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

C5. Comment and reflect on staff feedback and evaluation of the programme

In this section, the programme team should reflect on the aspects of the programme that worked well this year and include any identified areas for further development (the latter should be included in the Forward-Looking Plan). Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

If applicable, please reflect on the impact and effectiveness of any recent changes which have been made to the programme, over the last academic year.

If applicable, please provide a copy of any programme staff survey.

C6. Comment and reflect on employer feedback received and how it has informed programme development

In this section, please reflect on any engagement with employers. This could include work-based placements or projects (including 'live' projects) or employer involvement in programme development. Please include what has worked well, and why, and any identified areas for further development (which should be included on the Forward-Looking Plan). Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

Please include details on the mechanisms used to seek employer feedback and the frequency of interaction. Please provide a copy of any employer survey, if available.

C7. If this programme is an apprenticeship and/or includes work placements, comment and reflect on student performance in the workplace, and overall management of apprenticeship/work placement

This section should only be completed if a degree apprenticeship is offered as part of the programme.

It is imperative for such programmes that there has been extensive and robust engagement with employers. Reflection on how their feedback will be used to enhance and develop the programme is an integral part of any apprenticeship offer. You are also required to reflect on any arising matters, the interaction with the employer to monitor student progress and achievements, as well as the overall the student experience within the workspace. Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

C8. Articulate how student feedback for the programme is collated, analysed, acted upon and fed back

Please describe the mechanisms used for gathering student feedback and advise how frequently feedback is sought and responded to.

Please include information on the effectiveness of student engagement in quality processes this year, for example student representation on committees.

If your institution is eligible for the UK National Student Survey, please reflect on the outcomes of this survey. Please note that this survey is aimed at mainly final-year undergraduates in UK institutions.

Copies of surveys used at programme and module level should be included in this submission. Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

C9. Reflect on student feedback received and any actions taken

Please provide a detailed narrative which articulates the analysis of student feedback collected through all mechanisms. Response rates to each survey used must be explicit. Describe any resulting actions which have been, or will be taken, and ensure appropriate tracking of these on the Forward-Looking Plan. Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

C10. Staffing

Please list all programme staff. Any new academic staff should be highlighted and a copy of their CV and the role specification for which they were recruited be attached (if this has not been submitted previously). You are also required to provide a staff development record for each member of staff, as probed by the relevant column.

C11. Commentary on academic and administrative staff resourcing and turnover

Please comment on any increase or decrease in the total staffing resource for the programme (including teaching and administrative staff) and advise the reasons behind any changes.

Please report on how teaching has/will be covered whilst recruiting for any replacement staff.

If there has been a high turnover of teaching staff, please provide an explanation for this and reflect on the impact of any staff turnover on the student experience.

If there have been significant changes in student numbers recruited the impact of this on the staff team should be included in the commentary.

Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

C12. Commentary regarding any changes to the physical resourcing of the programme

Please report on the enhancement of learning resources, equipment and facilities (including studio/workshop spaces, if applicable) during the past academic year.

Please comment on the impact on teaching facilities and learning resources when there has been a significant change in student numbers. Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

C13. Submit details regarding any planned Moderate or Major Changes to the programme

Please refer to the OU Handbook for the definition of Moderate and Major Changes and the process to be followed.

Please note, it is recommended that Major Changes to programmes are not introduced in the 12 months leading up to revalidation.

Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.  
**Please note: No changes should be implemented without prior approval from the OU.**

C14. Submit details regarding Minor Changes which have been implemented during this cycle.

This should include acknowledgement of the updating of reading lists. These should be reviewed and updated annually to ensure subject currency.

Resulting actions must be clearly identified as instructed at the bottom of this field.

**Please note:** The Programme Evaluation Checklist must be completed, and the Statement of Compliance must be signed off **as part of Submission C**. Both items can be found at the end of the report.

OUVP Feedback on Submission C

OUVP will provide their initial feedback on this section within 4 weeks of the prescribed submission deadline date. It may include immediate actions to be addressed by the institution. These will be listed on the Immediate Actions field.

**4.5 Forward-Looking Plan**

The Forward-looking plan is used to capture all actions resulting throughout the report and must be updated with every submission. You are also expected to include actions targeting identified enhancements for the forthcoming year and anticipated activities in preparation for upcoming revalidations.

Please ensure all actions follow the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) criteria and are specific to the programme.

The Action Tracker must be endorsed by the Academic Board or equivalent following approval by the programme committee/programme team.

A separate field is also provided where you may elaborate further on the aims of planned actions where appropriate. For actions completed during the running academic year/cycle, please reflect on the impact of the actions taken as part of the programme action plan e.g., how successful were the actions taken to meeting the target, what impact did the target completion have on the programme? Please comment on individual actions separately where appropriate.

Programme Evaluation Checklist

Please ensure that all items listed under this section are made available with your Submission C, where applicable, and tick the respective boxes to indicate so.

Statement of Compliance

Please ensure that the Statement of Compliance is signed by the relevant signatory before submission C is submitted.

## Glossary

<b>Term/Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Appeals	Appeal against a decision of a Board of Examiners due to administrative error/irregularity/not in accordance with regulations or extenuating circumstances
AR	OU Academic Reviewer
Complaints	An expression of dissatisfaction with a service provided or the lack of service
Deferred	Approval for a student to postpone an attempt at an assessment due to extenuating circumstances, when they have received tuition in all modules.
Direct Entry via Stage Exemption	Exemption to a stage of a programme without award of OU credit
Disciplinary	Serious breach of institutional policies and rules
Interruption of Study	Approval for a student to take a study break for a maximum period of 12 months due to extenuating circumstances
MRAQCP	Module Results Approval and Qualifications Classification Panel
OfS	Office for Students
OUP	Open University Validation Partnerships
Progression	Advancement by a student from one stage of a programme to a higher stage having passed all assessments
PSRB	Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies
Referred/Resit	A second attempt of an assessment component following failure at first attempt
Repeat/Retake	Partial or full retake of all failed modules/assessment components during the following academic year having failed a resit
Retention	Students that have passed all assessments, remain registered and have progressed to the next stage of the programme
RPL	Recognised Prior Learning
RPEL	Recognised Prior Experiential Learning
RPCL	Recognised Prior Credited Learning
(S)QPM	(Senior) Quality and Partnership Manager
Transferred	Student transferred to a different programme within the institution
Withdrawn	Student withdrawn from a programme