

**DRAFT; Revised November 2019**

**Guide to the Peer-Review Process**

**and**

**Documentation Required for Peer Review**

*WP 5: ‘New/Revised Curriculum, Evaluation, and National Guidelines’*

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

This document is a guide to some of the key things that we will need to do.

Each Ukrainian university partner will have a Course Development Team (CDT); the people who will be working on the re-design and changes made to the two new/revised Journalism/Media programmes. Members of the CDT will have responsibility for deciding who will produce the documents needed for peer review, and who should represent the CDT when the peer-review panel conducts its site visit.

**2. PEER REVIEW PANELS**

Our DESTIN Application document says that we will form three peer-review panels that will study the documentation provided by each CDT, conduct site visits to each Ukrainian university, and produce a report on the findings. Although we should expect each panel to be quite formal in the way that it operates (as if it were an official validating/course-approval panel), it is important to remember that the purpose of the panel is *developmental* (to give advice about what has been achieved and what enhancements can be made) rather than *judgemental*.

**2.1 Remit and Conduct of Panels**

The remit of each panel is to a conduct desk- and site-visit review the two new/revised Journalism/Media programmes at each university; to report its findings; and to offer any advice that may help the CDT at each university to further enhance its new/revised programmes.

Panels will conduct their work in a professional manner, in accordance with European conventions for peer review of academic programmes. Each panel will be chaired by one of the EU members: she/he will be responsible for the work of the panel and the production of the Report following a desk review and site visit. A draft of the Report (excluding reference to particular individuals by name or title) will be shared with the CDT for comment and advice. It will aim to do this within a month of the site visit. The CDT will be asked only to check matters of factual accuracy. The Panel will review the draft report in the light of any feedback received from the CDT, and send its final report to the DESTIN Governing Board.

It is important that everyone respects the integrity of the work of the panels. All members of a panel (including all ‘internal’ members from the host university) will therefore be expected to work confidentially once the peer-review process begins. This may include correspondence between panel members and online discussions during desk review, and private meetings and discussions during and after site-visits. Throughout the review process, any and all questions about the work of the panel should therefore be addressed to, and answered through, the Chair of the panel.

Following the production of the 10 Peer Review Reports, the DESTIN ‘National Guidelines Group’ will prepare two ‘National Guideline Statements for Journalism Programmes’.

**2.2 Composition of Panels**

The composition is set out in the DESTIN Application document. In short, we will establish three panels (all working to the same remit) in order to share the work (including site visits) among all of our partners and make the review process as educationally productive and economically efficient as we can. We expect each panel to be chaired by an EU partner and to have about 9 members:

* 5 ‘external’ members (3 from EU partners, 1 from UAS, and 1 from HR).

*We will need to plan the ‘external’ membership of each panel according to the availability and expertise of colleagues.*

* 4 ’internal’ (host university) members (i.e., 2 members of staff, one student/recent graduate, one local employer representative).

Staff. We will ask each Ukrainian university to nominate its two ‘internal’ staff members of the panel. Between them, the two staff members of the panel should have some knowledge of the EQF and the nature of Journalism/Media programmes. One of them might be a Journalism ‘academic’ (e.g., Head of Department), and the other might be from the university’s Professional Services/Administrative staff (such as a Quality Assurance officer, or a senior manager).

Student. The student member of the panel could be nominated by the CDT or the university’s Students’ Union or equivalent. The student might be currently enrolled on one of the Journalism/Media degrees, or be a recent graduate from one of them. As with the staff members, the student member will need to be able to contribute to the overall work of the panel.

Employer. It would probably be best if this person, chosen by the CDT, has already been involved in the work of the Journalism/Media programmes; someone who knows and cares about the ‘employability’ of Journalism/Media graduates. We would expect the employer member to contribute to the overall work of the panel.

So, the 5 ‘external’ members of each panel will be fixed, and the 4 ‘internal members’ will change for each university’s review. We will discuss the composition of the panels at our Kyiv meetings in May 2019.

*Note.* All panel members should have a working knowledge of English. If a panel member does not, then the host university must ensure that translation is available for that member throughout the peer-review process. The host university should also try to ensure that any staff, students or employers who have been asked to meet the peer-review panel, but who have not previously been involved in the DESTIN project, are sufficiently prepared/briefed about the purposes of the review, the documentation that the panel has received, and the way that the panel will conduct its work.

**2.3 Work of Panels**

The work of each panel will be the same; conducting a desk review of the documents submitted by the CDT of the university, conducting a site visit to the university, holding online discussions among panel members, and producing a report.

We expect Panel 1 to be responsible for 4 peer reviews (IFNUL, UCU, UzhNU, CHNU); Panel 2 to undertake 3 peer reviews (MSU, ZNU, SSU); and Panel 3 to undertake 3 peer reviews (TSNUK, BKNUC, MEHU).

* ***Desk Reviews***

Each panel will share the documents submitted by each CDT for review and (through the Chair) may allocate any particular responsibilities that they would like any individual members of the panel to undertake.

* ***Site Visits***

The site visits to each university will last 1 day.

The agenda for a site-visit might typically look like this:

* Arrival. *(half-hour meeting)*
* ‘Private Meeting’ of the Panel. *(2 hours)*
* Meeting with some members of the CDT at the host university; max. 4 people. *(1 hour)*
* Review of the Design of the two New/Revised Programmes; max. 6 people, 3 persons from each programme. *(2 hours)*
* Review of the Curriculum of the two New/Revised Programmes; max. 6 people, 3 persons from each programme. *(2 hours)*
* Meeting with Students/Alumni from the New/Revised Programmes; max. 8 people. *(1 hour)*
* ‘Private Meeting’ of the Panel. *(1 hour)*
* Outline Feedback to the CDT team. *(1 hour)*

It may be of benefit if a small number of colleagues from the host university or other DESTIN partners were able to observe the site-visit meetings of the panels (except those marked ‘private meeting’). If the Chair of the Panel agrees to such attendance, these colleagues would have strictly ‘observer’ status: they would not be members of the panel, and the work of the panel would not entail any discussions with them. All such observers would be expected to respect the integrity of the panel’s work.

* ***Reports***

Each Peer Review Panel will produce a Report on each university that it has reviewed (i.e., Panel 1 will produce four reports). The Report will set out key findings, outcomes, recommendations and commendations according to agreed criteria and format. The Panels will follow a common format for their Reports. An common format would be:

1. Brief statement about the DESTIN project; its goals, activities and outputs.
2. Brief statement about the peer-review process for DESTIN and list of panel members.
3. Observations on the documentation received.
4. Observations on the site-visit programme and process.
5. Assessment of the Design of the new/revised programmes. \*
6. Assessment of the Curriculum of the new/revised programmes. \*
7. Summary of findings: this may include commendations and/or recommendations.

Annex 1. List of the names and roles of staff and students met during the visit.

Annex 2. Programme for the site-visit.

\* In sections 5 and 6 of the Report, the panel will use a rating-scale (not achieved / partly achieved / largely achieved / fully achieved) or ‘not applicable’ to assess each of the ‘indicators of good practice’ for the new/revised programmes. Each assessment will be accompanied by a short commentary on the rating given. Each Section will also include a summary account of the extent to which the general Expectation has been met.

**3. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR PEER-REVIEW**

We need to ensure that each of our Peer Review Panels has the documentation that it needs in order to conduct its reviews; no more and no less. So it is important that everyone understands what is needed. The full documentation from each university should be provided at least six weeks before the start of the site-visit and should be sent (as a Word document) to the Chair of the Peer-Review Panel who will share it with the other members of the panel.

*Note on Additional Information/ Documentation.* It may be the case that following the desk review of documents or during a site visit, the panel may ask for some additional information from members of the CDT, or be offered it. We should try to avert the need for any additional documentation before or during a site visit by ensuring that the review panel has received the full and appropriate documentation required before the desk review begins. So, in normal circumstances, there should be no need for presentations, university tours, additional materials etc., to be undertaken or submitted before or during the site visit.

There are *four parts* to the documentation to be prepared by each CDT for the Peer Review Panel.

**PART 1: TWO NEW/REVISED PROGRAMME DESCRIPTORS (BA AND MA)**

A Descriptor should be provided for *each* of the two academic programmes in Journalism/Media. In some places these Descriptors might be called ‘programme handbooks’ or ‘student handbooks’, but whatever they are called locally, they should contain:

**1.1** A **‘Brief Description of the Programme’**; its history and place within the academic strategies and structure of the university, its students, staff, resources, etc. *(guideline: maximum 2 pages.)*

**1.2** A statement of the **‘Aims/Goals of the Programme’**: explain its academic/educational rationale, and its value to students in terms of their needs and aspirations and employability/careers. *(max. 2 pages)*

**1.3** An outline of the ‘**Structure of the Programme’**; including the list of modules at each level, what is mandatory (required) and optional (elective), the mode of delivery (e.g., full/part time, online), the sequence of delivery, ECTS values, etc. *(max. 2 pages or in a diagram)*

**1.4** A matrix showing the **‘Alignment of Learning Outcomes with Programme Aims’.** *(max. 2 pages)*

**1.5** The **‘Module Descriptors’**. These contain information about each module/course unit’s level, learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities, class-contact hours, student assessment tasks (and their relationship to the module learning outcomes), ECTS awarded. *(max. 1 page per module*)

**1.6** **‘Summary Description of Programme-level Quality Assurance Procedures’**: the key processes for monitoring (during course delivery: e.g., student consultations), evaluating (after the delivery of the course: e.g., end-of-module questionnaires), and enhancing (acting upon data collected from monitoring and evaluation, and from the programme team’s reflections: e.g., on student performance, new learning facilities, employment data, or professional association advice) to make changes that will enhance the quality of students’ learning opportunities, experiences and outcomes in the future. *(max. 3 pages)*

*Note.* The programme and module descriptors may contain many other kinds of information (e.g., about rooms, staff profiles, complaints procedures, learning resources, assessment regulations, etc.) There is no need to delete this information if it is already included in the programme descriptor or handbook.

**PART 2: A SELF-EVALUATION DOCUMENT (SED)**

The SED is central to the review process and should provide an evidence-based evaluation of the two academic programmes being reviewed. When writing the SED, it is important to consider that it will be read by all members of the peer-review panel: some of these members will not be familiar with the university’s particular structure and processes, so please include a glossary of acronyms if you think this will help.

The SED should be prepared by the CDT and in consultation with current students. It is also recommended that relevant stakeholders are consulted who can offer guidance about some aspects of the SED, in particular where it relates to a specific area of responsibility and interest. It is helpful to record in the SED where consultation has taken place and with whom.

The SED should contain information and reflection about *both* of the two academic programmes that have been aligned. If there are significant or substantial differences in the ways that the programmes have been developed at the university, these should be noted in the relevant sections of the SED.

To aid the writing and review process, I propose that we follow a common Template for the SED, using the following headings.

**2.1 National, Institutional and Professional Contexts** *(max. 3 pages)*

a) The National Context

An account of how the CDT has addressed the main requirements of course design in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Where the NQF is in strict or close alignment with European standards and requirements, there is no need for any comment. Attention should only be given here to any elements of the NQF that do not appear to be consistent with European standards, or that have posed particular difficulties for the CDT. (For example, if the NQF requires that universities award marks/grades simply for student class-attendance, such things should be noted.)

b) The Institutional Context

An account of any additional academic requirements that the university requires for the approval, validation and re-approval of its programmes. (For example, if the university regulations state that all students must undertake a module in a foreign language, or that all students must undertake traditional unseen examinations, these things should be noted.)

c) The Professional Context

If either of the two Journalism/Media programmes is governed by national/external professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (e.g., for the professional accreditation of graduates), please summarise the requirements of that organisation and how the requirement is met in the relevant academic programme. (For example, an external organisation requires all Journalism Masters students to undertake a six month internship, or to take a particular national test, these things should be noted.)

**2.2 Development of the Academic Programmes** *(max. 3 pages)*

This should be an account of how the two programmes have been developed within the university during the DESTIN project. It should include the following information:

a) a list of the main people (CDT) who have been involved, their university roles, and their roles within the DESTIN project;

b) a brief summary of how the CDT has undertaken its work, and the key stages of development in aligning the academic programmes;

c) a short statement of the main challenges that have been faced, and how (if possible)these have been addressed; e.g., as noted in the CDT ‘Action Plan’.

**2.3 Key Changes** *(max. 4 pages)*

a) an account of the main changes that have been made to the design and delivery of the programmes in the light of the DESTIN project;

b) an account of the main changes that have been made to the content/curriculum of the programmes in the light of the DESTIN project.

**2.4 Information about Students** *(max. 3 pages)*

Please provide information about the students studying the programme. This should include:

a) quantitative data on the two academic programmes: e.g., current student numbers, demographic data (ethnicity, gender, disability, age), entry standards, enrolments, course/study choices, progression rates, mobility, academic performance, post-award employment, international students.

b) qualitative data, in the form of short statements that would help panel members to understand how the design and content of the two academic programmes have been revised to provide learning opportunities, experiences and outcomes (employability)that address the nature and variety of future students’ needs and aspirations.

**PART 3: EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT OF NEW/REVISED PROGRAMMES WITH EQF**

A key part of the review documentation consists of a CDT self-assessment of the nature and extent to which academic programmes have been designed / developed to align with European and national standards and requirements. The peer-review panel will have an ‘Expectation’ of what good EQF alignment looks like.

To check alignment with the EQF, we have provided ‘Ten Indicators of Good Practice’ and we ask you to provide some critical reflection on how far you think you meet these indicators. In some cases, the indicators may only require a few lines of commentary and refer to evidence contained in the SED. I some cases, you may need to write a short paragraph about a particular indicator. Overall, you should not need to write more than 5 pages to cover all of the 10 Indicators. The panels will be looking for clear and short commentaries, and we will use our site visits to discuss your self-assessments.

Please remember that the primary purpose of our peer-review process is developmental and collaborative. There are few (if any) universities anywhere in the world that would claim to have a perfect set of answers with all the supporting evidence in response to every indicator, and certainly every university has its own particular ways of doing things. So, we are not looking for perfect answers and solutions. Try to give an honest account of how things stand at present (there’s no need to exaggerate success or to hide problems), as this will provide us with excellent platform for our discussions on how we can best help and support your development.

**3.1 Evidence of Alignment of Course Design with the EQF** *(max. 5 pages)*

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| The expectation of the panel will be:  **‘In designing and delivering the two new/revised programmes, the programme teams (including its teachers and supporters of student learning) will meet the appropriate European and national standards and requirements.’** |

10 Indicators of Good Practice:

1. The academic programmes are properly titled and lead to awards at the appropriate level, consistent with European and national frameworks for higher education qualifications, and the Dublin Descriptors for Masters’ awards.
2. The academic programmes are informed by and consistent with professional/industry standards/requirements, where appropriate.
3. The aims of the programmes are appropriate for the student intake, and can be realised through students’ attainment of the programme aims and module learning outcomes.
4. All learning outcomes for modules are at the appropriate level, and are assessed through fair, valid and reliable student assignments/tests.
5. Throughout their course of study, students are able to monitor their academic progress and development, and receive advice on how they can improve and enhance their work.
6. The teaching and learning activities employed within the modules are informed by reflection on professional practices, and designed to enable students to develop the knowledge, skills, abilities and professional competencies that will enable them to achieve the modules’ learning outcomes.
7. The structure of the programme ensures the progression of students’ learning, and provides appropriate opportunities for student choice.
8. The credit ratings (national and ECTS) for modules are properly aligned with the designated student workloads for the modules.
9. Students are provided with clear and up-to-date information about the learning opportunities and support available to them.
10. The design, delivery and monitoring of the academic programmes is ‘student centred’, engaging students collectively and individually as partners in the development, assurance and enhancement of their educational experiences (e.g., through effective representation of the student voice, discussions about opportunities for course enhancement, involvement in quality assurance processes, and the monitoring and evaluation of student experiences).

**PART 4: EVIDENCE OF THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM OF NEW/REVISED PROGRAMMES**

**4.1 Evidence of the Quality of the Curriculum** *(max. 5 pages)*

As with PART 3, a key part of the review documentation consists of a CDT self-assessment of the nature and intended impact of the changes that are being made to the curriculum of the new/revised Journalism/Media programmes. The peer-review panel will have an ‘Expectation’ of what we might expect a Journalism/Media programme to look like within a specific university context, and we will agree a general ‘Expectation’ for this, together with a set of ‘Indicators of Good Practice’ during 2019.

We ask you to provide some critical reflection on how far you think you meet these indicators. In some cases, the indicators may only require a few lines of commentary and refer to evidence contained in the SED. I some cases, you may need to write a short paragraph about a particular indicator. Overall, you should not need to write more than a 5 pages to cover all of the 10 Indicators. The panels will be looking for clear and short commentaries, and we will use our site visits to discuss your self-assessments.

A Draft of the Expectation might be,

**‘In developing the curriculum of the two new/revised programmes, the programme teams have provided a curriculum that is well informed by knowledge of good international practices and is appropriate to national and institutional needs and contexts.’**