

Continuous Monitoring and Improvement 2011/12 – Frequently Asked Questions

General questions

Q1: What is Continuous Monitoring and Improvement?

A: The Continuous Monitoring and Improvement process is an important component in the University's quality assurance and enhancement procedures. It aims to support the maintenance of standards, to assure the consistency of learning opportunities and to enhance the quality of the learning experience for students by continually reviewing provision, identifying areas for improvement and taking appropriate and timely actions. The process focuses on objective, core data to inform senior managers, academic teams and other internal and external stakeholders of the health of units and courses across the University. It has replaced the former Annual Monitoring Exercise (AME) from 2011/12.

Q2: Which provision is covered?

A: Continuous Monitoring and Improvement applies to all taught courses of study offered by MMU whether they are delivered on-site or through collaborative partner organisations.

The Continuous Improvement Plan

Q3: Do programme teams need to complete a Continuous Improvement Plan for every course or every programme?

A: A single Continuous Improvement Plan is needed for each programme specification, and this Plan covers all courses within that programme specification. Programme teams are free to have a Continuous Improvement Plan for selected, individual courses within programmes if they wish.

Q4: Can programme teams group programmes together within a single Continuous Improvement Plan?

A: Normally a separate Continuous Improvement Plan is needed for each programme specification. However, in certain cases a FADC/UPB may deem that monitoring is more appropriately conducted on the basis of subjects or of programme groupings, in which case it must seek approval from the Academic Development Committee.

Q5: Who is responsible for preparing the Continuous Improvement Plan?

A: Responsibility for course level monitoring, including the preparation of the Continuous Improvement Plan, rests with the Programme Leader. Unit leaders are responsible for responding to feedback on units, including student feedback and unit health data. They

provide this feedback to the Programme Leader to inform the drafting of the Continuous Improvement Plan.

Q6: When do I prepare the Continuous Improvement Plan?

A: As the Continuous Improvement Plan is a live document, it is continually added to and updated. It commences during the Autumn Term 2011. It is submitted for approval to the Programme Committee and discussed with the Head of Department. As the Continuous Improvement Plan is a *live* action plan, it is updated throughout the year as actions are achieved or referred on, and as new issues for resolution or good practice are identified. An approximate timeline* for the availability of specific data, used to update the Continuous Improvement Plan, is available as Appendix B of the Continuous Monitoring and Improvement information which is available at http://www.mmu.ac.uk/academic/quality_assurance.php under the 'Programme Monitoring and Improvement' heading

*This timing may differ in the case of programmes which do not run to a 'standard' academic year.

Information, documentation and templates

Q7: Where can I find the Continuous Monitoring and Improvement templates and documentation?

A: You will find these on the CASQE website. Full information about the process is available at http://www.mmu.ac.uk/academic/quality_assurance.php under the 'Programme Monitoring and Improvement' heading and specific forms/templates are available at <http://www.mmu.ac.uk/academic/qamapps.php>

Collaborative provision

Q8: How does Continuous Monitoring and Improvement work for collaborative provision?

A: The same Continuous Monitoring and Improvement requirements apply to collaborative provision as for campus-based programmes. For **franchised** programmes, where collaborative provision is linked to an MMU home programme, a separate Continuous Improvement Plan must be maintained by each partner organisation / institution. Where delivery at the partner is limited to single units of study, unit reports should be completed. Partner Continuous Improvement Plans must be considered alongside the home programme Continuous Improvement Plan, comparisons should be noted and good practice shared as part of the departmental and faculty scrutiny of the Continuous Monitoring and Improvement process.

For **externally validated** programmes, the Continuous Improvement Plan should be completed by the partner Programme Leader and submitted to and discussed with the Head

of the link department, or equivalent, for inclusion in the Departmental Strategic Planning Process.

Collaborative partners may use their own systems for gathering and using data to evidence the Continuous Monitoring and Improvement process.

Issues requiring central/institutional action

Q9: What do I do if an identified area for improvement requires institutional action?

A: The issue should be recorded on the Continuous Improvement Plan and the Programme Leader should refer the issue to the appropriate central service/department, clearly indicating on the Continuous Improvement Plan that this has been done.

Q10: I am the Head of a central service. Where do I fit into Continuous Monitoring and Improvement?

A: The Continuous Improvement Plans prepared by programme teams include provision for the Programme Leader to refer issues requiring resolution to the appropriate central service provider/department. The central service should feed back to the Programme Leader on progress made towards resolving the issue referred, or with reasons if resolution is not possible. On an annual basis each central service provider submits a report to ADC of such institutional issues that have arisen throughout the previous year, and of actions taken to optimise the impact on the student experience and enhancement activity.

Institutional oversight

Q11: How does Executive make judgements on the health of courses?

A: Executive uses key performance indicators from Uniview to make judgements on the health of courses. A 'RAG' based system flags courses as Red (at risk), Amber (in need of improvement) and Green (in good health but with the opportunity for enhancement). In the short term the following key performance indicators will be used:

- Unit performance;
- Year 1 enrolment;
- Year 1 retention;
- Good honours (for undergraduate programmes only).

As systems become more refined additional PPIs will be introduced.