

AVA Annual self-evaluation report 2010: special appendix guidance

Preparation and presentation of the 2010 special appendix

Introduction

The main focus of development activity for Access to HE in 2009-10 was the introduction of grading. The special appendix for 2010 is designed to gather information from students, tutors and AVAs about this major development, bringing together several strands of evaluation at the end of the first year. (QAA is also undertaking a separate survey with HE institutions.) The purpose of gathering this information is to determine whether the grading model is operating as intended, so that AVAs and QAA can identify areas where action, clarification or additional guidance might be needed, and to allow other comments and suggestions to be considered by AVAs and QAA.

There are **FOUR PARTS** to the 2010 special appendix: the AVA evaluation and overview, and three supporting annexes (A-C). Requirements for each part are outlined below.

AVA evaluation and overview

Preparation

The AVA should consider the outcomes of the tutor survey, the student survey and the AVA grading data (see annexes A-C), together with analysis from its own monitoring activity, to provide a thorough analysis of the implementation of grading.

Presentation

This part will include information in the categories given below. It may sometimes be helpful to refer to information provided elsewhere in the AVA's annual report for specific evidence or examples or to improve the breadth of analysis (for example, responses from tutors may be supported by, or challenged by, feedback from moderators in moderators' reports). If references to the main report or other appendices are made, these should be clearly cross-referenced.

- 1 **Brief summary** of the AVA's approach to the implementation of grading, including:
 - a method used for assigning grade descriptors to units
 - b schedule of training provided (for centres and moderators)
 - c new AVA guidance developed and issued
 - d changes made to moderation and/or other quality assurance procedures
 - e methods used to monitor implementation.

- 2 **Detailed analysis** and key findings of:
 - a student survey responses, with reference to Annex A (see below)
 - b tutor survey responses, with reference to Annex B (see below)
 - c the AVA's grading data, with reference to Annex C (see below).

The AVA's analysis should attempt to explain the responses and data in light of the AVA's particular context. This will include consideration of factors which may have contributed to notable similarities or contrasts in responses and/or data from different courses or centres.

The grading model is a criterion-referenced system, so there are no established norms against which any individual provider or AVA will be judged or expected to bring variances in grade profiles in line. Nonetheless, significant variation between courses or centres may trigger more detailed consideration or analysis.

3 **Summary and commentary** on any other key issues arising from the AVA's own monitoring processes in relation to the implementation of grading, including:

- a questions raised most frequently by providers
- b other issues that have emerged for the AVA in its management of the implementation of grading, in relation to unit or course development or any aspect of quality assurance. The AVA should indicate how it has responded to each issue discussed (including plans for any major changes) and whether the issue:
 - is now largely resolved
 - requires further development work/support by the AVA
 - requires further clarification or guidance from QAA
 - requires further consideration or development at national level
- c observations about impacts on Access to HE Diploma course structures or delivery.

4 **Conclusions**, in which the AVA should include reference to:

- a the key messages that have emerged from its evaluation
- b what it has learned about the centres' development needs in order to enhance practice in the implementation of the graded Access to HE Diploma and to ensure consistency of its application across the AVA
- c its plans for feedback to providers about the outcomes of the special appendix surveys and intended actions based on outcomes.

Annex A: student survey (see sample online survey)

Preparation

QAA has developed an online survey, in order to facilitate the collection of students' views, which is housed on the Access to HE website (www.accesstohe.ac.uk/students). The following points should be noted:

- 1 the AVA should make its centres aware of the student survey and request their support in encouraging students to respond **before 31 July 2010**, when the survey will be closed
- 2 QAA will break down the responses by AVA and will send the appropriate set of data to each AVA for detailed analysis
- 3 the online survey should not be issued in a different format
- 4 if the AVA wants to gather student feedback on any other questions, this must be gathered through other means.

Presentation

Annex A will present the outcomes of the AVA's survey of students. It should include:

- 1 number of responses received
- 2 the proportion of the AVA's Access to HE centres from which responses have been received
- 3 a breakdown of responses to each question, providing the total number of responses received in each response category for each question

- 4 a summary of responses in any category in which free comment is invited.

Analysis of outcomes, and the AVA's commentary about student survey responses, should be included in the AVA evaluation and overview, section 2a (see page 1).

Annex B: tutor survey (see sample questionnaire)

Preparation

The AVA should survey all its centres to gather information and views from tutors, using the standard questions provided by QAA. The following points should be noted:

- 1 the AVAs should circulate the survey to all its centres, with a date for return **before the end of the 2009-10 academic year**, to ensure that responses can be gathered from those teaching on and coordinating Access to HE courses in 2009-10
- 2 the AVA can choose its own method for collecting this information (for example, convert the questionnaire into an online survey, or circulate the pro forma attached here, for electronic or hard copy return)
- 3 all questions supplied for the tutor survey should be asked of all centres, as worded here. (If the AVA has other questions that it wants to ask at the same time, these must be asked separately from the questions presented here.)
- 4 the AVA should attempt to gather as many responses as possible from tutors.

Presentation

Annex B will be a report on the tutor survey responses received by the AVA. It should include the following information:

- 1 number of responses received
- 2 the proportion of the AVA's Access to HE centres from which responses have been received
- 3 a full breakdown of responses to each question, providing the total number of responses received in each response category for each question
- 4 a summary of responses in any category in which free comment is invited.

Analysis of outcomes, and the AVA's commentary about responses to the tutor survey, will be included in the AVA evaluation and overview, section 2b (see page 1).

Annex C: AVA grading data supplement (see pro forma sample)

Preparation

It is important that QAA is able to report on the range of profiles of grades awarded to Access to HE students. For this part of the special appendix, the AVAs must interrogate its own data about the award of grades to provide data in each of the categories listed in the attached pro forma. Please note that the data provided for Annex C should relate **only** to students who achieved a full graded Diploma in 2010: data on grades awarded is not required for students who have not yet been awarded a Diploma (whether withdrawn during 2009-10 or continuing in 2010-11) or for those who achieved ungraded units in 2008-09 who have a final grade profile which comprises both graded and ungraded units. The AVA may comment on any notable features of grades awarded to students in these latter categories in its evaluation and overview, if it wishes to do so.

Presentation

Annex C will be a completed version of the pro forma.

Analysis of outcomes, and the AVA's commentary about the grading data, should be included in the AVA evaluation and overview, section 2c (see page 1).