

WHAT CONSTITUTES A COMPLETE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR)?

This note is intended to guide SARs Committees, Deans and Directors, and the members of the Quality Assurance Review Committee (QARC) as they play their different parts in the process of periodic programme reviews. One purpose of this note is to try to establish some consistent standard for all those who are obliged to exercise their judgement about what constitutes a “complete self-assessment report” (SAR), as required under AKU’s *Academic Quality Framework: Policy and Procedures*.

“Completeness” is a difficult criterion to define in the case of many processes and procedures. It can be linked to notions of “adequacy” and “sufficiency”, but it is commonly thought to be more than either of those notions. In this case the test should be clear and straightforward, and it is suggested that the following set of three requirements should suffice for those who are charged with exercising their judgement:

1. The SAR critically addresses all 18 cells in the *IUCEA Road Map, Volume 1* (p.36), and provides a substantial array of evidence to support the findings of the Report; effectively addressing programme issues and improvements.
2. The SAR clearly defines the strengths and weaknesses of the programme, as the Committee sees them, and also areas of good practice; and
3. The contents of the proposed Improvement Plan (or Action Plan) are closely aligned with the identified weaknesses of the programme, addressing the critical issues raised in the SAR, and the proposed actions are SMART (i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound).

The conclusion at any stage that the SAR is, under the above test, “incomplete” requires that the SAR be revised in order to meet the test. Where a Dean or Director or the QARC reaches that conclusion, the SAR should be returned to the Chair of the Self-Assessment Committee together with clear guidance on what renders the SAR incomplete and a request that the revised SAR be re-submitted at the earliest possible date.