

Programme Validation Process

This is a defined Process which all Faculties are required to follow.

**Operational Excellence
Version dated 8 September 2014
www.southampton.ac.uk**

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1 Title

Programme Validation

Revision History

V 1.0 September 2014 (constructed from previous text)

V1.1 June 2015 (new 3.5, addition of Equality Impact Assessments to 9.5.1 and addition of teaching experience of staff to 9.6).

2 Scope & Brief Description

2.1 This procedural document relates to the process of validating new and existing programmes of study.

- Any taught undergraduate and postgraduate programme leading to a University of Southampton award.
- Research degrees with a taught component (e.g. Engineering Doctorate).

2.2 This instruction will be of particular interest to:

- Proposers of new degree programmes,
- Directors of Programmes
- Associate Deans (Education and the Student Experience)
- Programme Leads
- Faculty Academic Registrars
- Faculty Curriculum and Quality Teams

3 Purpose

3.1 New Programmes must be validated to ensure they meet the exacting standards of the University and that they will provide a high quality experience for the students.

3.2 Existing Programmes will be re-validated every five years, or when major changes are planned outside of the normal validation cycle. This will ensure that they remain an asset to our offerings.

3.3 Programmes are validated for a defined period only (normally a maximum of five years)

3.4 In good time before this validation expires, programmes must again undergo validation in accordance with the procedures set out in this document, to assess their continuing validity and relevance in the light of:

- the relevance of the programme to Faculty and University education and research strategies;
- the effect of changes, including those which are cumulative and those made over time, to the design and operation of the programme;
- the continuing availability of staff and physical resources;
- current research and practice in the application of knowledge in the relevant discipline(s), technological advances, and developments in teaching and learning;
- changes to external points of reference, such as subject benchmark statements;
- relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Boards' (PSRB) requirements;
- changes in student demand, employer expectations and employment opportunities;
- data relating to student progression and achievement;
- student feedback, including the National Student Survey.

3.5 Where a validation of an existing programme is proposed beyond the five year period of approval, the Faculty concerned must present the rationale for this and request an extension of the period of validation from AQSC.

3.6 After first validation, programmes may be validated either individually or as cognate groups of programmes.

3.7 Approval of new awards (as opposed to new programmes) must also be approved by Senate. A list of currently approved awards can be found on the [University Calendar](#).

4 Advice and Assistance

4.1 Programme Proposers¹/Directors of Programmes² should consult their Faculty Academic Registrar (FAR) for advice on the arrangements for validation and the support available. Further advice may also be obtained from the Quality Standards and Accreditation Team (QSAT).

5 Process Owner

5.1 Dr Anna Barney, Associate Dean (Education and Student Experience), Faculty of Engineering and the Environment, owns this process on behalf of UOS.

5.2. The Academic Registrar is responsible for the [Programme Validation Policy](#).

6 Inputs

- Ideas for new Programmes
- Cyclical Validation of Existing Programmes
- [Major changes to Existing Programmes](#)

7 Reference Points and Constraints

7.1 All new and existing programmes must be validated with reference to:

- The national [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#);
- Relevant [subject benchmark statements](#);
- The requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (where relevant);
- [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\)'s UK Quality Code, Part B, Chapter B1: Programme design and approval](#);
- [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\)'s UK Quality Code, Part B, Chapter B8 Programme Monitoring and Review](#);
- [QAA Masters Degree Characteristics](#);
- [QAA Doctoral Degree Characteristics](#);
- The University requirements set out in the Calendar and the Quality Handbook, including:
 - the [Guidelines for first degree programmes](#) OR
 - the [Guidelines for Masters degree programmes](#);
 - the [Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme](#) ;
 - the [Inclusivity Good Practice Checklist](#);
 - the [Code of Practice for Research Candidature and Supervision](#);
 - the procedures set out in this document, including the timeline for development.

8 Outputs

8.1 Completion of the Programme Validation Procedures may result in the following outputs:

- Programme Documentation

¹ The programme proposer is the member of academic staff proposing the introduction of a new programme or major amendments to an existing programme

² This role may be undertaken by the Programme Lead where the structure of programmes makes this more suitable.

- Validated Programmes
- Minutes of Scrutiny Panels
- The validation process requires the completion of all stages of the [Programme Validation Form](#).

9 Instructions

9.1 Initial discussions (to see the process road map click [here](#))

9.1.1 For a new programme, the Programme Proposer should in the first instance discuss the proposal informally with appropriate academic colleagues and the relevant Associate Dean (Education and Student Experience) (AD ESE) to test the feasibility of the proposal.

9.1.2 If the Associate Dean(ESE) is supportive of the development, the programme proposer should approach the relevant Faculty Academic Registrar (FAR) for advice on the process and to identify the colleagues who should be consulted as part of the initial consideration of the idea. At this stage, there should normally be consultation with:

- [Communications and Marketing](#) (for market research);
- [Strategy and Planning](#);
- [Finance](#) (Faculty Finance Manager);
- Student representatives (via the relevant Academic President);
- [International Office](#);
- The Faculty Curriculum and Quality Team;
- A member of the [Institute for Learning Innovation and Development](#) (ILLiAD);
- The [Tier 4 Visa Compliance Team](#) ;

to test the proposal and seek views on the feasibility of the development.

9.1.3 If, as a result of this consultation, it appears that the new programme is likely to be viable, the Programme Proposer should confirm with the Associate Dean (ESE) that it is appropriate to proceed to develop the proposal to submit for strategic approval. **(Stage 1)**

9.1.4 For existing programmes due for validation, the Director of Programmes should at an early stage of planning for validation consult the colleagues indicated in 9.1.2 above to seek views as to the ongoing feasibility of the programme(s).

9.2 Stage 1 Strategic Approval

The purpose of Stage 1 is to determine the strategic fit of a proposed new programme or confirm the continued strategic fit of an existing programme, including consideration of market demand.

9.2.1 The Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes should complete **steps 1-9 of Stage 1 of the [Programme Validation Form](#)**. This requires the Programme Proposer/ Director of Programmes to outline the academic rationale for the programme, provide an indication of anticipated student numbers (or actual number for an existing programme) and supply brief evidence of market demand as informed by initial external and internal consultation.

9.2.2 The Stage 1 form should be considered by the Faculty Executive Group (FEG) or equivalent. FEG may wish to seek input from colleagues outside the Faculty to enable them to reach a decision about whether to allow a proposal to proceed or continue.

9.2.3 FEG should consider whether:

- there is a good academic rationale for the programme;
- the programme is consistent with the Faculty and University research and education strategies;
- there is a realistic estimate of (continued) student numbers and evidence of sustainable market demand;
- the University has the appropriate resources to support the delivery of the programme and to provide a high quality student experience;
- the proposal is likely to secure the support of all groups within the Faculty and outside which will contribute to the delivery of the programme;
- for an existing programme, the programme continues to be valid and relevant.

- 9.2.4 On the basis of the evidence provided, PSRB FEG will decide whether strategic approval should be granted. **Step 10 of the Programme Validation Form** should be completed to record the decision of the FEG, and any conditions.
- 9.2.5 The Head of Faculty Operations will inform the Faculty Academic Registrar of the outcome of this stage of the process. The Faculty Academic Registrar will inform the Programme Proposer/Programme Lead.
- 9.2.6 For all new programmes given strategic approval, the Faculty Academic Registrar will submit steps 1-2 of the Stage 1 form to the Secretary of the [Academic Standards and Quality Committee](#) (AQSC) for circulation to AQSC for information. Members of AQSC should raise any queries about the proposal with the relevant Associate Dean (ESE) in the first instance. If any significant concerns are raised, the Pro Vice- Chancellor, (Education) will bring together the relevant parties for discussion, and will have the final decision.
- 9.2.7 Strategic approval for a new programme proposal is granted for one academic year; proposals not completed within this period must be reconsidered by FEG.
- 9.2.8 The proposal then proceeds to the development stage. If a programme involves an external partnership, following FEG discussion, the [University's collaborative provision policy](#) should be followed.
- 9.2.9 If FEG grants strategic approval, the programme may be promoted 'subject to Validation'.
- 9.2.10 The completed stage 1 form will be submitted to AQSC for information. The AQSC monitors the programmes being created. However, the strategic decision with regards to which programmes should be created lies with each Faculty.

9.3 Development of programme documentation

- 9.3.1 Following strategic approval, the Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes should prepare the programme documentation or bring together existing documentation where applicable.

At this stage, the documentation will consist of:

- (a) For new programmes:
- Draft programme specification(s)
 - Draft module profiles for all core modules and new modules
- (b) For existing programmes:
- Draft programme specification(s) and associated module profiles.
 - A short report highlighting any issues with the current provision of resources (for example updated software requirements or previous difficulties with

timetabling particular modules) on which the views of internal stakeholders are required.

- (c) For major change to existing programme:
- As for existing programmes, plus document setting out the rationale for the changes proposed.

- 9.3.2 At this stage, the Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes, in consultation with relevant academic colleagues, should nominate an External Advisor to participate in the validation of the programme(s) by commenting on the proposal. The nomination must be submitted to the Associate Dean (ESE) for Faculty approval. The [External Advisor policy](#), including the criteria for nomination, is available from the Quality Handbook.
- 9.3.3 Where a single External Advisor would be unable to commend in an expert manner on all the disciplines involved in the programme, it is expected that additional External Advisors would be appointed. Similarly, for joint honours or multi-disciplinary programmes there may be a requirement for more than one External Advisor so that the necessary expertise in all major disciplines is covered.
- 9.3.4 In consultation with the Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes, the Faculty Academic Registrar should agree the timeline for the remainder of the process, including dates for the Stakeholder meeting (Stage 2 of the validation process) and the Faculty Scrutiny Group (Stage 3).

9.4 Stage 2: Internal stakeholder consultation

The purpose of Stage 2 is to provide an opportunity for key internal stakeholders to identify and comment on any specific educational support resource requirements for the programme(s) and any context relevant to the programme

- 9.4.1 Once the required documentation is available, the Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes should advise the Faculty Academic Registrar, who will convene a meeting of the programme proposer/Director of Programmes and relevant academic colleagues with internal stakeholders from Professional Services.

The meeting must include an opportunity for input from the following:

- SAA representative (Curriculum and Timetabling Team);
- Library representative;
- iSolutions representative;
- Student Services representative;
- Strategy and Planning;
- Communications and Marketing;
- Input from current students;
- Assistant Director SAA (Head of University Admissions)

Professional Services representatives may, in cases where they feel the proposal raises no significant issues for them, either submit comments to the meeting in writing, or ask another representative to feed in comments on their behalf.

- 9.4.2 The internal stakeholder meeting must have available to it the following documentation:

For new programmes

- Draft Programme Specification
- Draft module profiles for all new modules

For existing programmes

- Programme Specification(s) and associated Module profiles
- A short report highlighting any issues with the current provision of resources (for example updated software requirements, previous difficulties with timetabling particular modules) on which the views of internal stakeholders are required.

For major change to existing programme

- Document setting out the rationale for the changes proposed,
- Draft programme specification and associated module profiles

- 9.4.3 The meeting will discuss the resource requirements for the programme(s), highlight any specific issues and needs, confirm whether resource provision is likely to be (at least) adequate and, if this is not the case, what actions will be adopted to provide adequate resource. The meeting will also discuss any context relevant to the programme(s), as provided by Strategy and Planning, Communications and Marketing and student input.
- 9.4.4 Following this meeting, **Step 11 of the Programme Validation Form** should be completed. Particular attention should be paid to recording any issues to which the Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes will need to respond in finalising the programme documentation for detailed academic scrutiny. This will form part of the documentation considered by the [Faculty Scrutiny Group at Stage 3](#) of the validation process.
- 9.4.5 Representatives on the Internal Stakeholder Group may not prevent a proposal being submitted to the next stage for academic scrutiny – their role is to highlight any issues or concerns which should be recorded in the relevant section of the Programme Validation form. It is for the Faculty Scrutiny Group to take these views into consideration when making a recommendation to Faculty Programmes Committee.

9.5 Preparation of revised programme documentation, reflective report for existing programmes, and involvement of External Advisor.

- 9.5.1 For a new programme, the programme proposer will:
- revise the draft programme documentation taking into account feedback from internal stakeholders,
 - seek the advice of the Faculty Academic Registrar, in consultation with the Associate Dean (ESE) , in drawing up draft programme regulations for the University Calendar where specific regulations for the programme are required,
 - seek the advice of Communications and Marketing in refining those parts of the programme specification which will also be used to provide public information about the programme – for example on the ‘find a course’ webpages.
 - review the outcome of any Equality Impact Assessment.
- 9.5.2 For existing programmes on the regular validation cycle, the Director of Programmes should prepare the following document:
- An evaluative report, using the standard University template, on the operation of the programme(s) since the last validation, with an action plan, reflecting on the feedback available from the following sources:
 - previous annual programme and module reports;
 - external examiner reports;
 - reports from professional, statutory, regulatory, accreditation or other external bodies;
 - staff and student feedback from module and annual programme reports, staff/student liaison groups, focus groups, minutes of Faculty committees

- that consider module reviews;
- feedback from former students and their employers if available;
- management information, including data on student progression and award data. The team should consider performance by different student groups (e.g. analysis by gender, disability, ethnicity) and should review award data taking into account equivalent data from comparator Universities;
- the outcome of [Equality Impact Assessments](#);
- information on [Admissions](#) and Applications to the programme;
- external competitor information, where available;
- data on [alumni destinations](#);
- and feedback from employers.

All staff teaching on the programme(s) should have the opportunity to contribute during the preparation of the reflective report.

- 9.5.3 The programme documentation and, for existing programmes, the evaluative report, should be made available to the External Advisor, together with Steps 1-11 of the Programme Validation Form.
- 9.5.4 The External Advisor must complete a [report](#), using the approved University template which is available in the Quality Handbook. This report is an essential part of the documentation to be submitted at [Stage 3](#) of the validation process. Within the template, the [External Advisor](#) is asked to give assurance on the potential for achievement of programme educational aims and learning outcomes and comment on whether the programme(s) matches the expectations of the FHEQ qualification descriptors and the relevant subject benchmark(s). There is opportunity for the External Advisor to comment on the inclusivity of the curriculum and learning and teaching methods, the appropriateness of assessment to learning outcomes and the clarity of the programme specification for a variety of audiences.
- 9.5.5 Once the External Advisor's report has been received, the Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes should consider how he/she wishes to respond to the feedback received. At the next stage of validation process, the Faculty will look for evidence that an appropriate response has been made to the External Advisor's report.
- 9.5.6 The Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes should then complete **Steps 12-25 of the Programme Validation Form**. Throughout this process, the programme proposer/Director of Programmes should continue to take advantage of support and guidance available from the Associate Dean (ESE) and the Faculty Curriculum and Quality Team.
- 9.5.7 When completed, the form, with the revised programme documentation and, for existing programmes the reflective report, should be submitted to the Faculty Academic Registrar.

9.6 Stage 3 Academic Scrutiny

The purpose of Stage 3 is to provide in-depth academic scrutiny of the programme(s), to enable a recommendation to be made to Faculty Programmes Committee as to whether the programme(s) should be validated.

- 9.6.1 The following documentation is required for Stage 3 consideration:

New Programme

- Programme validation form (*completed up to step 25*)
- Programme specification
- Module profiles for all core and compulsory modules and all new modules

- Mapping document(s) to show where each programme learning outcome is assessed and by what type of assessment
- External advisor's report
- Programme regulations for the University Calendar (*where specific programme regulations are required*)
- Evidence of the level of teaching experience of partner staff teaching on collaborative provision programmes.

Existing Programme Validation Cycle

- Programme validation form (*completed up to step 25*)
- Updated programme specification(s)
- Module profiles for all core and compulsory modules and all new modules
- Mapping document(s) to show where each programme learning outcome is assessed and by what type of assessment
- External advisor's report
- Programme regulations for the University Calendar (*where specific programme regulations are required*) *For existing programmes any changes to regulations should be highlighted, using 'track changes'*
- Evaluative report and action plan *
- Latest Professional Body accreditation report (*where applicable*) *
- Annual programme reports since the last Validation *
- Evidence of the level of teaching experience of partner staff teaching on collaborative provision programmes.

Major Changes to Existing Programme (outside of normal Validation Cycle)

- Programme validation form (*completed up to step 25*)
- Updated programme specification(s)
- Module profiles for all core and compulsory modules and all new modules
- Mapping document(s) to show where each programme learning outcome is assessed and by what type of assessment
- External advisor's report
- Programme regulations for the University Calendar (*where specific programme regulations are required*) *For existing programmes any changes to regulations should be highlighted, using 'track changes'*
- Rationale for proposed changes

9.6.2 The Faculty Academic Registrar should convene a Faculty Scrutiny Group to undertake the detailed academic scrutiny of the proposal. The membership of a Faculty Scrutiny Group must include as a minimum:

- Associate Dean (ESE) or nominee (Chair)
- A member of academic staff external to the Faculty, nominated by the Faculty and approved by AQSC.
- Student representative
- The Faculty Academic Registrar or Nominee
- The External Advisor (for an existing programme)
- A member of ILIaD (compulsory for on-line programmes)

Other members of staff with relevant expertise may be invited to join the Faculty Scrutiny Group as required.

9.6.3 Student representatives may be from within or outside of the programme, normally from the same Faculty as the location of the programme, but may be a representative from the Students Union where necessary.

9.6.4 If a student is not able to attend the meeting, they should be encouraged to give their views on any new or existing programmes through alternative means, for example, by email or by a separate meeting with at least one of the panel members.

- 9.6.5 The member of staff from another Faculty is asked to confirm on behalf of AQSC that the process has been followed appropriately, and that all reporting has been properly carried out.
- 9.6.6 Where appropriate, representatives from PSRBs may also be invited to participate in the Faculty Scrutiny Group, to enable both PSRB and University validation to take place simultaneously. In such cases, there may be requirements for additional documentation and/or for engagement with the programme team as part of the process.
- 9.6.7 The Faculty Scrutiny Group will meet with members of the programme team. The composition of the programme team should be such that there would be suitable representation from subjects included in the programme, and able to respond fully to the suggested questions below. It is recommended that representation should be a minimum of 3 members of the programme team in addition to the Programme Lead (e.g. Module Leads, Year Coordinators, Admissions Tutor, Pathway/Theme representatives).
- 9.6.8 For a new programme, the Faculty Scrutiny Group will discuss the proposed programme proposal in detail and consider whether:

- appropriate use has been made of the relevant external reference points (such as FHEQ, the relevant subject benchmark(s), PSRB standards where applicable) and internal guidelines in developing the programme.
- the aims and intended learning outcomes are appropriate to the level of the programme, and the learning outcomes relate to and are appropriate to the overall aims
- the curriculum content and design is informed by current research and scholarship, promotes learning, demonstrates progression through parts of the programme, and will enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.
- the modes of assessments are clearly linked to learning outcomes, and will enable students to demonstrate achievement of all the intended learning outcome;
- arrangements for feedback to students on assessment performance are clearly specified, and are designed to identify opportunities for students to improve their performance
- there is a flexible and inclusive approach to learning and teaching and provision is made for all students to be able to access the curriculum and demonstrate achievement of all the intended learning outcomes;
- design of the programme and modules recognises that students have different learning styles and come from diverse backgrounds, for example by using examples and resources drawn from a range of sources, cultures and viewpoints
- there is confirmation that all necessary resources are available to support the programme and any issues raised at Stage 2 of the Validation Process have been addressed satisfactorily;
- an appropriate response has been given to any issues or recommendations arising from the External Advisor's report;
- the programme documentation is clear, accurate and suitable for a student audience
- student employability has been considered as part of the curriculum development process.
- arrangements for student evaluation of the programme and modules are clear and appropriate
- the arrangements for student support are clear.
- there is clarity about the opportunities for students to exercise choice in the curriculum and to engage with modules outside of their home discipline.

- 9.6.9 For existing programmes on the regular validation cycle the Faculty Scrutiny Group will in addition to reviewing documentation, also engage directly with staff

(including those who are able to comment on the strategic fit of the programme in the Faculty portfolio, those responsible for the day to day management and running of the programme, and where relevant, those who participate in the teaching and learning support of modules on the programme), students and, wherever possible, employers and/or alumni associated with the programme(s), through a series of meetings. A template agenda for this meeting is available through this process, the Faculty Scrutiny Group will discuss the programme(s) in detail and consider whether:

Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation

- there is evidence that the design, content and organisation of the programme will enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes in terms of knowledge and understanding, subject specific skills, professional skills, key skills, progression to employment/further study, and personal development?
- the programme's content and design are clearly informed by developments in techniques of teaching and learning, by current research and scholarship, and by any changes in relevant occupational or professional requirements
- developments in the subject, current research and scholarship or changes in occupational/professional requirements (where appropriate)
- design of the programme and modules recognises that students have different learning styles and come from diverse backgrounds, for example by using examples and resources drawn from a range of sources, cultures and viewpoints
- the intended learning outcomes relate appropriately to external reference points including relevant [subject benchmark statements](#), the [qualifications framework](#), the [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area](#) and any professional body requirements?
- the levels and modes of study, their breadth and depth, coherence, flexibility, extent of module choice, are appropriate to achieving the intended learning outcomes
- there are any characteristics of the programme which are particularly distinctive or innovative to which attention should be drawn
- the Faculty ensures that curriculum content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes
- the Faculty ensure that the design and organisation of the curriculum is effective in promoting student learning and achievement of the intended learning outcomes
- there is clarity about the opportunities for students to exercise choice in the curriculum and to engage with modules outside of their home discipline.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- the teaching learning and assessment methods proposed will enable students to achieve and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes
- there is a flexible and inclusive approach to learning and teaching and provision is made for all students to be able to access the curriculum and demonstrate achievement of all the intended learning outcomes;
- there is a suitable variety of teaching methods, to recognize diversity of learning styles and is that there is sufficient breadth, depth, and challenge in the curriculum to be offered
- there is an appropriate range of assessment methods to effectively evaluate the attainment of learning outcomes and to differentiate levels of student attainment
- sufficient provision is made for feedback to students on assessment which will enable them identify how to improve their academic performance
- there is clear information about the contribution of placement learning or study time spent abroad, to the programme (where applicable)
- Information about progression requirements is clear or clearly signposted to students

Student Progression, Academic Support and Guidance

- where the nature of the programme indicates that there are particular requirements for support and guidance for students, there is clear evidence that this has been addressed in the documentation
- the student support and guidance provided (as referenced in the documentation) reflects the potential diversity of needs of the student body
- there is an appropriate overall strategy for academic support, including written guidance, which is consistent with the student profile and the overall aims of the programme
- there are effective arrangements for admission and induction, including cultural orientation, which are generally understood by staff and applicants
- learning is effectively facilitated by academic guidance, feedback and tutorial arrangements
- the arrangements for academic tutorial support are clear and there is evidence as to how the Faculty knows if these are being offered by staff and taken up by students
- written guidance is provided for students presented in language which is clear and unambiguous, and is material available in alternative formats as required
- reasonable adjustments are made for students with disabilities.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement

- it is clear how students can be involved in the development and enhancement of the programme
- clear and accurate information is presented about the internal and external monitoring procedures that ensure the quality of the programme

Learning Resources and Placement Learning

- appropriate technical and administrative support is available
- there is an overall strategy for the effective use of learning resources
- learning is effectively facilitated in terms of the provision of resources
- there are any unresolved issues arising from the Internal stakeholder meeting (Stage 2)

General presentational issues

- the programme specification clearly enables students to understand what the programme will enable them to achieve and how such achievement is realised through the learning, teaching and assessment methods used
- the programme specification is clearly written in straightforward and inclusive language, recognising diversity of the audience.

9.6.10 Having considered the documentation the Faculty Scrutiny Group will make one of the following decisions:

- Recommend for approval of validation and submit to AQSC
- Undertake further work to revise documentation and resubmit to Faculty Scrutiny Group
- Revise documentation and submit to FPC for approval of validation

9.6.11 The Faculty Scrutiny Group will identify, where applicable, any general issues emerging from the discussion, including examples of good practice, which should be drawn to the attention of FPC.

9.6.12 For existing programmes on the regular Validation cycle, the Faculty Scrutiny Group will also draw out and record on the Programme Validation Form general conclusions, commendations, and recommendations.

Step 26 of the Programme Validation Form should be completed to record the proceedings and outcome.

9.7 Preparation of documentation for Faculty Programmes Committee

- 9.7.1 The Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes will undertake further work as necessary and revise the documentation to address any issues raised by the Faculty Scrutiny Group. If required (see above), he/she will submit this for further scrutiny or sign off.

9.8 Stage 4: Academic Approval

The purpose of Stage 4 is for a final decision to be taken by the Faculty Programmes Committee whether to approve the validation of the programme(s), on behalf of the University.

- 9.8.1 The following documentation is required for this stage:
- Programme Validation Form (steps 1-25 complete)
 - Final version of programme specification amended in the light of Faculty Scrutiny Group comments
 - Module profiles for all core modules and all new modules
 - Mapping document to show where each programme learning outcome is assessed and by what type of assessment.
 - External Advisor's report
 - Programme regulations for the University Calendar (where specific programme regulations are required) For an existing programme any changes to regulations should be highlighted, using 'track changes'
 - Minute of the Faculty Scrutiny Group meeting
- 9.8.2 The Programme Proposer/Director of Programmes will submit the required documentation to the Secretary of Faculty Programmes Committee, for circulation to the committee at its next scheduled meeting.
- 9.8.3 Faculty Programmes Committee will consider the full set of documentation, and confirm
- that the proposal meets threshold academic standards
 - that all stages of the approval process have been completed appropriately
 - that any conditions set and/or amendments required by the Faculty Scrutiny Group have been met or, for existing programmes, that the action plan is appropriate
 - that the comments of the External Advisor have been considered and addressed
- If FPC is unable to confirm all of the above, the proposal must be returned to the Faculty Scrutiny Group for further consideration.
- 9.8.4 Following consideration of the proposal Faculty Programmes Committee will make one of the following decisions:
- Approve validation
 - Approve validation with conditions
 - Reject proposal (for new programmes)/close programme(s) (for existing programmes on the regular validation cycle)

Faculty Programmes Committee will also identify, where applicable, any general issues emerging from the discussion which should be explicitly drawn to the attention of AQSC.

Step 27 of Stage 4 of the Programme Validation Form should be completed by the Faculty following consideration of the proposal.

- 9.8.5 If a decision is taken to close an existing programme, the University's [policy on programme closures](#) must be followed, to ensure that appropriate provision is made for current applicants and students.
- 9.8.6 Once the Faculty decision has been taken and, where applicable, it is confirmed that any conditions required to be completed before the programme can proceed have been fulfilled, the Secretary of FPC will notify:
- Head of Faculty Finance
 - Communications and Marketing
 - Strategy and Planning
 - Library
 - iSolutions
 - Student Services
 - Recruitment and Admissions Team (SAA).
 - Hub Curriculum and Timetabling Team (SAA)
 - QSA Hub Team
- 9.8.7 The Faculty Curriculum and Quality Team will submit to the Secretary of AQSC Stage 4 of the Programme Validation Form **Stage 4 of the Programme Validation Form** for onward reporting to AQSC, a file reference for the final approved version of the programme specification and a copy of the programme regulations (where specific regulations for the programme are required). This documentation will be submitted to the next meeting of AQSC for note.
- 9.8.8 **Step 28 of the Programme Validation Form** should be completed to confirm this action has been taken.

9.9 Post- approval

- 9.9.1 The Faculty Curriculum and Quality Team is responsible for obtaining new programme codes, and for ensuring that all necessary action is taken to create or update the program(s) and associated modules within [Banner and the Programme Catalogue](#). The **Programme Creation Appendix to the Programme Validation Form** should be completed for each programme and submitted to the Hub Curriculum and Timetabling Team (SAA).
- 9.9.2 The Faculty Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring that, where applicable, the programme has an accurate KIS, published in accordance with HEFCE requirements. Undergraduate programmes cannot be advertised through UCAS without a complete KIS.
- 9.9.3 The Faculty Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring that accurate programme regulations are submitted for inclusion in the University Calendar and for ensuring the accuracy of public information regarding the programme (for example the 'find a course' page).
- 9.9.4 The Associate Dean (ESE) is responsible for ensuring that any actions arising from programme validations are included in the Faculty Action Plan and monitored via FPC.

10 Standard timeline for the development and initial validation of proposals

- 10.1 The table below sets out the standard timeline for the validation of new programmes; action may be taken more quickly if necessary, for example to respond to external drivers. The timeline for developing new programmes involving educational collaborations (particularly high-risk international partnerships) will take longer, for example where full due diligence and a partner approval event is required. Please see the [University Collaborative Provision Policy](#) for more information. Please see the University Collaborative Provision Policy for more information.

	Academic Year 1	Academic Year 2	Academic Year 3	Academic Year 4
UG	Faculty generate idea for new UG programme to start AY4 notify AQSC of planned proposal May/July [or October of AY 2?]	FPC <u>approval</u> of proposal by Prospectus deadline mid- January	KIS information published September	First entry September
		Notified to AQSC Jan/Feb		
		Goes to Senate Feb		
		KIS data based on new programme ready for submission by March		
PG	Faculty generate idea for new PGT programme to start AY3; notify AQSC May/July [or October of AY 2?]	FPC <u>approval</u> of proposal mid- January	First entry September	
		Notified to AQSC Jan/Feb		
		Goes to Senate Feb		

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Glossary

AD ESE	Associate Dean Education & Student Experience
AQSC	Academic Quality Standards Committee
CTT	Curriculum & Timetabling Team
EA	External Adviser
FAR	Faculty Academic Registrar
FCQT	Faculty Curriculum and Quality Team
FEG	Faculty Executive Group
FSG	Faculty Scrutiny Group
FPC	Faculty Programmes Committee
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council England
ILlAD	Institute for Learning Innovation and Development
ISM	Internal Stakeholder Meeting
KIS	Key Information Set
PSRB	Profession, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies
PVF	Programme Validation Form
QSAT	Quality Standards and Accreditation Team