

QUALITY FRAMEWORK

VALIDATION (ANNEX 1)

GUIDANCE FOR COURSE DESIGN AND PLANNING TEAMS

The role of a course design and planning team (CDPT) is to provide a forum through which the design of a new course may be informed by relevant expertise drawn from within and external to the University. The CDPT's aim is to ensure that proposals subject to validation are of a high quality and will meet the University's **Criteria for Assessing Quality and Standards at Validation**. The CDPT is responsible for ensuring that appropriate consultation takes place within the proposing faculty and department and with central directorates and faculty professional services teams. A suggested membership for course design and planning teams is included towards the end of this Guide.

The CDPT is also responsible for the production of proposal/submission and definitive course information, delivered to an appropriate quality and standard for submission to a validation panel. The faculty or department's agreed approach to the individual proposal's 'sign-off' for submission to the validation panel should be discussed with the relevant departmental quality lead at the start of the design and planning process.

Consultation with Stakeholders

The course design and planning process will necessarily involve staff from within an academic department and from across the wider faculty and University. The range of staff who should be involved in planning and developing new provision is likely to include academic teaching staff and professional services staff at faculty and University level with detailed knowledge and experience of course delivery, student support and student administration issues. In working closely with relevant colleagues in the faculty and central directorates, the aim is to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is in place to support learning on the new course.

As part of the design process, a course design and planning team (CDPT) is expected to consult educational developers, library and student support services staff and technology enhanced learning specialists, academic quality leads and quality officers.

CDPTs are encouraged to work with and/or consult external examiners, external subject specialists and practitioners from other external organisations and accrediting bodies as part of the development process.

CDPTs are expected to work with and/or consult existing students and/or alumni and to actively engage students in the planning and design process. This may involve a range of methods including students undertaking research on behalf of the CDPT, the use of tailored surveys, feedback questionnaires, focus group meetings, workshops, formal consultations etc. Validation panels will seek evidence of the ways in which students have actively participated in the planning and design process and how students' views may have affected the final course design.

CDPTs are also expected to take into account the views of employers and/or to actively engage employers in the planning and design process. Validation panels will seek evidence of the ways in which employers have actively participated in the planning and design process and how employers' views may have affected the final course design. The CDPT is responsible for ensuring that the course design and planning process:

- Takes full account of key external reference points, which must include any relevant subject benchmark statements, professional, statutory and/or regulatory body (PSRB) standards and requirements, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (UK Quality Code, Chapter A1), and any other relevant discipline or industry standards
- Takes into account relevant University frameworks, regulations, policies and strategies for enhancing the student learning experience and other extant teaching, learning and assessment policies and guidance on good practice
- Ensures that the course structure, delivery and assessment strategy complies with the University's Academic Awards Framework, Standard Assessment Regulations and Academic Calendars. If necessary, an application for exemption from the AAF, Regulations and/or Calendars must be sought well in advance of the planned validation exercise. Support from the proposing department and faculty will be required, if such exemptions are sought.
- Confirms that appropriate teaching expertise (underpinned by relevant research and scholarship), learning spaces, learning resources and academic support can be provided for students on the proposed course/s
- Involves consultation with current and former students and also external subject experts, practitioners, employers, services users and other stakeholders as relevant to the proposed course/s
- Ensures the University's policies, guidelines and good practice in relation equality and diversity and inclusive practice have been taken into account as part of course planning and design process
- Ensures new proposals will meet the University's requirements for compliance with the relevant consumer protection legislation, in terms of the accurate and clear description of courses and as defined within the University's Student Terms and Conditions and by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) Guidance to HE Providers (CMA, 2015).

Note on the Marketing of Provision, Pre- and Post-Validation

Advertising courses before they have been formally approved by the University is not generally permitted because of the risk to the University of litigation should the course subsequently not be approved or the proposals are substantially changed from the advertised description of the course, as a result of the approval process, setting of approval conditions, etc. Consumer protection legislation and Advertising Standards Agency regulations apply to all marketing information published by the University, including printed advertising material and the use of electronic media. Prospective students must have access to full information about their course (including structure, location, content and fees, etc) before they apply for a place on the course. The type of information required is defined by the CMA based on the Consumer Contract Regulations (2013). Once provided, this information is deemed to be legally binding under the Consumer Contract Regulations. This also applies to existing courses undergoing revalidation as there may be significant changes made to existing provision during the revalidation process such that up to date, accurate and detailed course information would not be available for marketing purposes until after the revalidation exercise was completed. Exceptionally, where an existing course is subject to external requirements such as those of a professional, statutory and/or regulatory body (PSRB), it may be permissible to advertise the course/s as 'subject to revalidation' to avoid any potential disruption to marketing and recruitment. Such cases will be considered on a case by case basis.

Suggested Membership of Course Design and Planning Teams

To ensure all responsibilities for planning and designing new provision are met and shared by a CDPT and that the team has access to relevant advice and expertise during the planning process, the following membership of the CDPT should be considered. The constitution of the team may vary according to the type and scale of the provision being planned and consultation, with some advisers contributing to the planning and design of the course outside formal planning meetings. The Faculty Assistant Dean (Academic Development) (or equivalent role) may be consulted to give further advice on the membership of CDP teams.

1. Chair / Academic Lead (course leader, or another individual with appropriate experience of course design and approval), responsible for leading and co-ordinating the work of the Team, ensuring agreed deadlines are met, liaison with external advisors and other stakeholders, and for proposing external members for the validation panel
2. A range of academic staff who will be involved in the delivery of the new course, including module leaders of modules to be designated as Core within the proposed course structure/s
3. Students and other stakeholders as relevant may be invited to join the CDPT or engage in consultation activity, as appropriate.
4. External advisers (external examiners, employer representatives, PSRB representatives, etc)
5. Subject librarian/information specialist responsible for providing advice on learning resources and for assisting with requests for additional texts, journals, etc to support the new course
6. Representatives from faculty (Head of LTA, etc) and from central directorates with responsibility for providing advice on good practice in approaches to teaching, learning and assessment

7. Representatives from faculty or University professional services teams with course/student administration expertise (e.g. Faculty professional services, Registry Services) to provide advice on systems and curriculum/delivery information requirements to ensure the timely and accurate updating of the University corporate systems (SITS), timetabling of new courses, etc.
8. Representatives from Faculty professional services (Business Support) and/or Student Services, to advise on course and student experience, support and administration issues

The course design and planning team may also wish to consult Academic Quality and Standards to provide further advice and guidance on the validation process and to advise on proposal documentation, regulatory matters and other issues relating to the timescale and other arrangements for validation.

OTHER USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

[Curriculum Design Toolkit](#)

[Teaching Essentials](#)

[Assessment Essentials](#)

[Inclusive Practice](#)

[Equality and Diversity](#)

[Accessible Assessment](#)

[Assessment for Students](#)

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