University Code of Practice

Approval, amendment and withdrawal of programmes and modules

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Summary/ Description:

This Code sets out the University's approach to, and requirements for, the approval of new programmes and modules, and their amendment and withdrawal. New programmes (Chapter I) are subject to a three-stage process which is designed to ensure that the rationale for the programme (academic and business) is properly considered, that the academic standards are set at the required level, that the programme will offer an appropriate level of student experience in terms of learning, teaching, assessment and resources, and that the information provided to prospective students and other stakeholders is clear, accurate and informative. Full approval is carried out by an Approval Panel which includes three external experts and is overseen by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee. Programmes must be developed in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1).

Chapter II addresses the amendment of programmes and draws a distinction between 'major', 'minor' and 'operational' amendments, giving definitions of each. The Code makes explicit that the University

will not approve major amendments to existing programmes which are to apply to current and prospective students unless students are informed in writing and provided an opportunity to respond; minor amendments are subject to the approval of the relevant Programme Coordinator. In both cases the opinion of the external examiner will typically be sought.

Chapter III governs the suspension of recruitment to, and withdrawal of, programmes. Suspension is temporary (up to two years) and neither suspension nor withdrawal is permitted where it would affect current students (including those to whom an offer has been made and not rejected). The University is committed to 'teaching out' existing programmes (see further the Student Protection Policy – QH:E2). A suspended programme may be resumed, although subject to evidence that the quality and standards remain appropriate otherwise the programme amendment process must be followed.

Chapter IV sets out arrangements for the approval of, amendment to, and withdrawal of modules which are 'free-standing', i.e. not part of a programme of study.

Chapter V sets out the University's arrangements to maintain a 'definitive record' of its programmes and modules (reflecting Part A of the UK Quality Code 2014). This ensures that there is no uncertainty about which is the approved version of each programme when it comes to delivering, monitoring and reviewing each programme, and when providing information to students in the form of the Official Transcript and European Diploma Supplement, and when verifying those documents for employers.

Further Guidance

See the Introduction to the Quality Handbook (QH:A1) for further guidance and explanations of:

- how the Handbook is designed to work and what it covers and does not cover
- how it is structured
- the 'external reference points' and established practice which have informed each of the Codes
- key concepts and themes
- some suggestions for further reading
- a quick guide to each Code, including definitions and things to watch out for.

This university Code has been written in accordance with the approach approved by the University to enhance clarity involving the following terminology: must = mandatory should = advisable may = desirable. Where these terms are used they are emphasised in bold.

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INTRODUCTION

1 The UK Quality Code and the European Standards and Guidelines recognise that the nature of educational provision is determined at an institutional level and reflects the University's mission and its responses to wider strategic factors. Such factors might include government policy and investment in key and vulnerable subject disciplines, student demand for new programmes, workforce needs driven by professional bodies and/or employers and industry interests. As such, this document is concerned with the design, development and approval of academic undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes.

2 Both the UK Quality Code and the European Standards and Guidelines describe programme design and approval as an iterative process that involves a number of stages and a number of stakeholders. This is to ensure that programmes are strategically viable, academically/professionally appropriate, and feasible within the academic and research resources of the institution. At the University of Gibraltar programme design, development and approval involves a distinct three stage process:

(a) an Initial Programme Planning Approval
(b) Programme Development
(c) Programme Approval.

3 The Code also sets out the University's arrangements for the approval of amendments to existing programmes and for their temporary or permanent withdrawal. It also provides for the approval, amendment and withdrawal of modules where such activity does not constitute a change to the programme as a whole.

4 The development and enhancement of academic programmes is an ongoing cycle of the delivery of learning, teaching and assessment, the evaluation of the programmes and modules and their revision based on experience, feedback and ideas for improvement. This Code should therefore be read alongside the University's arrangements for the monitoring and review of programmes (QH:C12) and for the full (periodic) review which will take place every six years, with an interim ('mid-cycle') review after three years (QH:C13).

Authority

5 The Academic Quality and Standards Committee is, on behalf of the Academic Board, the final arbiter of the application and interpretation of this code of practice.

Scope of the Code

6 This Code applies to modules and programmes classified by Academic Board as taught and which lead to the award of the University's higher education qualifications (as set out in the Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1)). It includes free-standing modules (which are not part of such programmes) provided they are credit-bearing.

Application to collaborative provision

7 Unless specified by the Academic Board, this Code applies to all provision referred to in paragraph 6 whether that provision is delivered by the University or another approved provider in accordance with a formal legal agreement.

Definitions

8 In this Code the following definitions are used:

Programme

9 The University defines a programme as a defined set of core and optional modules leading to one of the University's qualifications and satisfying the criteria as to the number and level of credits in the UK Higher Education Credit Frameworks.

Module

10 The University defines a module as being a separately assessed unit of learning with specified learning and teaching strategy, assessment and reassessment methods and learning outcomes. For credit bearing programmes each module must be assigned a credit value (15, 30 or 60 credits) and a level. (See further chapter I of the Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1)).

Professional Accreditation

11 Where appropriate, and in consultation with the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB), the processes of approval set out in this Code will be conducted in parallel with the relevant body. Where a programme or free-standing module is subject to any form of accreditation by a PSRB the Programme Coordinator is responsible for ensuring appropriate consultation with that body in respect of any proposal under this Code.

Exemptions from the Academic Regulations

12 Where the proposal for a new programme or for the amendment of an existing programme includes a request for exemption from part of the Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1), or for variation in the way those Regulations apply to the programme, application **must** be through Academic Quality and Standards Committee to Academic Board. Such exemption or variation will be granted only for the purpose of meeting the clear and explicit expectations of a professional, statutory or regulatory body and where there are no other means for meeting those expectations.

CHAPTER I: APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMMES

13 At the University of Gibraltar programme design, development and approval involves a distinct three-stage process:

(a) initial programme planning approval;
(b) programme development;
(c) programme approval.

(see Programme Approval Process Flowchart at the end Chapter I)

Inclusive programme design

14 The University is committed to taking an inclusive approach to the provision of learning opportunities and seeks to reflect this in the way in which it designs its academic programmes.

15 Creating an inclusive environment for learning is a key consideration at both the initial planning stage and, in a finer detail, during the programme design and development stage. This approach aims to provide access and equal opportunities and reduce any barriers to learning. Anticipating, within reason, a broad range of needs allows programmes to be designed with fewer requirements for individual adjustments. The University recognises that this may not address the needs of every student and will make reasonable adjustments for individual students where required (see the Code on Reasonable Adjustments (QH:E4)).

Stage 1 - Initial Programme Planning Approval

16 The first stage of the design, development and approval process begins with the Programme Team and/or Proposer. In order to propose a new programme the Programme Team/Proposer need to scope the viability of the programme and involve key stakeholders in a preliminary discussion about feasibility of the programme under design.

17 Key stakeholders might include any or all of the following: academic staff, lecturers, librarian, IT department, students, expert external advisors, potential students, key advisory groups, local employers and/or professional groups.

18 The initial programme planning approval process is intended to enable the Executive Management Team of the University to make informed decisions about the viability of proposed programmes based on a range of strategic considerations including:

(a) evidence of market demand for the proposed programme (e.g. discipline-led drive, employability, student demand)
(b) the market context (e.g. the extent of similar provision – by competitor institutions – locally and regionally, the opportunity for collaboration and partnership in programme delivery)
(c) alignment with the University Strategic Plan
(d) resource requirements (e.g. staff, specialists, equipment, library, rooming) and implications for existing resource base

(e) economic costing/business case underpinning the proposed programme's financial viability
(f) analysis of the risk factors if the proposed provision were approved.

19 Programme proposals should be recorded by the Programme Team/Proposer as part of meeting minutes. Programme proposals **must** be approved by the Vice Chancellor before being progressed to programme development. It is the Vice Chancellor's responsibility to ensure that approved programmes are formally recorded by the Academic Board.

Stage 2 Programme development

20 The full approval procedure involves a number of steps and documentary requirements, as follows:

Initial Internal Planning Meeting

21 To include the Programme Team/proposer and at least one member of the Executive Management Team who signed-off the application at the programme planning stage (above).

22 The planning meeting **should** agree timescales in the form of a programme approval/validation schedule, for the full programme approval process. This should include:

(a) meeting date
(b) the constitution of the Programme Approval Panel (as set out in para. 23)
(c) the deadline for submission of documentation

23 At the planning meeting the Programme Team should identify a minimum of three external experts (as set out in para. 23) who are suitably qualified to scrutinise and provide independent, professionally objective commentary on the curriculum proposal.

24 Membership of each Programme Approval Panel **must** include:

(a) an external member of Academic Board or its sub-committees with Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) or equivalent expertise, not associated with the provision under approval, to act as an independent Chair;
(b) an external, academic peer, with higher education pedagogy expertise, not associated with the provision under approval;
(c) an external, academic or professional peer currently in the practice in the relevant field or industry, with higher education subject matter expertise, not associated with the provision under approval.

25 At the end of the planning meeting, the programme team should agree to appoint, seek VC approval for the panel appointments and then forward the programme approval/validation schedule and agreed Programme Approval Panel members to the panel secretary for actioning, including the sending of invitations to agreed Approval Panel members.

Development of Programme Documentation

26 To apply for full programme approval, Programme Teams **must** develop the following documentation using the approved templates accompanying this Code, and submit to the panel secretary for onward transmission to the Chair of the Programme Approval Panel:

(a) Programme Proposal Overview document (C2.2 template)
(b) Programme Specification (C2.3 template)
(c) Module Descriptors (C2.4 template).

Programme Overview Document (C2.2)

27 This narrative document **should** provide a concise contextual overview of the proposed programme. It is a briefing document for the attention of the Approval Panel members. It **should** enable them to understand why the programme has been proposed, how it has been designed and developed, and secure their confidence in the Programme Team and the Proposal. In so doing, it **should** highlight the key features of the proposed programme, innovations in the curriculum in terms of content, pedagogy and/or assessment. Equally the document needs to demonstrate how academic standards have been defined and professional standards addressed (where applicable). The overview needs to show how the student learning experience and the future interests of students (e.g. employability) have been central to the development and design of the programme. The overview **should** facilitate the discussion between the Approval Panel and the Proposal/Programme Team and prevent the need for every aspect of the programme to be discussed in depth during the formal meeting.

Programme Specification (C2.3)

28 The programme specification **should** provide a concise technical overview of the programme that is easily accessible to students and other stakeholders. It is a public document that tells the external world what the programme is about and how it works.

Module Descriptors

29 Module descriptors detail the learning outcomes, and the learning-teaching-assessment strategy and structured content of individual modules. They include information about teaching hours, learning resources and the grading scheme of the module. The descriptors for all of the modules in a programme **must** be submitted for approval.

Document Checks

30 The Programme Team should conduct a thorough check of the proposal documentation prior to submission. The following checklist should be used as minimum:

(a) the content and presentation is coherent, well-structured and the content demonstrates that the proposal is well-researched, current, relevant and academically defensible;
(b) the learning, teaching and assessment strategy is fit-for-purpose.
(c) all regulatory requirements are met, and the proposal complies with the University's Quality Codes;
(d) the documentation is complete and is provided on the approved templates;
(e) any modifications to the approved templates (if applicable) have been authorised by either the VC or the Head of Academic Quality and Learning.

31 Where the documentation is deemed fit for submission to the Approval Panel, the Programme Team **should** confirm the date and time for the formal approval meeting with the panel secretary for onward confirmation with the Approval Panel

Stage 3 - Programme Approval

32 The Approval Panel will review the submission and provide initial feedback to the University, in accordance with the criteria set out in the Programme Approval External Scrutiny Report. Key areas for discussion must be shared with the Programme Team prior to the full programme approval meeting.

33 The meeting of the Approval Panel **may** be convened as a virtual meeting that connects panel members via a video-conferencing platform, e.g Zoom.

34 It is the responsibility of the Approval Panel to affirm that the standards of the proposed programme have been set at the appropriate thresholds and that the programme structure, content and available resources are such that the standards and outcomes of the proposed programme can be met.

35 In coming to a decision, the Approval Panel **must** take into account:

(a) the UK Quality Code
(b) the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies
(c) UK Subject Benchmark Statements published by QAA (where appropriate)
(d) the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area)
(e) any other applicable discipline/professional expectations, standards or practices.

36 The Approval Panel is responsible for ensuring that the academic standards of the University are not put at risk or brought into disrepute.

37 In reaching a decision the Approval Panel **must** work in accordance with the criteria of the Programme Approval Scrutiny Report.

38 The Approval Panel has the authority to make one of the following decisions:

(a) **APPROVED**
(b) **APPROVED** with recommendations (see para 39(b))
(c) **APPROVED** with conditions (see para 39(a) and with/without recommendations
(d) **APPROVAL WITHHELD**: where the panel identifies substantial issues with the submission that cannot be resolved in a timely manner through a set of conditions (see para 41).

39 Conditions and Recommendations:

(a) **Conditions** are issues that the programme team ***must*** address, usually requiring revision or amendments to the programme before it can be delivered.

(b) **Recommendations** usually relate to actions which are not required, but are deemed to enhance the standards and quality of the proposed programme and to which the proposal team is expected to respond.

40 Where the programme is approved with conditions or approved with recommendations, the Approval Panel must set a time limit for the Programme Team to address the conditions/ recommendations. This time-limit should not usually exceed 20 working days from receipt of the formal approval report.

41 Where the Programme is not approved the Panel will recommend a time-line for a further submission of the proposal or, in exceptional circumstances, recommend that the development is discontinued.

Academic Quality and Standards Committee oversight

42 While responsibility for determining the outcome of the programme approval rests with the Approval Panel appointed in accordance with the above paragraphs, the Academic Quality and Standards Committee must receive a report of the approval process, including the outcomes and the way in which those outcomes have been addressed by the Programme Team. The purpose of this report is to provide assurance to the Committee that the programme approval process has been properly conducted and to enable it to identify any issues for the University, for example in terms of the effectiveness of the programme development and approval process.

Flowchart – Programme Approval Process

	Event	Objective/ Outcome
Stage 1 **Initial Programme Planning Approval**	Programme Team scopes viability of proposed Programme	• Includes evidence of market demand, market context, alignment with University strategic plan, resource requirements, financial viability, risk assessment; • Typically involves internal consultation (e.g., academic staff, lecturers, librarian, IT department, students) & external consultation (e.g., expert advisors, potential students, local employers/stakeholders)
	Programme Team requests initial Planning Approval from the Executive Team	• Executive Team scrutinises the request in terms of the business and academic case. Approval is by the VC and must be recorded by AB. • If approved, by VC, proceed to Stage 2.
Stage 2 **Programme development**	Initial Internal Planning Meeting	• Agree date of Programme Approval meeting • Identify suitable external experts for the Programme Approval Panel • Agree deadline for the submission of documentation. • Inform panel secretary.
	Development of Programme Documentation	Using approved templates complete: • Programme Proposal Overview document (C2.2.) • Programme Specification (C2.3) • Module Descriptors (C2.4)
	Document checks	• Programme Team ensures the quality, accuracy and completeness of documentation
	Proceed to formal approval	• Documents submitted to Approval Panel
Stage 3 **Programme Approval**	Approval Panel scrutinises documentation	• Panel provides feedback to the Programme Team using approved Scrutiny Report.
	Approval Meeting (validation)	• Discussion between Approval Panel and programme team concluding with Panel's findings and approval decision (incl. any conditions and/or recommendations)
	Approval Panel conclusions written & circulated	• Programme team respond to conditions & recommendations by agreed deadline *(usually within 20 days).*
	Programme Approved	• Final Approval report issued incl. the programme team's response to any conditions and recommendations.
	Report submitted to Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Academic Board	• Programme added to approved provision **Programme launched**

CHAPTER II: AMENDMENT OF PROGRAMMES

43 The amendment of programmes, including amendments to their constituent modules, is determined based on whether the amendments are considered to be 'major', 'minor' or operational.

Definitions

Major and minor of amendments

44 Major and minor amendments are defined as follows:

Major amendments	Minor amendments
1 the award (e.g. BBA, BSc)	1 Module aims or learning outcomes (only those which do not affect the programme aims or the alignment between module and programme outcomes)
2 Title of the programme where the nature or subject of the programme is affected by accompanying major changes to programme content, structure, mode or location of delivery or significant changes to modules	2 Title of the programme where the change is minor and possibly motivated by marketing reasons or by the need to reflect more accurately the substance of the programme
3 significant change of location of delivery (such as a different campus)	3 The assessment strategy is shown as indicative and may be adjusted for example, according to cohort needs. This also applies to changes to weighting of assessment components within a module
4 mode of delivery (e.g. change to part-time or online)	4 Changes to assessment/marking criteria
5 the intended learning outcomes	5 Changes to the curriculum within a module
6 changes which would require an exemption from or variation to the Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1) [and therefore subject to approval by Academic Board]	6 Tthe learning and teaching strategies are shown as indicative. These may be adjusted for example, according to cohort needs (e.g. move from lectures to tutorials or increased proportion of independent learning)
7 credit weighting of constituent modules	7 Addition of optional module(s)
8 addition/removal of core modules	8 Removal of up to 20% of optional modules
9 removal of >20% of optional modules	9 Changes to the methods of assessment or the weighting of assessment (between assessment components) unless there are extensive changes across more than one module
10 changing the level of a module or the stage of the programme in which it is offered	

Notes

(a) consideration **should** be given to whether a change of title for a number of modules represents a change in the emphasis of the programme and for which classification as a major amendment might be more appropriate
(b) every third minor change **should** be treated as a major amendment as it suggests that a more substantive review of the programme is required (unless the programme has recently undergone mid-cycle or periodic review under the Code on Periodic Review (QH:C13).

Operational amendments

45 Operational (or 'housekeeping') amendments are those carried out to ensure that the programme specification and module descriptors continue to reflect current terminology, references, other factual changes or to ensure the correction or clarification of existing content.

46 Operational changes include:

(a) updating bibliographies/reading lists
(b) updating hyperlinks
(c) other factual updating (e.g. names of organisations or similar)
(d) correction or clarification of existing content
(e) change of module leader.

47 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that operational amendments are made as required and that students, the external examiner, other stakeholders are informed of the changes.

Approval of major amendments

Approval panel

48 Applications for major amendments require the approval of a Panel established by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, membership of which **must** include:

(a) a member of AQSC as chair
(b) a member of academic staff not involved in the design or delivery of the programme.

49 Membership **should** also include a student of the University who is not studying on the programme or a recent graduate who is a graduate of an unrelated programme.

Approval documentation

50 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for submitting a revised programme specification, any revised module descriptors, with changes highlighted and a summary document setting out the rationale for the changes and any financial or resource implications.

51 The submission **must** make clear the date from which the change(s) will take effect, including making clear the extent to which it applies to current students.

Consultation with students

52 As major amendments would constitute a change to the Terms and Conditions of the contract with each student, a major amendment which will apply to current students will only be approved if those students have been consulted in writing and each student has provided their written agreement to the changes. Copies of these written agreements **must** be provided with the application for approval.

53 In accordance with the University's Code on Student Protection (QH:E3) 'current student' includes:

(a) any enrolled student including any student who has interrupted their studies but is permitted to return
(b) any prospective student to whom an offer of a place has been made and not rejected.

54 Changes which will only be implemented for new students **should** be the subject of consultation with those students studying on the current version of the programme or evidence **should** be provided that the proposed changes are the result of student feedback.

Externality

55 Written evidence of the opinion of the *current* external examiner(s) **should** be provided. No additional independent externality is required, but it may prove helpful as part of the rationale for the change (e.g. views of industry or other stakeholders to demonstrate the appropriateness of a change of title).

56 The Programme Coordinator **must** inform the external examiner of the changes following approval.

Deadlines

57 The deadline for submitting a proposed major amendment for full approval is **three months** prior to the proposed date on which the changes would take effect.

Academic Quality and Standards Committee oversight

58 The Academic Quality and Standards Committee must receive a report of the approval process, including the outcomes and the way in which those outcomes have been addressed by the Programme Team. The purpose of this report is to provide assurance to the Committee that the programme approval process has been properly conducted and to enable it to identify any issues for the University, for example in terms of the effectiveness of the programme development and approval process.

Minor amendments

59 The Programme Coordinator is responsible for making minor amendments to a programme and for reporting those amendments to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee via the Head of Academic Quality and Learning, in addition to informing the current external examiner of the changes.

60 Confirmation of the changes made **must** include evidence of:

(a) consultation with current students where the amendments will apply to current students, unless the changes are a response to feedback from current students
(b) the opinion of the current external examiner
(c) any other evidence or feedback on which the amendments are based.

61 The Head of Academic Quality and Learning is responsible for ensuring that the definitive record for the programme is updated (chapter V).

CHAPTER III: SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF PROGRAMMES

62 The ongoing review of the University's portfolio, informed by its strategic direction and by market needs, will show that from time to time it is appropriate to suspend recruitment to a programme or to permanently withdraw a programme, perhaps as part of the development of new programmes. Clear procedures need to be followed to ensure that the interests of all stakeholders are considered.

Suspension of recruitment

63 Where it is proposed to temporarily suspend recruitment to an existing programme of study, to modules which do not form part of a programme, or to one mode of the programme where it is delivered in more than one mode, application for suspension must be made to the Chair of Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

64 Temporary suspension applies to any suspension up to a maximum of two years. Suspending recruitment in this way means that while there will be no further intakes to the programme (for one or two years) there will be no effect on delivery of the programme to students already enrolled and studying and no effect on prospective students to whom an offer has been made and not rejected.

65 The Chair **must** reject the application if there is evidence that current or prospective students (as defined above) will be affected by the suspension.

66 Where an application is granted current students (unaffected by the suspension) **must** be informed in writing that recruitment to the programme on which they are studying is being suspended and the reasons for that suspension, so that they are aware that there will not be future cohorts on the programme. The external examiner **must** also be informed of the decision.

67 The requirement to apply for suspension of a programme outlined in para 63 will not apply where there exists a planned, staged recruitment to programmes (e.g. biennial cohorts).

Resumption of recruitment

68 Where temporary suspension has been granted in accordance with the above paragraphs, an application to resume recruitment must be made to the Chair of Academic Board and be supported by evidence that:

(a) the quality of the learning opportunities and academic standards of the programme remain appropriate, taking into account changes (e.g. to learning resources, currency of the curricula) since recruitment was suspended
(b) the former external examiner remains willing to act for the programme, or that another external examiner is willing to undertake the role
(c) any applicable professional, statutory or regulatory body has been consulted.

69 Account must be taken of the term of office of the external examiner, which might have expired if the examiner is also responsible for other programmes, or who may no longer be willing or available to act as external.

70 If the Chair is concerned that the above criteria may not be met satisfactorily they may direct that the programme **must** be revised and be considered for approval by the appropriate Panel under Chapter II of this Code.

71 Where resumption of recruitment is approved either by the Chair or by an Approval Panel, current students **must** be informed so that they are aware that there will be new intakes.

Withdrawal of a programme

72 In accordance with the University's Code on Student Protection (QH:E3) the University will not permit the withdrawal of a programme in a way which affects the interests of current or prospective students (those to whom an offer has been made and which has not been rejected). The University will ensure the 'teaching out' of any existing programme enabling all current students to complete the programme.

73 Applications to withdraw a programme in respect of future cohorts of students (to whom offers of a place have not yet been made) are subject to the approval of the Chair of Academic Board. If the Chair considers that there is a risk of the withdrawal having an impact on another programme (for example because it provides the articulation route for a lower qualification) the Chair may establish a Panel to consider the application.

74 Applications to withdraw a programme **must** include evidence that the external examiner(s) and any applicable professional, statutory or regulatory body have been consulted.

75 Current students (unaffected by the withdrawal) **must** be informed in writing that the programme on which they are studying is being withdrawn and the reasons for that withdrawal, so that they are aware that there will not be future cohorts on the programme.

Resumption of delivery

76 Withdrawal of a programme in accordance with the above paragraphs is deemed to be a permanent withdrawal. Any proposal to resurrect such a programme must be addressed as a new programme in accordance with Chapter I of this Code.

CHAPTER IV: MODULES – NEW, AMENDED OR WITHDRAWN

77 This chapter governs the approval of new modules, and the approval of the amendment or withdrawal of existing credit-bearing modules which are freestanding. Any change to a module which forms part of a programme **must** be considered in accordance with Chapter II of this Code.

78 The creation of new free-standing modules and their amendment **must** be approved by a Panel established for the purpose by the Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

Consultation

79 Approval will not be granted for the withdrawal of a module in a way which affects the interests of students currently studying the module (including prospective students to whom an offer has been made but not rejected). The University will ensure the 'teaching out' of any existing free standing module enabling all current students to complete the module.

80 Proposals to amend an existing module must include evidence of consultation with students who are currently studying the module.

Approval documentation

81 The following documentation is required and **must** be submitted electronically:

(a) new module: completed module descriptor
(b) amendment to module: amended module descriptor - with changes highlighted - supported by a list of the programmes affected by the amendment if applicable, and evidence of consultation as specified above
(c) withdrawal of module: Copy of current module descriptor, supported by a list of the programmes affected by the withdrawal, and evidence that no current students are affected.

CHAPTER V: UNIVERSITY DEFINITIVE RECORD OF PROGRAMMES

82 The Head of Academic Quality and Learning is responsible for:

(a) maintaining a central repository (in electronic format) of final version programme specifications and module descriptors approved or amended in accordance with this Code and for informing the relevant parties of any updates;

(b) maintaining a detailed record of the approval of each programme, including whether the programme has been accredited by a professional, statutory or regulatory body and the period for which that accreditation is valid.

83 The final approved version of the programme is used as the basis for the delivery of the programme (including assessment), and for the monitoring and periodic review of the programme. It also provides the basis for information for students, employers and other stakeholders, for example supporting the production of Official Transcripts and European Diploma Supplements.

84 Historical versions of programmes and modules will also be maintained for as long as required to ensure that accurate information can be provided to graduates and other stakeholders where their studies related to versions of the programme which have been superseded or withdrawn.

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