UNIVERSITY OF SURREY

Code of practice for programme life cycle processes

Academic year 2023/24

Introduction

1. This *Code of practice for programme life cycle processes* applies to all the University's undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision. It also applies to undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes delivered by the University's Associated Institutions (AIs)[1] that lead to an award of the University. It covers the processes for programme viability, programme validation, periodic enhancement, modification, suspension, re-suspension, reinstatement, and withdrawal.

2. Processes for continuous enhancement review are covered in a separate Code, the *Code of practice for continuous enhancement review: taught programmes*. This *Code of practice for programme life cycle processes* has been informed by the *QAA Quality Code for Higher Education.*

Key deadlines

3. The following tables show the deadlines for the processes contained with this Code and those that the various professional service departments use in managing the related marketing, administration, and timetabling processes.

Table 1: Professional Service Departmental deadlines

Department	Context	Deadline	Timescale/notes
Library	Teaching materials (reading list) decision deadlines needed by the library	Three months prior to teaching of new module(s)	
Library	Requests for new subscription materials	At least one year before starting teaching	
Marketing	New undergraduate programmes – to be included in the printed prospectus and major recruitment fairs	October (last day of the month)	Two years prior to the introduction of the programme
Marketing	New postgraduate programmes – to be included in the printed prospectus and major recruitment fairs	February (last day of the month)	One and a half years prior to the introduction of the programme
Marketing	To be notified of programmes being withdrawn	December	One and a half academic years prior to the year of closure
Programme Administration –	Module selection/online module registration –	One week preceding the	Students can make changes to their

[1] Reference to Faculty/School/Department should also be taken to include the relevant unit within the AIs.

Student Scheduling team	continuing students	end of each semester (mid-late June – semester 1, mid-February – semester 2)	selections within the first two weeks of each semester
Programme Administration – Student Scheduling team	Module selection - new students	End of week 2 semester one	For students to select their modules for the year. Students can make changes to their selections within the first two weeks of each semester
Programme Administration – Student Scheduling team	Changes to the module catalogue	July (last day of the month)	Prior to the start of the upcoming academic year
Student Scheduling team	Module requirements to be received for semester 1 timetable	Mid-May	Annual process
Student Scheduling team	Timetabling release semester 1 teaching timetables to Faculties	Beginning of August	Annual process
Student Scheduling team	Faculties check semester 1 teaching timetables and request any changes	Beginning of September	Annual process
Student Scheduling team	Final teaching timetable for semester 1 published to students	Beginning of September	Annual process
Student Scheduling team	Timetabling release semester 2 teaching timetables to Faculties	Mid December	Annual process
Student Scheduling team	Faculties check semester 2 teaching timetables and request any changes	Beginning of January	Annual process
Student Scheduling team	Final teaching timetable for semester 2 published to students	Beginning of January	Annual process

4. For more detailed information about this year's Academic Registry timelines please click here (this website is password protected).

Programme viability

The process[2]

5. The programme viability process is the first stage of the validation process. A new programme or pathway (including adding a new pathway to an existing programme) cannot be offered to applicants until it has been approved through the programme viability and validation process. The process is designed to assess the viability of each proposal within the following areas:

    - Financial
    - Resource
    - Market

6. The proposer of a new programme should email Academic Quality Services (AQS) at qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity to confirm their intention to propose a new programme. To undertake the programme viability process the relevant programme viability paperwork will need to be completed, signed and submitted to Academic Quality Services.

7. Before proceeding to the Programme Viability Approval Committee (PVAC), the proposal will be considered via a workshop, as part of the Curriculum Design Review process. The Associate Dean, Education for the Faculty should provide indication of provisional Faculty support for the proposal prior to the workshop being arranged. A focus for the workshop will be informing the formal viability approval from PVAC.

8. As new programme proposals are submitted to Academic Quality Services these will be considered by PVAC. Proposals can be submitted throughout the academic year, with a final deadline of 18 months, prior to the first intake of students. On consideration of the proposal, if further information or clarification is required, this will be requested from the programme proposer.

9. There are four possible outcomes of the programme viability approval stage:
    - Approved – the programme can continue to the curriculum design review stage of the process
    - Approved with recommendations - the programme can continue to the curriculum design review stage of the process where the recommendations will be considered
    - Approved with conditions - the programme can continue to the curriculum design review stage of the process - the programme team must complete any conditions and have them approved by the Academic Quality Services representative at the initial checks stage before the programme can progress to the validation/periodic enhancement event stage
    - Rejected – the programme proposal is deemed not to be viable

[2] The programme viability stage of the process is not applicable to the Associated Institutions who operate their own planning schedules.

10. The committee will aim to provide a decision on whether the new programme proposal has been approved within eight weeks of the completed documentation having been submitted to Academic Quality Services. The programme proposer and the quality systems group e-mail distribution list will receive a confirmation email, from Academic Quality Services, informing them of the outcome of the programme proposal. Once a proposal has been approved through the programme viability process it can progress to the validation stage, which focuses on academic viability, and advertised as 'subject to validation'.

11. Postgraduate research programmes with taught elements must also seek initial approval through the programme viability process; once approved they undertake the validation process and periodic enhancement processes as outlined within this code of practice.

Table 2: Timescales – programme viability

Process	Context	Deadline
Programme viability	New programmes considered at the first Curriculum Design Review workshop	19 months before the first intake of students
Programme viability	New programme proposals receive approval from the Programme Viability Approval Committee (PVAC) to progress to validation	18 months prior to the first intake of students. For example: for an October 2024 intake the deadline for PVAC approval would be the end of March 2023

Table 3: Roles and responsibilities – programme viability

Role	Responsibility
Programme team	• Development of proposal within the Faculty • Inform Academic Quality Services of their intention to develop a new programme • Complete the relevant forms • Arrange for the forms to be signed by the Faculty and the Director of Library and Learning Services • Submit completed, signed forms to Academic Quality Services, to be considered by the Programme Viability Approval Committee • Answer questions raised by the Committee • If deemed necessary, attend a meeting with the Chair and Secretary to resolve any outstanding issues and agree the outcome
Academic Quality Services (Secretary to the Committee)	• Inform new programme proposer of the process and forms to be complete • Upload the completed, signed forms to the Programme Viability Approval Committee Team's site • Inform the Committee that there is a new proposal for consideration

	• Summarise the findings of the Committee for the Chair • Arrange a meeting with the Chair and relevant parties if further discussion is required for the Chair to be able to make an informed decision • Once the outcome has been agreed complete the outcomes section of the application form and arrange for the form to be signed by the Chair • Communicate the outcome to the programme proposer and quality systems group • Move the proposed programmes Teams channel to the files folder of the PVAC Teams site
Programme Viability Approval Committee	• Review each new programme proposal • Raise any issues to be addressed either within the University or by the programme prosper • Confirm whether in support of the new proposed programme • If any issues remain be available to attend a meeting lead by the Chair with the programme proposer • Chair to agree outcome and sign the application form
Associate Dean, Education	• Provide provisional support for new programme developments

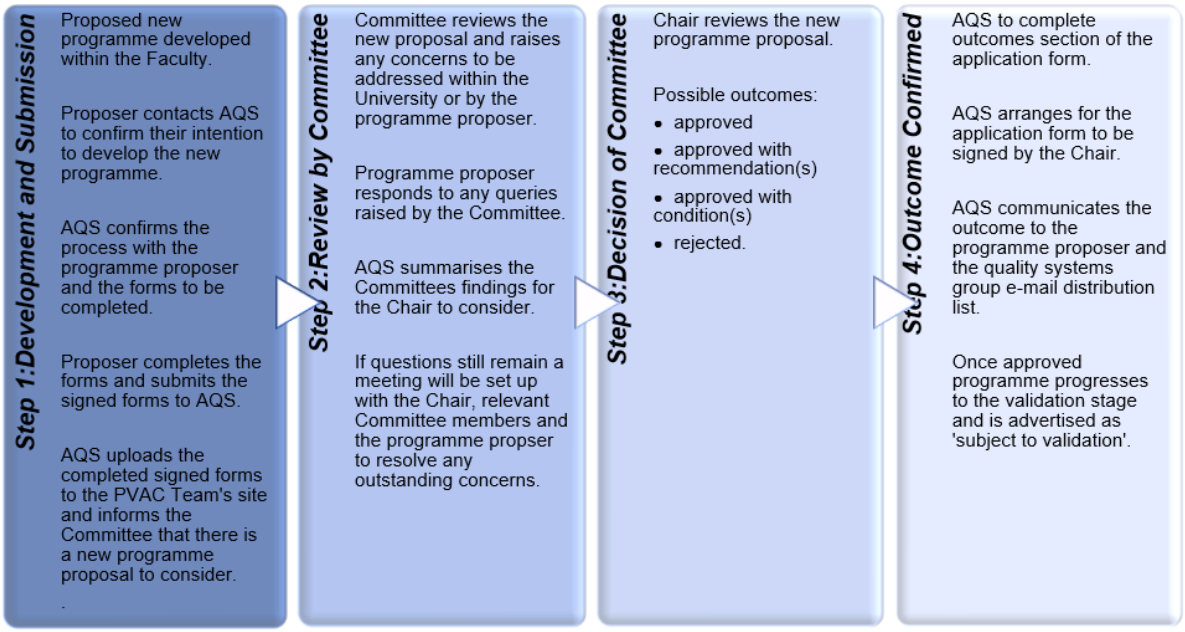
Forms and guidance

12. The following documents will need to be completed to undertake the programme viability process:
    - Programme viability application form - available from Academic Quality Services
    - Programme outline template – available from Academic Quality Services
    - Marketing checklist – available from your Faculty Marketing Manager
    - Library checklist – available from your Academic Liaison Librarian
    - Business finance case – available from your Business Finance Manager

    All forms are available from Academic Quality Services: please request a copy of the forms by emailing qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk.

13. For the application form to be considered by the Committee it must be approved and signed by those listed in Section 3 of the application form. For a programme proposal which involves more than one Faculty, consideration will need to be given to who assumes the administrative responsibility for the programme and how the teaching will be shared and a supporting statement from each Pro-Vice Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty or their nominee will also need to be included in the submission document.

Process map 1: Programme Viability



Validation[3]

The process

14. The design and approval process (validation) is the quality assurance mechanism by which a proposed programme of study is scrutinised, in order to assure Senate (the academic authority of the University) that the programme meets the University's expectations for academic standards and quality.

15. When designing a new programme, programme teams are expected to ensure that their programmes will meet internal and external reference points. These include:
    - University strategy (and supporting strategies)
    - University regulations
    - Relevant Codes of practice
    - Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)
    - Relevant subject benchmark statements
    - Relevant PSRB requirements

16. The validation process is made up of three stages: curriculum design review, initial checks, and the validation event (see Table 4 below for the process timescales and process map 2 for the validation and periodic enhancement process map). Programmes approved through the validation process will have an open-ended approval and will be subject to the periodic enhancement process when their School/Department next undertakes the process as per the schedule (the periodic enhancement schedule dates can be obtained from qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk).

[3] Please note that the validation and periodic enhancement processes have been suspended for the academic years 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24, and will be replaced by the Curriculum Design Review during this time. Please see process map 2.

17. Those programmes which have a non-standard start date, (i.e., January, February, March, July) will follow the standard timeline for the validation process as outlined below.

Table 4: Timescales – validation

Context	Deadline	Timescale
Programme and module design, including: -pre-workshop information -workshop 1 -workshop 2 - writing retreat	End of May	6-8 weeks following on from the PVAC deadline of the end of March
Initial checks portion of the process, including: - the desk-based review - consultation with the programme team - the completion of any conditions - the setup of new programme and module descriptors - creation of the marketing pages 'subject to validation'	End of June	4 weeks
Validation and periodic enhancement events, including: - the production of the self-evaluation document - the circulation of the paperwork two weeks prior to the event to the panel -the one-day event	June/July	2 - 4 weeks
Conditions following a validation/periodic enhancement event (exceptional circumstances only) must be signed off in full by the panel	July	the process must be complete by no later than the 31st July (13 months prior to the start of the programme)

Periodic Enhancement[4]

The process

18. Periodic enhancement is the process by which the University assures itself that existing provision and practices within Schools/Departments continue to be relevant, current, and meet their stated aims and objectives. The periodic enhancement process operates at School/Department level, normally on a five-year cycle, and it is the expectation that all taught programmes within a School/Department will go through the process at the same time.

[4] Please note that the validation and periodic enhancement processes have been suspended for the academic years 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24, and will be replaced by the Curriculum Design Review during this time. Please see process map 2.

19. When reviewing an existing programme, programme teams are expected to ensure that their programmes will continue to meet internal and external reference points. These include:
    - University strategy (and supporting strategies)
    - University regulations
    - Relevant Codes of practice
    - Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)
    - Relevant subject benchmark statements
    - Relevant PSRB requirements

20. The periodic enhancement process is made up of five stages: initial planning, curriculum design review, initial checks, the periodic enhancement event, and post event activity (see Table 5 below for the process timescales and process map 2 for the validation and periodic enhancement process map). The periodic enhancement schedule dates can be obtained from Academic Quality Services by e-mailing qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk.

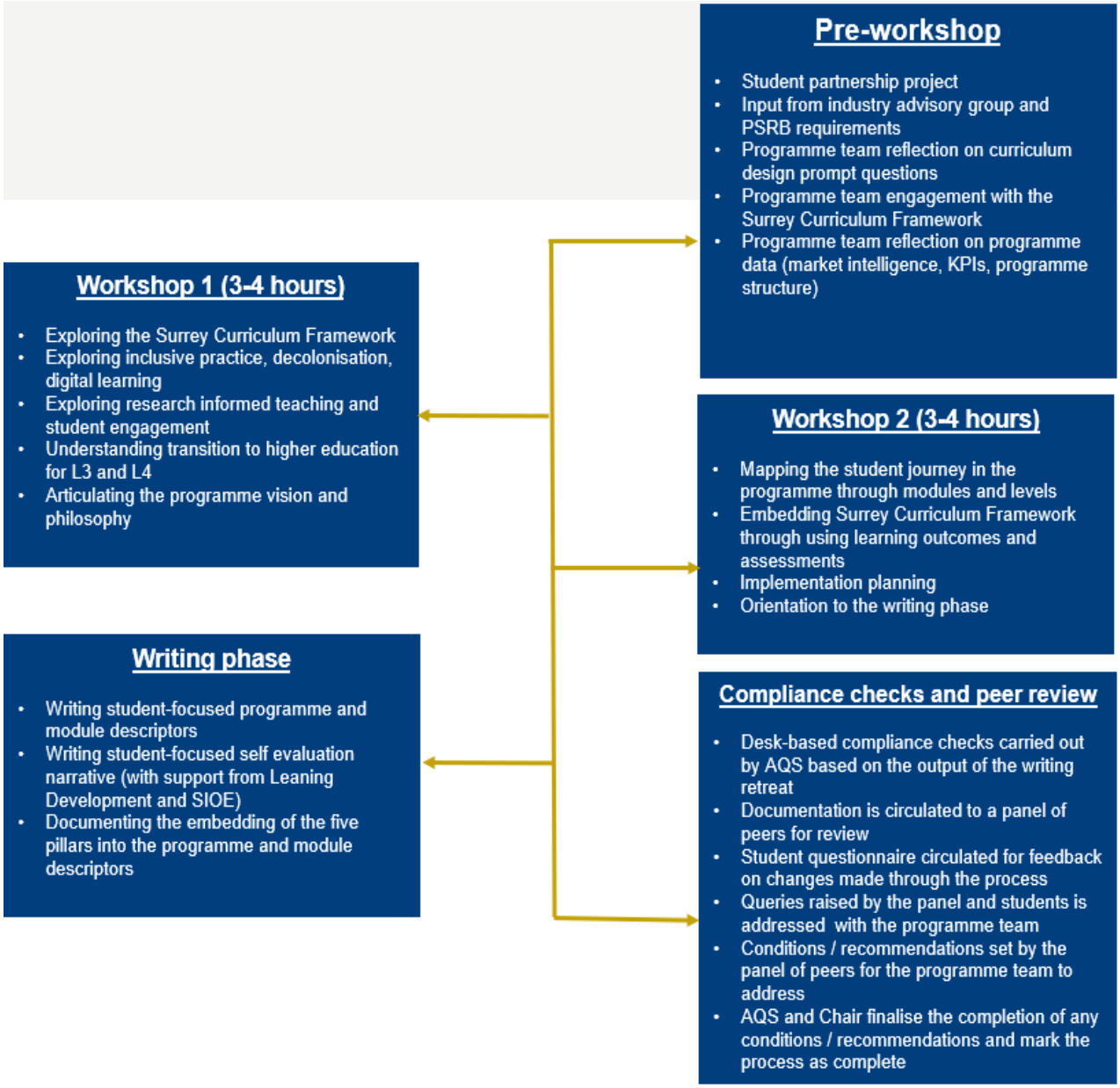
21. Postgraduate research programmes with taught elements are considered as part of the periodic enhancement process. When a School/Departments is due to undertake the periodic enhancement process, this will cover both postgraduate taught provision and research provision with taught elements.

Table 5: Timescales – periodic enhancement

Context	Deadline	Timescale
Programme and module design, including: -pre-workshop information - workshop 1 - workshop 2 - writing retreat	end of September	6-8 weeks
Initial checks portion of the process, including: - the desk-based review - consultation with the programme team - the completion of any conditions - the setup of new programme and module descriptors - creation of the marketing pages 'subject to validation'	end of January *	8 – 12 weeks
Validation and periodic enhancement events, including: - the production of the self-evaluation document - the circulation of the paperwork two weeks prior to the event to the panel - the one-day event	February / March	4 - 6 weeks

Conditions following a validation/periodic enhancement event (exceptional circumstances only) must be signed off in full by the panel	30th April	6-8 weeks

Process map 2: Curriculum Design Review



Curriculum Design Review

The process

22. This step is an opportunity in the process to pause, critically reflect and enhance each foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate taught programme that we offer or hope to offer at the University of Surrey. The process involves drawing programme teams and other key stakeholders together to look at current and future provision in a series of workshops. The teams will then create a plan and work collaboratively to support implementation.

23. All taught programmes will be involved but it is important to stress that in some Schools and Departments, a significant amount of work may have been recently undertaken so this review process may only impact on a handful of areas/modules. In other programmes, colleagues may use this opportunity to undertake more fundamental change. The agency of change required for the programme remains with the academic community, including the programme team.

24. Colleagues will be asked to undertake several pre-workshop activities ahead of two main workshops and a follow-on writing retreat as outlined in the diagram below. The process flow diagram for this step is as follows:

Initial checks

25. The initial checks exercise is designed to assess compliance to ensure that the provision under review is in line with the University's regulations, Codes of practice and policies in addition to any external requirements. The initial checks process is led by Academic Quality Services and will normally take place early in semester one of an academic year. The following information will be sourced by Academic Quality Services and reviewed to complete the initial checks process:
    - Programme specification (s) (new and existing)
    - Module descriptors (new and existing)
    - Approved and proposed modifications from the past two academic years (periodic enhancement only)
    - Most recent Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) report (if applicable/available) (periodic enhancement only)
    - The programme team will need to complete a programme specification (validation only) and module descriptors for any new modules prior to the completion of the initial checks exercise (see process maps 1 and 2 for further information).

26. The initial checks process will concentrate on the following areas:
    - Programme structures and curriculum
    - Assessment and feedback
    - Quality assurance
    - PSRB accreditation – any exemptions to the regulations that have not been approved will need to be submitted to the Quality Enhancement Subcommittee (QESC) and then to the University Education Committee (UEC) for approval

27. Further information can be found within the initial checks report template which is completed by Academic Quality Services.

28. The initial checks process requires approval from the Academic Quality Services representative for the process to be signed off as complete. There are three possible outcomes of the initial checks exercise:
    - Compliant – the programme(s) can continue to the validation/periodic enhancement event stage (stage 4)
    - Compliant with conditions/corrections – the programme team must complete any conditions/corrections and have them approved by Academic Quality Services before the programme(s) can progress to the validation/periodic enhancement event stage (stage 4)
    - Non-compliant – it is expected that this would only be the case in exceptional circumstances. In the case of a validation the programme(s) could not proceed to the validation event stage. In the case of a periodic enhancement the relevant Associate Dean, Education would be informed to consider an appropriate course of action for existing provision

Publication of programme and module records

29. Following the completion of the initial checks exercise new programme specifications and module descriptors will be released to the public catalogue. Academic Quality

Services input updated programme specifications for new programmes into the Quality and Curriculum Management (QCM) system once they have been approved through the initial checks process and forward any new modules to the Student Scheduling team to be input into SITS and QCM. Once the setup process is complete the public catalogue is updated by Academic Quality Services and relevant Professional Services teams are informed so that their records can be updated, e.g., Marketing programme pages.

***Validation/periodic enhancement event*[5]**

30. The validation/periodic enhancement event is designed to provide a forum to consider the provision under review in a peer-led discussion focusing on innovation and plans for the future to include:
    - Strategic aims and objectives of the School/Department
    - Learning and teaching
    - Assessment and feedback
    - The student experience

31. The programme team will be expected to complete a self-evaluation document that will be circulated to a panel for consideration. You may wish to include a summary of the outcomes of the Curriculum Design Review step (step 2) within your self-evaluation document. A validation/periodic enhancement event will take place over one day. The panel will be appointed by Academic Quality Services and consist of:
    - A chair
    - An internal member
    - An external member(s)
    - A student member
    - The event co-ordinator (from Academic Quality Services)

32. For further information on areas the validation/periodic enhancement event will focus on see the self-evaluation document template.

33. The outcomes of the validation/periodic enhancement event can include conditions and recommendations. These should be designed to be helpful to the School/Department to improve the proposals and inform their practice. If conditions are set, they will need to be met before the process can be signed off as complete. Should conditions or recommendations indicate an additional resource requirement that has not been included within the viability approval for the programme this will need to be raised and approved with the applicable budget holder or executive lead. The implementation of recommendations should be monitored through the continuous enhancement review process.

34. Should a panel have concerns that cannot be addressed satisfactorily through recommendations and conditions the panel can agree not to validate/re-approve. The panel will provide feedback to inform a resubmission. The panel will indicate a timeline for the reconsideration of the proposals at a second event, with advice from Academic Quality Services.

[5] As part of the Curriculum Design Review 'events' will be carried out via correspondence

Table 6: Roles and responsibilities – validation and periodic enhancement

Role	Responsibility
Programme team	• Attend a planning meeting with Academic Quality Services to agree dates and discuss the various stages of the validation/periodic enhancement process • Complete a programme specification (validation only) and module descriptors for new modules to support the completion of the initial checks process • Be available for meetings with the Academic Quality Services representative during the initial checks process • Complete a self-evaluation document for the validation/periodic enhancement event • Attend the validation/periodic enhancement event and answer any questions the panel may have as well as contribute to discussions • Keep key stakeholders informed of the outcomes of the process • Complete any conditions/recommendations from the initial checks and validation/periodic enhancement event exercise
Academic Quality Services	• Hold a planning meeting and set dates for the validation/ periodic enhancement process • Lead on and complete the initial checks process • Coordinate the validation/periodic enhancement event, including: securing panel members, circulating documentation, booking rooms and catering • Attend the validation/periodic enhancement event and produce a brief summary report of discussions and outcomes • Chase the outcomes any conditions/recommendations for the two stages of the process • Publish finalised documentation
Chair of the validation / periodic enhancement event	The Chair is a senior member of University staff who has experience of the validation and periodic enhancement process. The Chair is from a different Faculty to that of the programme(s)/School/Department under consideration *Before the event the Chair is expected to:* • Inform the event coordinator, in advance, if they have any issues or concerns and resolve any queries regarding the proposal or the event before the event date • Work with the event coordinator to set the agenda and organise the panel, where necessary • Read the documentation and prepare discussion points/questions for the private panel meetings, consultation with the programme team and, in for a periodic enhancement event, meeting with students *During the event the Chair is expected to:* • Establish an agenda for each meeting during the event • Chair meetings of the panel

	• Ensure that members of the panel, staff and students can contribute to the discussion and further explore themes with the programme team, and students in enhancement events • Within the initial meeting, provide a brief overview of the University's processes and its outcomes, noting which areas need to be covered, using the University's *Codes of practice* as guidance • Ensure that the external assessor(s) understand the process • Clarify and enable the role of any PSRB representative(s) • Ensure that the event runs smoothly and to time • Identify and record areas of good practice • In conjunction with the event coordinator, compile any commendations and recommendations identified by the panel and ensure that they are clear and achievable. Conditions are only to be set in exceptional circumstances • Feedback the outcomes to the programme team at the conclusion of the event *After the event the Chair is expected to:* • Approve the brief report compiled by the event coordinator summarising the outcomes and key areas of discussion • If conditions are set, work with the event coordinator to approve their completion • Review the response to any recommendations set by the panel
Internal panel member of the validation / periodic enhancement event	Internal panel members cannot be from the same Faculty as the programme/School/Department being considered through the validation/periodic enhancement process, and must be a member of staff at the University of Surrey (usually an academic member of staff) *Before the event the internal panel member is expected to:* • Read the documentation and prepare discussion points/questions for the private panel meetings, meeting with the programme team and, for a periodic enhancement event, meeting with students • Highlight any issues to the event coordinator, that need to be dealt with prior to the validation/periodic enhancement event *During the event the internal panel member is expected to:* • Advise the University as to whether the programme(s) threshold standards are comparable with other programmes within the University and the FHEQ • Discuss with the programme team how the learning, teaching and assessment opportunities have been enhanced • Discuss their findings and conclusions with the panel • Help identify any areas of good practice

	After the event the internal panel member is expected to: • Advise on any corrections that need to be made to the event summary report • If necessary, work with the Chair and event coordinator to approve any conditions. Conditions should only be set in exceptional circumstances • Review the response to any recommendations set by the panel
External panel member of the validation / periodic enhancement event	One or more external panel member(s) will be appointed from comparable higher education institutions (and where applicable from a PSRB or industry) *Before the event the external assessor is expected to:* • Read the documentation and prepare discussion points/questions for the private panel meetings, meet with the programme team and, for a periodic enhancement event, consult with students, in particular: • Examine the content and the curriculum to determine whether it is appropriate for the subject area and comparable to similar programmes offered at other HEIs • Review the programme and module learning outcomes and consider whether they are: set at the correct level, reflect the content, and clearly demonstrate progression • Review the assessment strategy and the individual assessment methods to ensure that they are appropriate for the subject area and the level • Determine the currency and viability of the programme in light of current trends within the subject area and industry • Provide any suggestions for improvements or examples of good practice which could be adopted • Highlight any issues to the event coordinator, that need to be dealt with prior to the validation / periodic enhancement event *During the event the external assessor is expected to:* • Provide independent subject expertise and / or professional experience • Advise the University whether the threshold standards as expressed in the learning outcomes meet the expectations of the FHEQ, relevant subject benchmarks and, where applicable, PSRB/external body requirements • Advise the University whether the delivery and assessment methods of the learning resources (including, where applicable, in professional practice) support students in achieving and demonstrating the learning outcomes and allow the outcomes to be demonstrated by students *After the event the external assessor is expected to:*

	• Advise on any corrections that need to be made to the event summary report • If necessary, work with the Chair and event coordinator to approve any conditions. Conditions should only be set in exceptional circumstances • Review the response to any recommendations set by the panel
Student panel member of the validation / periodic enhancement event	The student panel member will be appointed from a pool of trained reviewers (who are nominated by the University of Surrey Students' Union, USSU) from a different Faculty to that of the programme(s)/School/Department under consideration. The student member will normally have experience of being a student representative for a programme or hold a post within the USSU (excluding anyone who has served on a complaint or appeal panel for the programme under review). The principal role of the student reviewer will be to bring to the process the student perspective. The student reviewer may explore any themes (as a non-subject specialist) they wish that impact on the student learning experience. Key areas of discussion and consideration for the student reviewer will include, but not be limited to: • The arrangements made for the student voice to be heard – examples can include the student rep system, tutorials, surveys etc • Whether issues raised through the student voice have been considered and responded to (only applicable for periodic enhancement events) • Whether student feedback received via the NSS, PTES, Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs) and student representation has been considered and responded to (only applicable for periodic enhancement events) • The information available to students in support of their studies is accurate, complete, and effective • The arrangements for supporting students to progress and achieve, including personal tutoring • The learning opportunities and resources provided to students to achieve the intended learning outcomes *Before the event the student reviewer is expected to:* • Read the documentation and note any areas which may need further investigation during the validation/periodic enhancement event *During the event the student reviewer is expected to:* • Contribute to the discussions of the private panel meetings • Highlight any areas that were not clear in the documentation, which need further investigation in the meetings with the programme team and students • Ask questions that arise and are pertinent to the discussion during the event

	After the event the student reviewer is expected to: • Advise on any corrections that need to be made to the event summary report • If necessary, work with the Chair and event coordinator to approve any conditions. Conditions should only be set in exceptional circumstances • Review the response to any recommendations set by the panel
Event coordinator of the validation / periodic enhancement event	*Before the event the event coordinator is expected to:* • Read the documentation and prepare discussion points/questions for the private panel meetings, consultation with the programme team and, for an enhancement event, meeting with students. *During the event the event coordinator is expected to:* • Provide information and advice on the University's *Regulations* and the relevant *Codes of practice* • Keep a formal record of the event's key discussions and outcomes • Contribute to discussions where applicable • Assist in the formulation of the outcomes *After the event the event coordinator is expected to:* • Write a brief summary report of key discussions and outcomes from the event • Circulate the final report to the panel and programme team • If conditions are set work with the Chair and, if applicable, the panel to approve the conditions. Conditions should only be set in exceptional circumstances • Review the response to any recommendations set by the panel

Forms and guidance

35. All forms and guidance for the validation and periodic enhancement processes can be downloaded from the Academic Quality Services webpages. To complete the process, the following forms will need to be completed:
    - Self-evaluation document template
    - Programme specification template (validation only)
    - Module descriptor template (if new modules are being proposed)
    - Validation – new modules will be created in the Quality and Curriculum Management (QCM) system by the relevant professional services department following approval
    - Periodic enhancement – new modules should be created through the modification task within the QCM system, but they can be provided in Word format for the initial checks stage of the process

36. Following the completion of the validation or periodic enhancement process, a definitive set of documentation will be uploaded to the Quality Assurance Programme Documentation (QAPD) SharePoint site.

Programme and module modification

The process

37. The modification process is the quality assurance mechanism by which any proposed changes to programmes and/or modules are considered and implemented if approved.

38. Academic Quality Services maintains the records of any modifications. This *Code of practice* provides detailed information and guidance about the programme and module modification process, in addition to the responsibilities of all participants.

39. The University is committed to ensuring the continuous improvement of its programmes to guarantee the best possible student experience. Part of this commitment is to recognise where change is needed and to make sure there are no unnecessary barriers to enable programmes to stay relevant, current, viable and competitive. The modification process allows for this.

40. There is an expectation that a modification is identified through one or more of the factors below, which then flags the need for a change:
    - Data on student progression and achievement
    - Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements
    - External examiners' reports
    - Continuous enhancement review reports
    - Student surveys
    - Discussion at Boards of Studies
    - Feedback from students, employers, alumni, and staff
    - Validation
    - Periodic enhancement

41. The modification process should not be used for individual students who require reasonable adjustments to a module/programme due to extenuating circumstances. Faculty-level processes are in place to manage these instances.

42. Where substantial changes are being made to an existing programme, a scrutiny process may be triggered which involves the changes being scrutinised through the initial checks process (see paragraphs 25–28 above) in addition to the changes being processed through the modification process. Once approved through the initial checks and modification process no further action will be required.

43. Where a need for modification is identified, the Programme Leader, or nominated alternate, is required to log into the Quality and Curriculum Management (QCM) system and start a modification. They will be required to complete the modification context sections as well as edit any programme and/or module records related to the modification. For example, if the modification was to introduce new programme content through the development of a new module, this would need to be created within the system and the programme record updated to include the new module. Based on the

modifications entered, the system will then determine whether the modification is major/minor (see paragraphs 53-56 below).

44. It is the expectation that any proposed changes to modules and/or programmes are discussed with students before final approval and implementation. Student feedback should be taken into account when considering whether to proceed with the modification. The method used to collect this information should be documented within the context screen of the QCM system and will not be approved without evidence of appropriate consultation having taken place. Students should be consulted or kept informed through means such as Staff/Student Liaison Committee and Boards of Studies meetings. More detailed information on this topic can found within appendix 2.

45. If current and/or prospective students need to be contacted to inform them of the modification, a form of words should be produced and included within the context screen of the QCM system.

46. Programme and Module Leaders that will be impacted by the proposed modification(s) should be informed at the earliest possible opportunity. A notification from the QCM system will be sent to relevant parties affected by the modification once it has been submitted by the proposer. It is the responsibility of the affected Programme / Module Leader to submit a further modification to ensure any changes that affect their provision is also updated for their own area. For example, a shared module may be removed from a programme; other areas that share this module may then also need to remove this module from other programmes as it is no longer available.

47. Modifications such as the introduction of a new programme structure and/or programme title should only come into effect for new cohorts of students unless there are exceptional circumstances as to why they should be introduced for existing cohorts. Clear evidence for the modification and how it will be implemented must be detailed within the context screen of the QCM system, to ensure that academic standards are maintained during any transition period.

48. Modifications cannot be introduced for the following academic year after the modification's deadline. Similarly, modifications should not be introduced during a current academic year. However, it is recognised that this might be necessary in exceptional circumstances, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In these instances, a clear rationale must be provided to the Board of Studies as to why the introduction cannot wait and how it will improve the overall student experience. Late or in-year changes must be communicated to all students affected and where possible they should be consulted beforehand. Examples of exceptional circumstances in this context include:
    - Where the only staff subject expert has left the University, meaning there is no one to carry on the delivery of a module's content
    - A PSRB requirement that must be implemented with immediate affect
    - Where a programme is in breach of the University's regulations

49. Modifications and any necessary amendments to programme and module records should be completed and submitted by members of academic staff to the Board of Studies for consideration and approval. The Secretary to the Board of Studies will manage the consideration of the modification(s) through the Board of Studies process.

Chair's action to approve any modifications should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

50. Normally Boards of Study Chairs should not submit and approve their own modifications. A modification submitted by the Chair should normally be considered at a Board of Studies meeting.

51. All modification approvals should clearly be recorded within the Board of Studies minutes and the papers made available to Academic Quality Services on request. Where Chair's action has been granted, the modification must be reported at the next Board of Studies meeting and clearly recorded.

Process map 4 – modification process

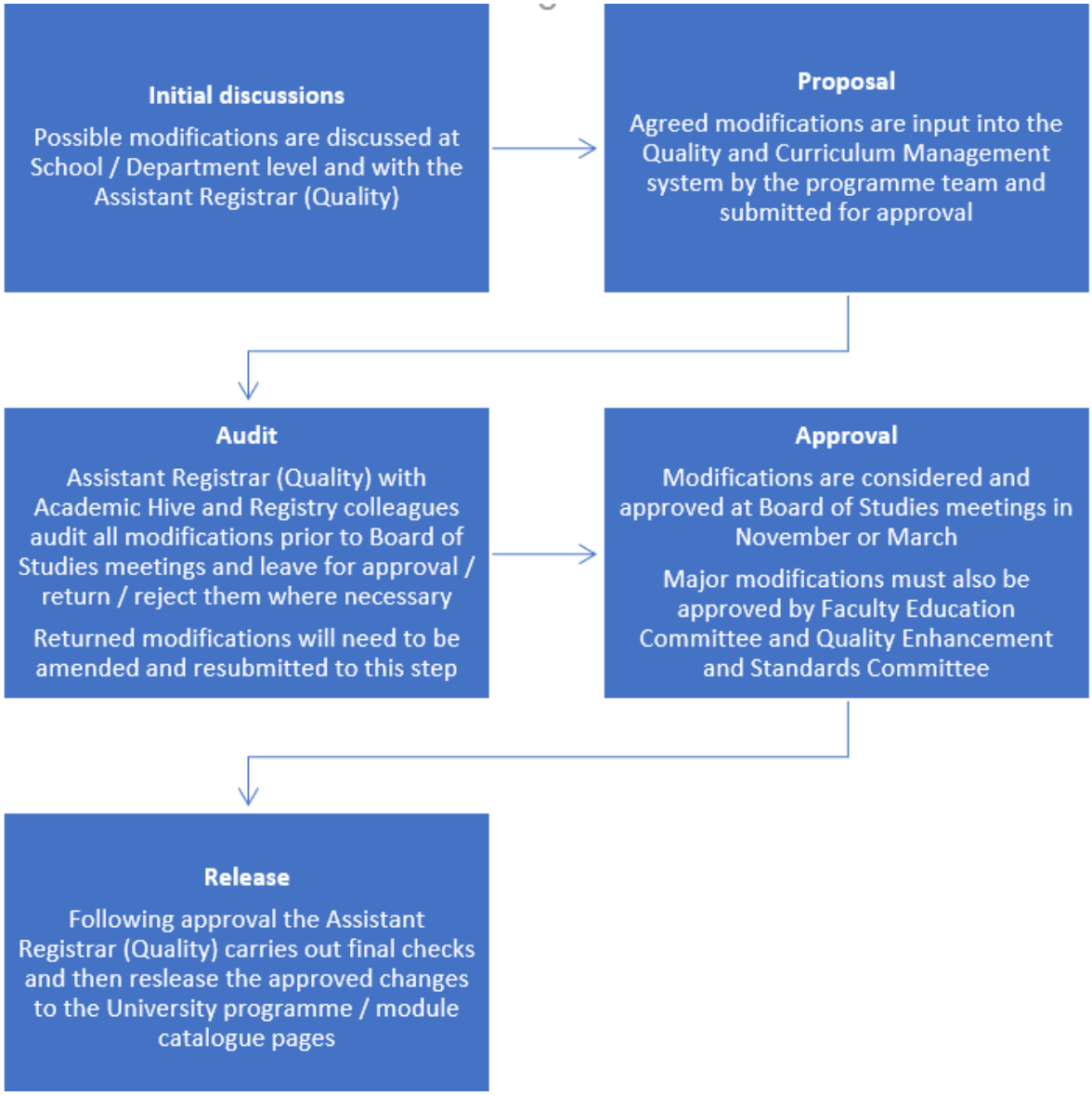


Table 7: Timescales - modification

Context	Deadline (last day of the month)	Timescale
Any major/minor modification must be approved in QCM	30th April	Prior to the start of the upcoming academic year
Programme name changes to be approved in QCM	17 months prior to the first intake of students to the new programme title	For example: for an October 2024 intake the deadline for approval would be the end of April 2023

52. *NB: the above dates are in place to ensure compliance and support the ongoing quality of the student experience. There may be occasional exceptions to the above deadlines, which should be discussed with Academic Quality Services.

Major/minor changes

53. Modifications are classified as major or minor and this determines the level of approval required. Minor modifications can be approved by a Board of Studies; major modifications are first approved by a Board of Studies and then forwarded on for further levels of approval (see Table 8 below for roles and responsibilities in this respect).

54. The following changes represent a major change:
    - Programme name change(s) – Marketing must be consulted on the new name and their response documented in the 'consultation with relevant departments' section within the QCM modification workflow
    - New awards or change of existing award (e.g., changing a BA to a BSc)
    - Change to/removal of/introduction of a mode of study (full-time/part-time/distance learning/ short course)

    The following changes represent a minor change (please note that the following list is not exhaustive):
    - Module scheduling (i.e., semester 1/2)
    - Module classification (core/compulsory/optional)
    - Removal of an existing module (core/compulsory/optional)
    - Introduction of a new module (core/compulsory/optional)
    - Changes due to PSRB requirements (unless the change conflicts with the University's regulations in which case a case would need to be made to the University Education Committee and then to Senate)
    - Module titles
    - Learning outcomes and/or aims (programme/module)
    - Assessment patterns/strategy
    - Learning and teaching methods
    - Content (programme/module)

- Contact hours

55. When auditing modifications, Academic Quality Services will consider each modification on a case-by-case basis.

56. Where there is a large volume of changes that could culminate in a minor change becoming a major and/or a major requiring a periodic enhancement event, or a change that does not fit within either category (major/minor) as listed above, this would be classed as a substantial change. Academic Quality Services is responsible for assessing whether the threshold for changes being 'substantial' is triggered and will liaise with the proposer to take the changes forward.

Table 8: Roles and responsibilities - modification

Role	Responsibility
The proposer	• Identify the modification(s) required • Discuss the modification(s) with students • Consult with relevant Departments, e.g., Admissions, Marketing, collaborating academic areas • Complete the relevant sections within the QCM system • Submit the modification within the QCM system once all information has been provided and changes made • Implement the change(s) whilst maintaining the academic standards of the programme and the quality of the learning experience • Report on and monitoring the effectiveness of the modification(s) through the continuous enhancement review process and any subsequent periodic enhancement events • Carry out the process in a timely manner • Keep all relevant parties informed throughout the process
Academic Quality Services	• Ensure that all modifications are reported to any institutional level committees in a timely manner (if applicable) • Ensure that the QCM system has been completed correctly and accurately • Ensure that the proposed changes are compliant with the University's regulations and relevant processes and policies • Be responsible for the modification audit step within QCM system and seek input on the auditing of modifications from relevant professional service departments • Update the programme and module catalogue once modifications have been released from the audit step NB: notifications to relevant parties in relation to the approval of modifications are automated and sent out via the QCM system.
Board of Studies	Consider and, if appropriate, approve all modifications in the first instance. Minor modifications only need to be approved by a Board of Studies; major modifications must be first approved by a Board of Studies and then forwarded on for further levels of approval. The Board of Studies are responsible for: • Ensuring the information provided is sufficient to make an informed decision • Ensuring the proposed modification is appropriate and timely • Ensuring the proposed implementation process is sufficient and that it can be supported by the Faculty, i.e., if funds are

	required for further resources • Ensuring that students have been informed • Approving modifications or recommending further improvement • Ensuring the change(s) is/are monitored through the relevant quality assurance mechanisms, i.e., continuous enhancement review and periodic enhancement Within the QCM system the Chair can click the approve button in addition to the Board of Studies Secretary. The Secretary can only approve the modification within the system with the Chair and/or Board's permission.
Associate Dean, Education	• Review major modifications to ensure that they are clear, accurate and are compliant with University regulations, policies and procedures • Approve, return, or reject major modifications following Board of Studies approval.
Chair of Quality Enhancement Sub-committee	The Sub-committee are responsible for: • Review major modifications to ensure that they are clear, accurate and are compliant with University regulations, policies and procedures • Approve, return, or reject major modifications following Associate Dean, Education approval. • Assessing the risk involved in major modifications • Assuring the implementation process proposed is appropriate • Ensuring that students have been informed • Deciding whether the modification is appropriate and timely • Approving the modification (if appropriate) or escalating the modification to the University Education Committee for further scrutiny

Audit checks

57. All modifications submitted within the QCM system are subject to an audit check, which is managed by Academic Quality Services. Academic Quality Services audit modifications prior to Board of Studies meetings and following their approval through the QCM 'audit step'. The 'audit step' within QCM is the final step in the approval workflow for modifications. Once released from this step all changes are released to the public catalogue and relevant marketing pages.

58. All modifications that have been approved within the QCM system will be subject to periodic audit checks by Academic Quality Services, and the relevant Associate Dean, Education and Director of Learning and Teaching.

59. The purpose of the audit checks is to identify any areas that may require further investigation and to ensure that due process is being followed.

60. Those carrying out the audit checks reserve the right to investigate any changes in the process of being approved, or which have been approved through the modification process and, if necessary, may request that revisions/amendments are made. Further information on the criteria in place for auditing changes can be found within Appendix 1, modification implications.

Forms and guidance

61. All modifications must be made within the QCM system. Once logged in the system can be accessed by clicking on 'curriculum management' and then 'programme life cycle'. How to guides and videos are available at the QAPD SharePoint site.

62. The QCM system allows the user to create and submit modifications. However, the system will not allow the submission of the following:
    - A modification for a suspended or withdrawn programme
    - A modification for an old version of a programme, for example, if the latest programme specification applies from 2021/22 onwards it will not be possible to submit a modification for the 2020/21 academic year
    - A modification if an action is already in progress for a programme/module to be amended

63. Modifications are still possible in these instances, but another process must be followed. In the first two circumstances a modification template must be completed, considered, and approved at the Board of Studies and then forwarded to qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk. The modification template can be obtained by e-mailing the above email address. Once Academic Quality Services has received the completed modification form with confirmation of its approval, the modification will be actioned. If a programme / module requiring modification is locked by another user, as they are carrying out an action, then normally the current action needs to be submitted and approved before further changes can be made. For any assistance in determining if any of the above relates to a programme / module please contact qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk.

Suspension, re-suspension, reinstatement, and withdrawal

The process

64. The purpose of the programme suspension and withdrawal process is to record and monitor the life cycle of programmes, ensure that due process is being followed and maintain the quality of the students' learning experience. Programme suspensions and withdrawals must be monitored to ensure that students are given every opportunity to finish their studies without compromising the quality of their learning experience and the academic quality of their award (for further information see the *Student protection plan*).

65. The completion of the suspension or withdrawal process gives formal notice to the University, enabling the programme team and the University to ensure that the interests of continuing students are safeguarded and that appropriate measures are taken to notify applicants at the earliest opportunity.

66. Where programmes are being withdrawn it is the expectation of the University that an exit plan is prepared by the programme team. The plan should include:
    - Information on how many students are left on the programme at the point of the withdrawal being implemented
    - When the last student(s)/cohort will graduate
    - Any changes that will need to be made to accommodate the teach out process
    - Student consultation and approval of any changes
    - Details of the programme structure that will continue to be delivered until the last student/cohort graduates

- Students on a withdrawn programme should receive the same level of experience and opportunities that would be expected if the programme was still active.

67. During the teach out period, the University will continue to deliver the programme in its validated form, subject to any subsequent changes that have been approved through the modification process.

68. Where further changes to the programme are needed during the teach out process these must be discussed with the students and their consent sought before the manual modification process is completed to introduce the change.

69. Information of the exit plan should be included in the context screen of the withdrawal process in the QCM system, and a copy of the exit plan should be sent to qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk once the withdrawal request is submitted for approval in the QCM system.

70. Programmes are suspended for one academic year at a time. Before the end of each suspension period, the programme team must decide whether to re-suspend the programme for a further academic year, re-instate the programme and start accepting applications or permanently withdraw the programme. A programme can only be suspended three times. At the end of three years the programme must be withdrawn. If the programme team wish to re-introduce the programme after this point a new programme proposal must be submitted through the programme viability process.

Table 9: Timescales – suspension and withdrawal

Context	Deadline (last day of the month)	Timescale
Planned programme suspensions, re-suspensions, re-instatement, and withdrawals must have been approved	18 months prior to the start of the suspension/withdrawal	For example: for an October 2024 suspension the deadline would be the end of March 2023
In-year programme suspension/withdrawal – this includes informing applicants of a programme withdrawals	6 months prior to the start of the suspension/withdrawal	

71. *NB: the above dates are in place to ensure compliance and support the ongoing quality of the student experience. There may be occasional exceptions to the above deadlines, which should be discussed with Academic Quality Services.

Table 10: Roles and responsibilities – suspension and withdrawal

Role	Responsibility
The proposer	• Identify the need to suspend / withdraw a programme • Discuss the suspension / withdrawal with students • Develop an exit plan for remaining students on the programme to enable continuity of study (see paragraphs 64 and 67)

	• Consult with relevant Departments, e.g., Admissions, Marketing, collaborating academic areas • Complete the relevant sections within the QCM system; detailed information must be provided on how the experience of remaining students will be protected • Submit the suspension/re-suspension/re-instatement/withdrawal within the QCM system once all information has been provided • Implement the change(s) whilst maintaining the academic standards of the programme and the quality of the learning experience • Carry out the process in a timely manner • Keep all relevant parties informed throughout the process
Academic Quality Services	• Audit the suspension and withdrawals once they have been approved • Release the changes to the relevant sections of the marketing pages and the programme and module catalogue pages once the request has been approved
Board of Studies	• Ensure that due process is followed, and relevant departments have been consulted • Ensure that plans are in place to manage the teach out period for a withdrawn programme if there are students remaining on the programme • Return the suspension / re-instatement / re-suspension / withdrawal request if further work is required • Approve/reject the suspension / withdrawal request, as appropriate Suspension, re-suspension, re-instatement, and withdrawal requests must be approved by the Board of Studies in the first instance. These requests are normally approved by Chair's action.
Associate Dean, Education	• Ensure that due process is followed, and relevant departments have been consulted • Suspension/withdrawal - ensure that plans are in place to manage the teach out period if there are students remaining on the programme • Return the suspension / re-instatement / re-suspension / withdrawal request if further work is required • Approve/reject the suspension / withdrawal request, as appropriate Suspension, re-suspension, and re-instatement requests receive final approval from the Associate Dean, Education. Withdrawal requests are approved by the Associate Dean, Education and forwarded on to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty for further approval.
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty	Review all withdrawal requests and where appropriate approve, return or reject withdrawal requests on behalf of

	the Faculty.

Forms and guidance

72. All processes can be completed by logging into the QCM system, going to curriculum management, programme life cycle and clicking on the relevant process tile. Managing suspended programmes is done via clicking on the suspension management hub.

73. How to guides and videos are available at the QAPD SharePoint site

Implications of module and programme modifications

74. When undergoing any of the programme life cycle processes detailed above it is important to understand the implications involved. When a change is made it is important to ensure that all relevant parties are aware of the changes and all necessary checks have been made, to ensure that the student experience is protected, and published information is clear.

75. The following organisations are examples of external bodies who have an influence upon what changes are possible and when they can be made:
    - Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)
    - Office for Students (OfS)
    - Student Loans Company (SLC)
    - Visas and immigration – Student visa

76. Examples of implications when changes are made through the above processes are as follows.

Table 11: Examples of implications

Action	Implication
Programme name change	• International students would have to re-apply for a visa, which may not be approved • Name changes past the advised deadline can cause delays in student loan payments • Applicants must be written to informing them of the change; the applicants then have the option to change any decisions they have made to date (this also applies to all major modifications and several minor modifications)
Placement activity	• The Home Office must be informed of placement activity and its locations and a placement cannot be more than 50% of a programme

77. Further information on changes and their implications can be found within Appendix 1 of this *Code of practice*.

Appendix 1 – Modification implications

Department	Implcations	programme changes (change/add/remove)																	module changes (change/add/remove)									
		principal award and title	exit award and title	FHEQ level	shcool/department	programme leader / other contributors	PSRB accreditation	aims / learning outcomes	associate tutors/guest lecturers	PTY / placements	dual degree	ERASMUS / exchanges	programme adjustments	mode of study and/or pathway	add/remove modules - change classification	conditions	change a modules delivery period	programme structure information	module name	department/school	aims / learning outcomes	content and/or overview	methods of learning and teaching	pre/co requisites	assessment pattern	alternative assessment and/or pattern	assessment strategy	module hours
Admissions	Admissions handle all communications with applicants about their specific application/offer so if significant changes are made to the programme they have applied for, Admissions need to communicate this to the applicant, outline the options open to them now that their programme has changed and assist the applicant once they respond. If the change is significant enough to warrant informing the applicant, they must be given the option to change any decisions they have made to date: - UCAS applicants who have not yet had an offer or who have an offer but have not yet responded to it, would be advised that they could continue with their application, be considered for a different programme at Surrey or substitute Surrey for another institution. - PGT applicants who have accepted the offer would be entitled to a deposit refund if they did not want to either continue with their application or change to a different programme. - In each of these cases, Admissions would require a response from the applicant (rather than assuming that they wish to continue with their application or have their programme changed to a similar programme) - UCAS applicants who have already responded to an offer would be advised that they could be considered for another programme at Surrey (UCAS would expect the university to be considerate of the circumstances, perhaps being more flexible on entry requirements for the alternative programme), that they could change their response (e.g. changing their firm for Surrey to insurance or decline) or, depending on the point in the cycle, substitute their UCAS choice. The university would be expected to assist the applicant by liaising with UCAS and their other institutions if necessary.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓			
Assessment and Awards		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓					✓	✓		
Faculty Student Services	Changes affect what is listed in the programme handbooks so they must be informed to ensure the handbooks accuracy Awareness of changes are required so that students who are course suspended or temporarily withdrawn know about the change ready for when they resume their studies Changes affect what programmes and modules are assigned to relevant members of staff Programme Leader changes affect the assinging of welcome week department sessions, the accuracy of the programme handbook and the membership of Board of Studies and Staff Student Liaison Committees Awareness of exchanges is necessary for exchange students Changes will require an action to draw or not draw up sub groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓			

Department	Implcations	programme changes (change/add/remove)																	module changes (change/add/remove)									
		principal award and title	exit award and title	FHEQ level	shcool/department	programme leader / other contributors	PSRB accreditation	aims / learning outcomes	associate tutors/guest lecturers	PTY / placements	dual degree	ERASMUS / exchanges	programme adjustments	mode of study and/or pathway	add/remove modules - change classification	conditions	change a modules delivery period	programme structure information	module name	department/school	aims / learning outcomes	content and/or overview	methods of learning and teaching	pre/co requisites	assessment pattern	alternative assessment and/or pattern	assessment strategy	module hours
Fees and Funding		✔	✔		✔					✔	✔	✔		✔														
Marketing	Changes would mean that the the web team must reimport the affected / new programme pages. For UG, before this can be done new KIS codes for the programme would need to be ontained, which can often delay page amendments. Copy on the page would also need to be updated.																											
	The school/department/faculty sites would need to be checked, plus check course pages to see what implications there would be and then work with Faculty Marketing Managers to get updated infomation as required. There may be an impact to the course subject listings pages. Copy on the page would also need to be updated																											
	If a professional training year is added or removed the progrmme pages would need to be reimported, the programme page text amended and relevant site sections																											
	need to get the new KIS codes for the programme which can often delay us amending the page.	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔									
Programme Administration and Timetabling	Any changes approved through the modification process need to then be updated within the module record in QCM and the relevant tables within SITS client																											
	Reciprocal action in SITS might then have to be taken - if in year change then could mean unpicking student records, temporary timetabling inaccuracy [updates overnight]. Could delay student module selection if short notice change to DIETs.																											
	Data must be accurate and mirrored in all areas to ensure exercises such as the annual exercise of setting student diets, which informs the student options selection are accurate																											
	Ancillary changes like Module Hours and Convenor names would have less impact although Convenor names not being right could have Module Access implications in Self-Serve with the right Convenor not being able to access the correct modules.																											
	if you are making a change in QCM that causes a fundamental change in the way a programme is being run [e.g. New Module/Change in Semester] there would be a variable [time linked] knock on effect to the Programmes team as we have to make sure that SITS is right which in turn drives the Timetabling software; SITS and the Timetabling software directly impact the Customer Base as these impact on the student experience.														✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Appendix 2 – Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) FAQ

Quality and curriculum management

CMA FAQ

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Consumer Rights Act 2015. The act seeks to:

- Simplify the law on the sale of goods and services
- Introduce rights and remedies for 'increasingly important' digital content
- Consolidate the law, and enhance consumer rights, in respect of 'unfair terms' in consumer's contracts
- Consolidate and strengthen enforcement and investigatory powers

The act covers students and aims to ensure that the information they receive before entering their contracts is fair, accessible, and transparent and the terms of the contract are brought to the consumer's attention before the contract is entered into (i.e., before the offer of a place has been accepted by an applicant).

The CMA's guidance to universities states that a student is a 'consumer' and must be able to make an 'informed choice' when deciding which institution's services to 'buy' – and that to make an informed choice, 'clear and honest information' must be made available by the University before such a decision is made.

Universities must submit an annual return to the Office for Students demonstrating compliance with Consumer Protection law as a condition of acquiring and maintaining registration.

This document has been created to act as a guide and provide context, to assist when changes are being made to programmes and modules. This includes actions that are carried out within the Quality and Curriculum Management system in relation to modifications, programme suspensions and programme withdrawals. This guide will act as a reference point to ensure that any changes that are made are aligned to the University's expectations in relation to programme and module changes and ensure compliance with the CMA.

1. Am I allowed to suspend entry to my programme?

   Yes, programmes can be suspended for one year at a time through the Quality and Curriculum Management system. At the end of each suspension period the programme can either be re-suspended, re-instated or permanently withdrawn. Programmes should not be suspended for more than three years in a row.

   Deadlines for programme suspensions can be found within the Code of practice for Programme Lifecycle Processes. The deadlines are in place to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to notify applicants and students at the earliest opportunity.

2. Am I allowed to permanently withdraw my programme?

   Yes, programmes can be withdrawn through the Quality and Curriculum Management system. Programmes should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they

continue to meet the needs of the students and the University. Where a programme is withdrawn the interests of continuing students must be safeguarded and appropriate measures taken to notify applicants at the earliest opportunity.

Deadlines for programme withdrawals can be found within the Code of practice for Programme Lifecycle Processes.

3. Am I allowed to make changes to my programmes and modules?

   Yes, changes can be made to programmes and modules through the Quality and Curriculum Management system. All changes must be approved by no later than the 30th April for the following academic year.

   It is the University's expectation that there will be a continuous improvement to programmes and modules to guarantee the best possible student experience. It is important to recognise where change is needed and to make sure there are no unnecessary barriers to enable programmes and modules to stay relevant, current, viable and competitive. However, we must also ensure that students and applicants are given sufficient time to consider / be informed of any proposed changes.

   It is important to be clear when making a change who that change applies to. Typically changes should only apply to incoming students, but there will be occasions where change needs to apply to both new and existing students.

4. Can I change the title or structure of my programme?

   Yes, although any changes to programme titles or new programme structures should only apply to new students. In exceptional circumstances these changes may apply to existing students, but the changes must be applied to the whole cohort or not at all. All current students must agree to these changes before they can be implemented.

5. I want to make an in-year change, can I do this?

   We recognise that an in-year change may be necessary in exceptional circumstances. Exceptions may include:

   - Where the only staff subject expert has left the University, meaning there is no one to carry on the delivery of a module's content
   - A PSRB requirement that must be implemented with immediate affect
   - Where a programme is in breach of the University's regulations

6. Do I have to consult students on any changes I make?

   You must ensure that applicants and students have adequate notice of any forthcoming changes to their programmes and / or modules. It is important that students are consulted on changes before the change is made and informed once the change has been approved. Student consultation could take many forms but must be meaningful and provide an appropriate opportunity for students to express their views. Student consultation should take place through established governance

channels at Staff/Student Liaison Committee and Board of Studies, where student representatives were present, or alternatively via email.

Change requests through the modification process should clearly detail the extent of the consultation with students. The detail needs to include any concerns expressed by the students and the actions taken by the programme team to address these concerns.

7. What changes do I need to communicate to offer holders and students?

   The CMA does not provide a clear list of changes that must be communicated. The University has developed a list of changes which should be communicated to offer holders and current students. Please see the attached 'programme and module changes' table that details which changes require offer holders and current students to be informed of the change

8. Why do I need to communicate changes to offer holders and students?

   When students accept an offer to study with the University, we enter into a contract with them. Students have made an informed decision to study at the University based on information and material we have made available to them prior to joining the University. Changing a programme or module constitutes a change to the student's contract with us. Based on these changes offer holders have a right to say no and decide to study elsewhere, in these instances the University is obliged to release the offer holder from their commitment.

   The CMA requires Universities to provide students with clear, transparent, and accurate information to help students make informed choices about where and what to study. The CMA state that 'before, or at the latest when you get an offer, universities must tell you about any changes to the information since you applied'… Failure to comply with consumer law could lead to enforcement action.

9. How should I tell offer holders and students about the changes?

   Offer holders
   When certain changes are made between students applying and being offered a place at the University this information should be made clear and communicated to the students, stating where the up-to-date information can be found. The section 'wording for communication to prospective students' should be completed within the QCM system when submitting a modification for approval. This information will then be used by the admissions team to convey the change to the applicant.

   Current students
   Students may be informed through various informal ways, however, changes must be discussed and approved at Staff/Student Liaison Committee and Board of Studies meetings where student representatives are present.

10. Why do we need an audit trail?

    By documenting changes, we make to programmes and modules we create an audit trail that evidences when and why changes are made. This is important as it shows

that due process has been followed. By following the process guidelines, it will ensure that students are kept informed, and this is clear to external auditors through reviewing our audit trails.

Audit trails may also be used in cases of student complaints and appeals. If a student makes a complaint that they were not informed, we need the audit trail to show that they were informed.

11. What should I do if a student does not agree to the change?

    Students must be consulted prior to a change being approved; they must also be given sufficient time to consider the change. Where concerns are raised these should be addressed before a change is approved. The timelines for the approval of modifications (April each year) also provides an opportunity for individual students to liaise with academic support and their programme team to consider options before the modifications are implemented.

    Students can be consulted through Staff Student Liaison Committees (SSLC) and Board of Studies meetings as well as other student meetings organised by the programme team. In these instances, it is important to record the consultation and report it at a Board of Studies meeting and within the modification.

12. If a student objects, can I ignore these objections and proceed with my change?

    If a student objects to changes a relevant member of staff should meet with the student to better understand the objection and help them understand the reasons behind the change. If the student still objects, then alternatives should be explored and discussed with the student. This may involve making an additional change to ensure that all students benefit from the initial change.

    If a significant number of students object to the change, then it would be appropriate for the programme team to seek an alternative course of action to the proposed change.

13. What is the key message I need about programme/module changes and CMA?

    - Information to students must be clear, transparent, and accurate.
    - Students should be consulted before a change is approved and informed after its approval
    - Changes must not be made after the 30th April for the following academic year, unless it meets with our exceptional circumstances listed above
    - Changes should only be made where they are needed, and the process should be followed to ensure that the University remains compliant with CMA requirements.

14. Who can I contact if I have any questions about the CMA?

    You can contact Academic Quality Services on qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk and someone will assist you.

Programme and module changes table

Change	Communicate change to offer holders?	Communicate change to current students?
Programme changes (add/change/remove)		
Programme title	Yes	Yes
Programme award	Yes	Yes
Mode of study	Yes	Yes
Removal, addition or change to a pathway within a programme	Yes	Yes
Introduction of/change to teaching location that is not on the University campuses	Yes	Yes
Introduction of out-of-semester programme delivery	Yes	Yes
Addition of an exit award and title	No	Yes
Removal of/change to an exit award and title	Yes	Yes
School/Department	No	Yes
Aims/learning outcomes	No	Yes
Add/remove a core/compulsory module	Yes	Yes
Add/remove an optional module	No	Yes
A reduction in the number of optional modules	Yes	Yes
Module classification – from optional to core/compulsory	Yes	Yes
Module classification – from core/compulsory to optional	No	Yes
PSRB accreditation	Yes	Yes
PTY/Placement opportunities	No	Yes
Programme leader/other contributors	No	Yes
Module changes (add/change/remove)		
Module name	No	Yes
Add a Pre/co-requisite	Yes	Yes
Remove a pre/co-requisite	No	Yes
School/Department	No	Yes
Aims/learning outcomes	No	Yes
Assessment pattern	No	Yes
Alternative assessment	No	Yes
Assessment strategy	No	Yes
Module hours	No	Yes
Content	No	Yes
Overview	No	Yes
Methods of learning and teaching	Yes	Yes
Module leader	No	Yes