UNIVERSITY OF SURREY

Code of practice for programme life cycle processes

Academic year 2026/27

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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, modifications, suspension, re-suspension, reinstatement, and withdrawal.

2. Processes for continuous enhancement review and periodic enhancement are covered in a separate Code, the *Code of practice for academic enhancement review: taught programmes*. This *Code of practice for programme life cycle processes* has been informed by the *QAA Quality Code for Higher Education (2024)* and the *Office for students conditions of registration.*

Key deadlines

3. The key deadline tables can be found in Appendix 1 for undergraduate programmes and Appendix 2 for postgraduate taught programmes that show the necessary steps and deadlines required to validate and market a new programme successfully. The deadlines are there to ensure successful marketing and recruitment of the programmes under development, as well as ensuring all appropriate steps can be completed by all professional services departments involved.

Validation of a new programme

Overview

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

5. The validation process grid below in Table 1 outlines the process for Full Validations and Fast Track Validations along with the required documentation.

Table 1: Validation process and required documentation grid

Process/Documents	Full Validation	Fast Track Validation	
Programme Viability Approval Committee (PVAC)	X	X	
Signed Programme Viability Application form	X	X	
Programme outline	X	X	
Business case	X	X	
Library checklist	X	X	

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

Marketing checklist	X	X	
Validation	X Full panel	X AQS/EE review only	
Programme specification	X	X	
New module descriptors	X	X* **Normally up to 30 new credits, otherwise full validation*	
Self-Evaluation Narrative	X	X	
EE nomination form	N/A	X	
EA nomination form	X	N/A	
Equality Impact Assessment	X	X	
Compliance checks (AQS and programme proposer to complete)	X	X	

6. All programmes are required to pass through the Programme Viability Approval Committee (PVAC). Fast Track Validations do not require a full panel event.

7. An indicative list of programmes that fit the above descriptions (Full Validation, Fast Track Validation are shown below in Table 2. Normally, Fast Track Validations are limited to new programmes with up to 30 new credits.

8. When a new programme involves a franchise, the same distinction outlined in paragraphs 6 and 7 would normally apply. Academic Quality Services should be contacted to confirm this. Academic Quality Services will advise on the documentation requirements and the timings to align with the partnership approval processes.

Table 2: Indicative list of programme types and validation routes

Type	Full / Fast Track (FT) / SOL Validation
Normal New UG or PGT Listed in pre-existing type (A0 and A1 Reg)	Full
Normal New UG or PGT (All existing modules - up to 30 credits new) Listed in pre-existing type (A0 and A1 Reg)	Fast Track
Degree apprenticeship with a new partner (UK)	Full
Top-Up Pre-existing programme's level 6	Fast Track
Top-Up Pre-existing programme's level 7	Fast Track

Top-Up New	Full
Accelerated Degree (regardless of if it is an existing programme)	Full
Adding Professional training year / industrial practice year (PGT)	Fast Track

Note: Postgraduate research programmes with taught elements must also seek initial approval through the programme viability process; once approved they undertake the validation process as outlined within this Code of practice.

Programme Design

Overview

9. 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 (mapping requirement)
   - Relevant PSRB requirements (mapping requirement).

10. Programme Teams have access to the Eduhub SharePoint site that contains a toolkit for New Programme Validation: Curriculum Design and accompanied resources. Academic Quality Services are available to support at this stage.

Inclusive Education

11. Programme teams need to ensure that the programme embeds inclusive education within the design stage. The *Code of practice for inclusive education* should be referred to in full, with particular attention paid to principles A, B and H for programme design.
    - Principle A outlines that programme teams should draw on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles for curriculum design to support the learner journey (please refer to Appendix 2 of the *Code of practice for inclusive education*).

    - Principle B also covers curriculum design and outlines the following practices: Student consultation is central to curriculum design; Universal Design for Learning principles (made explicit in documentation); inclusive assessment practices; inclusive design (resources and content, including the use of technology) and being attractive to a diverse range of potential students (please refer to Appendix 2 of the *Code of practice for inclusive education*).

    - Principle H focusses on learning environments, both physical and virtual (please refer to Appendix 2 of the *Code of practice for inclusive education*).

12. Further resources relating to inclusivity are available on Eduhub[2].

The Home Office Remote Delivery Policy

13. The Home Office Remote Delivery Policy has formalised boundaries on the amount of online teaching methods that can be delivered to international students on the student route[3]. Remote delivery has been defined as '*timetabled delivery of learning where there is no need for the student to attend the premises of the student sponsor or partner institution which would otherwise take place live in-person at the sponsor or partner institution site."* This would include lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, lab sessions, and practical/performance sessions. If there is **any** scheduled remote delivery within a programme this needs to be outlined on the programme viability application form submitted as part of the programme viability process.

14. When designing a new in person programme (FHEQ Level 4 and above) the University's stance is that timetabled taught sessions should be delivered in-person but if there is a pedagogical or programme requirement then programmes may contain up to 20% of remote delivery of taught elements[4]. This is applied to each year of study. As a guide, the number of credits that would be permitted to be delivered remotely, are listed below:
    - Undergraduate/Integrated Master's/PGDip/Top-Up Masters (120 credits) – 1 x 15 credit module per year.
    - MSc – 1 x 30 credit module per year.
    - Top Up MSc (up to 60 credits)/PGCert – No modules would be permitted.

15. The above guidance outlines the number of credits if the whole module was delivered online. If it is the case that remote delivery was spread across modules then the programme team would be required to ensure that no more than 20% of the programme of timetabled delivery of learning was delivered remotely, which includes lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, lab sessions, and practical/performance sessions. Academic Quality Services are available to assist where required at this stage.

16. Online programmes are out of scope of The Home Office Remote Delivery Policy.

Programmes with study exchanges

17. For all proposed programmes that include study exchanges, the programme proposer must discuss the proposal with the International Engagement Office (IEO) prior to the paperwork being submitted to the Programme Viability Approval Committee (PVAC).

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[2]Inclusivity resources on EduHub: https://surreyac.sharepoint.com/sites/EduHub/SitePages/Inclusivity.aspx

[3] Most programmes are offered on the student route with a few exceptions, including CPD modules and part-time unstructured Master's programmes,

[4] Programmes that contain between 21 – 40% remote delivery of taught elements will need to be approved by the Home Office before they can be offered on the Student Route. Sponsors will need to demonstrate 'how the higher usage is consistent with the requirements of the relevant educational quality standards body and remains consistent with the principles of the student route'. Approval will be granted via the existing annual CAS Allocation Renewal process. Programmes with more than 40% of the course being delivered remotely cannot be offered on the Student Route.

18. The requirement for the IEO's involvement also applies to all validation routes and to all types of study exchanges, including: one semester at Level 5, full year at Level 5, one semester at Level 7 (Master's programmes) and to all study exchanges taken during Level P. This step must be conducted prior to progressing further in the validation process.

Programmes seeking Professional, Statutory, or Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) accreditation or recognition

19. If a programme is seeking accreditation, it will need to map to the individual PSRB requirements. The accreditations are subject to individual PSRB processes but normally occur after the programme is validated. However, it is important to ensure that the requirements for accreditation are integral to the programme design and additional documentation is provided to support this. To support meeting the PRSB needs it is common that the panel will be composed of representatives from industry with appropriate professional standing, and an academic from an already accredited institution running a similar programme.

20. Further advice relating to PSRBs can be found in paragraphs 108-119.

Programme Viability Stage[5]

Overview

21. 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 financial and resourcing viability, alongside the current market demand of each proposal.

Process before the Programme Viability Approval Committee

Faculty viability approval

22. The proposing team should be working with the school and faculty on programme proposals. Once permission to proceed with the proposal is granted, the required steps are outlined below:

    The proposer of a new programme must:

    a. Email qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity to confirm their intention to propose a new programme, with their school Associate Head Education (AHE) and faculty Associate Dean, Education (ADE) in copy, to confirm approval.

    b. Confirm that remote delivery of the programme would not make up more than 20% of the programme and outline if any timetabled delivery of learning will be conducted remotely (see further detail under The Home Office Remote Delivery Policy section in paragraphs 13 to 16).

    c. For a programme proposal which involves more than one Faculty, confirm who assumes the administrative responsibility for the programme and how the teaching

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

will be shared. 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.

d. Complete and submit the programme viability application form to qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk, with the required signatures, including the Head of School, Director of Faculty Operations and Associate Dean Education and the Pro Vice Chancellor, Executive Dean. At the same time as the application form the following documentation need to be completed:

- 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 Faculty Finance Manager

Programme Viability Approval Committee (PVAC)

23. This stage of the process involves a committee of representatives from across the University's professional services team to review the viability of the new programme proposal.

24. If the proposal is for a programme structure that does not currently exist at the University, the Pro-Vice Chancellor Education will need to authorise whether this requires Executive Board approval first or whether it would go to the PVAC for initial comments.

25. On consideration of the proposal, clarification may be sought from the programme proposer by the committee.

26. There are two possible outcomes that are available to the committee:
    - Approved (with or without conditions/recommendations) – the programme can continue to the validation stage of the process (once any conditions are resolved).
    - Rejected – the programme proposal is deemed not to be viable.

27. When a proposed programme has a non-standard start and end date the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Education will be the final decision maker of the exact start and end dates, subject to validation of the programme. This is needed for student scheduling ahead of the programme being validated.

28. The Programme Viability Approval Committee will provide the outcome of the new programme proposal following the respective meeting.

29. 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.

30. At this stage a route code for the programme is generated and the programme (skeleton version) is set up in QCM. The new programme will be advertised as 'subject to validation'.

31. Once a proposal has been approved through the programme viability process it can progress to the validation stage, which focuses on academic viability.

Table 3: Timescales – programme viability[6]

Process	Context	Deadline
Programme viability	New programme proposals **receive approval** from the Programme Viability Approval Committee (PVAC) to progress to validation.	**Undergraduate Programmes** 20 months prior to the first intake of students. For example: for a September intake, the deadline for paperwork to be submitted to PVAC would be the middle/end of November (exact date will be circulated by Academic Quality Services) two years prior to the proposed start date.
Programme viability	New programme proposals **receive approval** from the Programme Viability Approval Committee (PVAC) to progress to validation.	**Postgraduate Programmes** 18 months prior to the first intake of students. For example: for a September intake the deadline for the paperwork to be submitted to PVAC would be the middle of January (exact date will be circulated by Academic Quality Services) of the year before the proposed start date.

[6] Programmes which have a non-standard start date, (i.e., January, February, March, July) will follow the standard timeline for the validation process).

Table 4: 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 • For programmes with study exchanges contact is required with the International Engagement Office (IEO) to discuss the proposal prior to submission • Submit the completed programme viability application form to Academic Quality Services • Complete the further required documentation with the required signatories (see Table 1).
Associate Dean, Education	• Provide provisional support for new programme developments and present the proposal at the PVAC meeting.
Academic Quality Services (Secretary to the Committee)	• Manage the programme viability process, including meeting set up. • 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 • Add the new programme to the Programme Administrator User Group (PAUG) tracker
Programme Viability Approval Committee (PVAC)	• Review each new programme proposal • Raise any issues to be addressed either within the University or by the programme proposer • Confirm whether in support of the new proposed programme • Chair to agree outcome and sign the programme viability application form
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education	• To confirm start and end dates for non-standard programmes

Validation Stage

Overview

The validation stage involves three substages: initial checks, the validation event, and post event activity (see Table 5 below for the process timescales). Programmes approved through the validation process will have an open-ended approval and will be subject to the periodic enhancement process when their School next undertakes the process.

Initial checks

32. 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.

33. All forms and guidance for the initial checks substage of the validation can be downloaded from the Academic Quality Services webpages (apart from the Equality Impact Assessment). These forms will need to be completed and submitted to Academic Quality Services to be reviewed ahead of the validation event.
    - Programme specification template
    - PSRB mapping template
    - Subject Benchmark statement template
    - New module descriptors template
    - Self-evaluation narrative template
    - External Assessor or External Examiner nomination form – for Fast Track Validations, an external examiner can be used instead of an external assessor.
    - Equality Impact Assessment – located on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion page under Toolkits, Training and Resources on Surreynet (please refer to the *Code of practice for inclusive education* and Eduhub[7] for further guidance).

34. Programme teams have resources available on the Eduhub SharePoint site that contains a toolkit for New Programme Validation: Curriculum Design and accompanied resources to assist with completing the forms and designing the programme further. The information under Programme Design in paragraphs 9 to 20 can be referred to for further information.

35. 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 Head of Academic Policy and Governance for further approval by the University senior academic committees..

36. Academic Quality Services will use the compliance checks report template to complete the initial checks documentation.

37. 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 stage.
    - 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 stage.
    - Non-compliant – it is expected that this would only be the case in exceptional circumstances. The programme could not proceed to the validation event stage.

Validation event

38. For Fast Track Validations an event would not be required, a review by Academic Quality Services and the external examiner would take place instead.

[7] Inclusivity resources on EduHub:
https://surreyac.sharepoint.com/sites/EduHub/SitePages/Inclusivity.aspx

39. For Full Validations, the validation event allows the programme proposer to present their programme to the panel and allows the panel to examine all aspects of the proposed programme. Areas that the panel will address, but are not limited to, include:

    - Examine the content and the curriculum to determine whether it is appropriate for the subject area and comparable to similar programmes offered at other Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and at the University of Surrey.
    - 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 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.
    - Ensure the programme from a student perspective is fully examined.

40. A validation event will take place over one day, which could be in person or held virtually. The panel will be appointed by Academic Quality Services and consist of:
    - A Chair
    - An internal member
    - An external member(s) (academic expert from similar Higher Education Institution (HEI) and in addition an industry expert where relevant)
    - A student member
    - The event co-ordinator (from Academic Quality Services).

41. The outcomes of the validation event can include conditions and recommendations. These should be designed to be helpful to the School 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.

42. Should a panel have concerns that cannot be addressed satisfactorily through recommendations and conditions, the panel can agree not to validate. 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.

43. All panel members should consider the conditions/recommendations and confirm if these have been satisfactorily met. If there are exceptional circumstances whereby the whole panel are unable to complete this action, then as a minimum the Chair and the external assessor can complete this on behalf of the panel.

Post event activity

44. A confirmation email will be sent to the quality systems group, programme proposer, and panel signing off the validation event and the PAUG tracker is updated.

45. 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 validation and forward any new modules to the Student Scheduling team to be inputted into SITS and QCM.

46. Once completed, the finalised new programme specifications and module descriptors will be released to the public catalogue.

47. The 'subject to validation' marker at this stage will be removed from any programme related material.

48. All relevant documentation will be uploaded to the Quality Assurance Documentation (QAD) SharePoint site.

Table 5: Timescales – validation[8]

Process Stages Context	Full Validation	Fast Track Validation	
Initial checks: Undertake initial checks and complete first draft of compliance checks report	2 weeks	2 weeks	
Academic Quality Services meet with Programme proposer to finalise documentation	2 weeks		
Validation Event: Paperwork sent to the panel for review	3 weeks	6 - 8 weeks (this process is completed with the external examiner rather than a panel).	

[8] These timeframes are used for guidance purposes and may be subject to change.

Academic Quality Services update compliance checklist based on the panels' feedback and circulate documentation to the panel	2 weeks		
The event	1 day	The event takes the form of a meeting between AQS, the external examiner and AQS	
Programme Team respond to conditions and recommendations	2 weeks	2 weeks	
Panel/Chair confirm that responses to conditions/recommendations have been addressed and where applicable documents updated accordingly	2 weeks	2 weeks	
Post event activity: Complete event report/Set up new modules/Complete the confirmation email	2-3 weeks	2-3 weeks	
	The process should be completed no later than the end of July of the previous year for a September start. This is to allow enough time for the new	The process should be completed no later than the end of July of the previous year for a September start. This is to allow enough time for the new	

	programme to be properly marketed.	programme to be properly marketed.	

Table 6: Roles and responsibilities – validation

Role	Responsibility
Programme team	• Attend a planning meeting with Academic Quality Services to agree dates and discuss the various stages of the validation • Complete the required forms (see paragraph 33) • Be available for meetings with Academic Quality Services representative during the initial checks process • Attend and present at the validation and answer any questions the panel may have • Keep key stakeholders informed of the progress/outcomes of the process • Complete any conditions/recommendations from the initial checks and validation/ event
Academic Quality Services	• Hold a planning meeting and set dates for the validation • Lead on and complete the initial checks process • Coordinate the validation, including: securing panel members, setting the event date, circulating documentation, etc • Attend the validation event and produce a brief summary report of discussions and outcomes • Chase the outcomes of any conditions/recommendations given by the panel • Publish finalised documentation
Chair of the validation event	The Chair is a senior member of University staff who has experience of the validation process. The Chair must be from a different School to that of the programme/School under consideration, and normally from a different Faculty (this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis) *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 discuss the agenda • Read the documentation and prepare discussion points/questions for the private panel meetings, consultation with the programme team. *During the event the Chair is expected to:* • Chair the meeting and cover the agreed agenda

	• Ensure that members of the panel, academic staff and students can contribute to the discussion and further explore themes with the programme team • 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)/ external examiners (Fast Track Validations) 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 event	Internal panel members must be from a different School to that of the programme/School under consideration, and normally from a different Faculty (this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis) 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 - Highlight any issues to the event coordinator, that need to be dealt with prior to the validation *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 level - 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 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.. Focus should be given on the below:
	  - 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 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
	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/	The student panel member will be appointed from a pool of trained reviewers (who are nominated by the University of Surrey Students' Union, USSU). These would be from a different school to that of the programme/School under consideration, and normally from a different Faculty (this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis) 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 - 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 *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	*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. *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 • Circulate to the panel to confirm that a satisfactory response to the conditions/recommendations has been provided

Programme and module modifications

Overview

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

50. 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.

51. 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.

52. 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.

53. Please refer to the section on consumer protection law and appendix 3 Module/Programme CMA Change Table which outlines the requirements for student notification (prospective and current) when modifications are made to modules and programmes.

Modification process

54. 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.

55. It is a requirement for Academic Quality Services to inform the University's immigration compliance department if any submitted modifications increase or reduce the remote delivery of timetabled learning of the programme and therefore must be outlined in the submitted modification.

56. The programme team is responsible for ensuring that any modification(s) to the module/programme does not increase the percentage of remote delivery for taught elements **above 20%** of the programme. This requirement ensures compliance with The Home Office Remote Delivery Policy. Academic Quality Services would not be able to approve a modification if the percentage of remote delivery for taught elements increased above 20%, please see paragraphs 13 to 16 for further guidance. It is to be noted that online programmes are out of scope of this policy.

57. The programme team must ensure consideration is given to the inclusive education principles when making modifications to programmes. Please refer to the *Code of practice for inclusive education* and Eduhub[9] for further guidance.

58. Any relevant modifications to the programmes that impact on study exchange elements and exchange students (incoming/outgoing) must be discussed with the IEO prior to submitting to Academic Quality Services through the Quality and Curriculum Management System (QCM). The standard modifications process would then follow.

59. 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 32-37 of the validation process) in addition to the changes being processed through the modification process. As a result of the initial checks stage, it could be approved at this stage or require the programme to go through a validation event.

60. Where a modification involves a change to the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement, potentially from a programme name change, this will require the programme leader to

[9] Inclusivity resources on EduHub:
https://surreyac.sharepoint.com/sites/EduHub/SitePages/Inclusivity.aspx

complete and submit a subject benchmark mapping document to AQS. This is to ensure that the programme content is in line with the new benchmark. Where this identifies a substantial change to the programme a revalidation process would be required.

61. Where a need for modification is identified, the Programme Leader, or nominated alternate, is required to log this on the Quality and Curriculum Management (QCM) system. 'How to' guides and videos are available at the Quality Assurance Documentation (QAD) SharePoint site.

62. The modification context sections must be completed as well as edits to 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 93-97 below).

63. Any proposed changes to modules and/or programmes must be 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.

64. 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. This will then be used by Admissions to formulative correspondence in order to inform applicants of the updates being made to their programmes.

65. When proposed modification(s) are submitted by Programme and Module Leaders that have an impact on other programmes the relevant persons 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 are also updated for their own area. For example, a shared module may be removed from a programme; other areas that share this module may also need to remove this module from other programmes as it is no longer available.

66. 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.

67. Modifications cannot be introduced for the following academic year after the modification deadline. Similarly, modifications should not be introduced during the

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 (BoS) 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*.

68. 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.

69. Normally Boards of Studies 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.

70. 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.

Table 7 – modification process:

Steps	Description
Step 1 Initial Discussions	Possible modifications are discussed at the School level and, where applicable, with Academic Quality Services
Step 2 Proposal	Agreed modification is inputted into the QCM system by the programme team and submitted for approval
Step 3 Audit	Academic Quality Services aim to audit all modifications prior to the Board of Studies meeting. Any actions required prior to the Board of Studies meeting should be undertaken by the proposer and submitted for review Returned modifications will need to be amended and resubmitted to this step

Step 4 Approval	Modifications are considered and actioned at the Board of Studies. The relevant action is then taken, e.g., Returned (further work is required) Approved (moves on to the final steps of the process) Rejected (modification is not suitable and not accepted by the Board of Studies) Major modification once approved at Board of Studies will then move to the next steps e.g., Associate Dean, Education approval and the Quality Enhancement Subcommittee
Step 5 Release	Following the final approval steps, Academic Quality Services will carry out final checks and release the approved changes from the QCM system where any updates will be displayed to the programme/module catalogue

Table 8: Timescales – modification:

Context	Deadline (last day of the month)	Timescale
Any major/minor modification must be approved in QCM[10]	30th April[11]	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 a September intake, the deadline for approval would be the end of March of the previous year to ensure optimal marketing opportunities
Programme name changes and module name changes f**or Academic Technology Approval Scheme** (ATAS) r**egistered**	Approval by the autumn Board of Studies (10 months prior to start of the academic year)	For example: for a September intake, the deadline for approval would be the Board of Studies in November of the previous calendar year

[10] For programmes that are not Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) registered, programme name changes can be processed by the final deadline of 30 April, however, will not benefit from the marketing opportunities for the full recruitment cycle.

[11] An exception is in place for the medical school, where the modification deadline is the 30 June due to the academic structure of the year.

programmes		

*NB: the above dates are in place to ensure compliance and to support the ongoing quality of the student experience. Ordinarily modifications outside of these deadlines will be rejected. Pro-Vice Chancellor, Education approval will be required for material changes after the 30th of April deadline (please see *Appendix 3: Module/Programme CMA Change).*

Major/minor changes

71. 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 9 below for roles and responsibilities in this respect).

72. 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).

73. 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 submission 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.

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

75. Where there are large volumes 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 9: Roles and responsibilities – modification:

Role	Responsibility
The proposer	• Identify the modification(s) required • Discuss the modification(s) with students • Consult with relevant professional services departments, e.g., Admissions, Marketing, collaborating academic areas • Consult with IEO for any modification(s) to a programme that have study exchanges within the programme • 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 monitor 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 the 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 is 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

76. 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.

77. 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 Associate Head of School, Education.

78. 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.

79. 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.

Manual Modifications

80. 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.

- A modification if an action is already in progress for a programme/module to be amended.

81. Modifications are still possible in these instances, but another process must be followed. In the first two circumstances above 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, re-instatement and withdrawal

Overview

82. Programme suspension is the temporary halt to recruitment for a programme. It is normally applied for a single recruitment cycle but can be extended for up to two full recruitment cycles (whole years) before the programme is automatically withdrawn if no recruitment occurs in the following cycle.

83. Programme withdrawal is the permanent removal of a programme from the University's curriculum offer. It cannot be resurrected without going through the normal validation processes outlined in the 'Validation Stage' section of this code of practice.

84. The purpose of the programme suspension and withdrawal process is to record and monitor the life cycle of programmes, ensure that the University follows due process and that the quality of the students' learning experience is safeguarded. Multiple suspensions raise major concerns relating to programme viability and student experience.

85. 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* until the publication of the new proposed Office for students C6 condition of registration: Treating Students Fairly comes into force). It also enables the appropriate notification process to applicants at the earliest opportunity.

86. There are two ways a programme may be considered for withdrawal or suspension.

- Standard lifecycle: Considerations on long-term recruitment, subject & industry developments, market conditions, or even staffing and resourcing reasons may lead to a decision to stop running a programme. This can result in suspension or withdrawal.

- In-cycle (recruitment cycle): Considerations made based on recruitment pipeline numbers. In this case, a programme may be suspended for the current

recruitment cycle, or multiple recruitment cycles. This may ultimately lead to a programme being withdrawn, but it would be unusual to do so straight away.

Suspension

87. The decision to suspend the recruitment of students onto a programme could be due to two main reasons, as listed below:

- The programme team/school can decide to suspend the recruitment of students onto the programme for a variety of reasons.
- When there are no students recruited onto a programme the University will automatically suspend the programme for that academic year.

88. The programme team/School can decide to suspend recruitment onto a programme; this can be done for one academic year at a time. In addition, the University will take action to suspend the programme for an academic year when no students have been recruited onto the programme that year. Suspension would be applicable for that single year so that the programme can be marketed for the subsequent year.

89. Admissions may work with schools to advise upon suspensions due to low number of applicants. Any suspension of a programme will require applicants and offer holders to be informed of the decision.

90. A programme can be suspended again for the subsequent year (thus two consecutive years) for either reason above. However, the programme cannot be suspended for a third consecutive year. At this point any suspension requests, or non-recruitment of students would lead to the programme being withdrawn.

91. Additionally, the University only allows a programme to be suspended for a total of two years (this does not need to be consecutive) in a periodic review cycle. A further request to suspend the programme by the programme team or the non-recruitment to the programme will automatically trigger a periodic review of the programme or, if this is not desired, the programme would be required to be withdrawn.

Withdrawal

92. A programme can be withdrawn as a result of the programme being suspended for two consecutive years or potentially for a total of two years within a periodic review cycle, as outlined in the suspension section above. The programme team can also decide to withdraw a programme without prior suspension of the programme. If a programme team wish to re-introduce the programme after it has been withdrawn, a new programme proposal would need to be submitted through the programme viability stage of the validation process.

93. If a programme is withdrawn, no new students can be recruited to any stage of the programme. If there are no students currently on the programme at any level of the programme's delivery, it can be closed.

94. If the programme has students still being taught on the programme, it will be considered closing and be in a status of 'teach out'. The Associate Head of Education for each School will be responsible to track and monitor programmes in 'teach out' until the programme is closed. A 'teach out' spreadsheet is available on the Quality

Assurance SharePoint site. The below includes, but is not limited to, the information that each school will be required to capture for each programme:

- Information on how many students and which stages/levels of study 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.
- A clear plan so that students on a withdrawn programme will receive the same level of experience and opportunities that would be expected if the programme was still active.
- Student consultation and approval of any changes.

95. The programme is only deemed closed when all the remaining students have had their opportunity to complete their studies (in accordance with the relevant Regulations and their period of registration).

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

97. 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.

98. Information from the 'teach out' spreadsheet should be included in the context screen of the withdrawal process in the QCM system, and a copy of the 'teach out' spreadsheet provided to qualityservices@surrey.ac.uk once the withdrawal request is submitted for approval in the QCM system and when it is updated.

99. Board of Studies and Faculty Education Committee must monitor the 'teach out' spreadsheet for all programmes and provide notification to members when a programme has been closed.

100. The Quality Enhancement Subcommittee (QESC) will receive the status of suspended and withdrawn programmes from Academic Quality Services, and updates from the faculties/school(s) on programmes in 'teach out' and programmes that have been closed.

Timescales – suspensions and withdrawals

Table 10: Standard timeframes for suspensions and withdrawals

Suspension (*(sign-off* – Board of Studies, ADE, Pro VC and Exec Dean)*	UG PGT	Ideally 18 months to commencement (no marketing took place) – minimum 12 months. 12 months prior to commencement

Withdrawal *(sign-off* – Board of Studies, ADE, Pro VC Exec Dean, Pro VC Education)*	UG PGT	Ideally 18 months prior to commencement (no marketing takes place) – minimum 12 months. 12 months prior to commencement

Table 11: In-cycle timeframes for suspensions and withdrawals

Suspension *(sign-off* – AHE/ Head of School, ADE, Director R&A)*	UG PGT Both UG and PGT:	8 months prior to commencement (Jan) (where there are a small number of firm and/or insurance offers in place, but no one has met the exact grade requirements, a decision may be made at the start of Confirmation and Clearing not to lower the entry requirements, given the likely low numbers on the programme, and to suspend recruitment). 4 months prior to commencement (May for Sept start; Oct for Feb Start) Where there are no firm responses or insurance (in the case of UG), a decision can be made at any point up to 1st July for UG and 1st August for PGT (September starts) and 1st December for PGT (February starts).
Withdrawal	UG/PGT	This is not applicable. Withdrawals must adhere to the standard lifecycle

**Any exceptions to the agreed timescales must be approved by Exec Deans and Pro-VC Education, with in-cycle exceptions additionally agreed by VP Strategic Growth.*

101.

Table 12: 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 and assist with the 'teach out' spreadsheet completion for remaining students on the programme to enable continuity of study (see paragraph 91) • Consult with the relevant professional services, 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 (when a programme is suspended, ensure manual activation is granted in QCM for marketing pages for the subsequent academic year)
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 and monitor the teach out spreadsheet 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.
Associate Heads of Education	Responsible for completing and monitoring the 'teach out' spreadsheet

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

103. 'How to' guides and videos are available at the QAD SharePoint site.

Implications of module and programme modifications (including suspensions and withdrawals)

104. 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.

105. 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.

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

Table 13: Examples of implications

Action	Implication
Programme name change	• Where the programme is ATAS registered and international students have received their visa already this may require a resubmission of the ATAS approval which has time and cost implications or the risk of applicants not joining the University if it is not processed in time • Name changes past the advised deadline can cause delays in Lifelong Learning Entitlement 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. Additionally, a placement cannot be more than 50% of a programme, except where there is a UK statutory requirement for a course to contain a specific period of placement which exceeds this limit.

Consumer protection law

107. The University has a responsibility to comply with the requirements of consumer protection law set out by the Competition and Markets Authority. The UK higher education providers – advice on consumer protection law provides guidance on which module and programme information may be considered as 'material' and 'non-material' information. Changes to information that is considered 'material information' would require notification to prospective students and current students. In addition to 'material information' that requires notification under consumer protection law, it is the University's decision on whether to notify prospective students on changes to 'non-material' information if it chooses to. The University has reviewed the documentation and devised a table (see appendix 3) outlining which changes to modules and programmes require student notification (prospective and current students).

QAA Subject Benchmark Statements

108. Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas. For programmes that have a respective QAA subject benchmark statement the proposing programme team are required to submit a mapping document as part of the validation process.

109. As mentioned in the modification section, when a name change is made or significant changes are proposed to the programme which changes the respective QAA Subject Benchmark AQS requires a subject benchmark mapping document to be submitted to ensure that the programme is in line with the new benchmark. Where this identifies a substantial change to the programme a revalidation process would be instigated.

110. Programme leaders are expected to ensure that their programmes align sufficiently with the respective subject benchmark statement and are responsible for ensuring that when an update is made by QAA to their respective benchmark that the subject benchmark mapping document is completed to ensure alignment. Modifications to the programme should go through the normal modification process.

Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)

111. PSRBs are an important partner and play a critical role in designing and delivering academic programmes of study in the UK[12]. The majority of the University of Surrey's students study on programmes which are accredited or recognised by PSRBs. The marketing of new Surrey programmes and the viability of the existing ones are often reliant upon these professional accreditations and recognitions.

112. This information below outlines a generic approach to maintaining PSRB's involvement with Surrey's programmes of study, particularly around programme design development, review, and modification to ensure compliance with due academic quality assurance processes and regulations, national regulator(s) requirements, and sector-recognised standards. Equally important is the maintenance of annual returns to PSRBs and re-accreditation visits that occur on multi-year patterns. These visits usually result in some subsequent action plans to maintain the accreditation, which will require the programme teams to follow through and report upon.

113. Establishing and maintaining formal links (application submissions, monitoring returns, reviews, responses to PSRB reports, etc.) with PSRBs requires approval of the Head of School, with oversight by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Deans of Faculty. (NB. Informal/ongoing liaison does not require this level of approval).

114. Normally, accreditation is sought following the validation of the programme of study, and then future periodic enhancement review events are held jointly with the professional body.

115. The procedure for gaining professional accreditation and recognition of Surrey programmes may vary. In some cases, a conditional accreditation may be granted by a PSRB, pending upon continuous monitoring and/or the first graduating cohort, etc. Where this is the case, the programme is advertised in accordance with its current PSRB accreditation status.

116. Programme teams seeking professional body's accreditation or recognition should map their programme(s) to the relevant PSRB requirements, including module/programme learning outcomes and skills developed (subject-related and academic).

117. Where a joint (re)validation and (re)accreditation event is held with the University, it is seen as good practice to arrange a planning meeting between the programme team, PSRB, and Academic Quality Services as soon as possible. In some cases, this may be a year in advance of the joint (re)validation and (re)accreditation event. PSRB input

[12] Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies: an exploration of their engagement with higher education. HEBRG, March 2011. https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-07/hebrg-professional-bodies.pdf (Last accessed on 28/01/2025).

to the programme validation event should be discussed and identified at the planning meeting.

118. Where (re)accreditation is sought post (re)validation approval, programme teams are required to keep Academic Quality Services informed about the proposal. This includes detailed information about:

- The reasons for seeking (re)accreditation,
- The timescales for approval in relation to the accrediting bodies processes,
- The outcomes of the event
- And, if approved, how long the approval period is for.

119. Academic Quality Services should be engaged during the (re)accreditation event as part of the University team regardless of whether it takes place before, during, or after the University (re)validation.

120. A copy of the approved documents should be submitted to Academic Quality Services for record (qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk) and filing within five University working days of receipt.

121. A central register of PSRBs is maintained on SharePoint, updated by Academic Quality Services in collaboration with Faculties to record and track the status of PSRB accreditations.

122. An overview of PSRB (re)accreditation events will be submitted to the relevant University academic committee for further consideration, including reviewing identified risks, matters arising, and examples of best practice.

Appendix 1: Key deadlines table for undergraduate programmes

			Sept start	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug
			Feb start	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan
	Department	**Process**	**Deadline/Timescale**	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
	AQS - PVAC approval	Programme team to submit paperwork to PVAC Teams site and PVAC consider paperwork	Middle of November - programme teams submit paperwork to PVAC By end of December - PVAC decision (is advertised subject to validation)			BOS																					
	Validation	Programme team to submit paperwork - middle of January. AQS complete all validation processes	Validation paperwork submission - Middle of February AQS initial checks, validation and post event activity (3-4 months) - Middle of May - Middle of June										validated														
	Marketing	Marketing commences two years prior to delivery	24 months																								
		Optimum marketing of new programme (18 months which would be March for Sept start)	18 months prior																								
		Marketing (subject to validation)	Timeframe if right up to the deadlines				Marketing subject to validation																				
		Recruitment fair leaflet print	January (October if needed)																								
		Printed International guide	End of July																								
		UCAS - Apply between September- end of Jan	September - January														UCAS Applicatipons										
	Library	Teaching materials (reading list) decision deadlines needed by the library	Three months prior to teaching of new module(s)																								
		Requests for new subscription materials	At least one year before starting teaching																								

Key	
	Time prior to deadline
	Deadline passed
	Programme commences

Appendix 2: Key deadlines table for postgraduate programmes

			Sept start	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep
			Feb start	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb
	Department	**Process**	**Deadline/Timescale**	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Postgraduate	AQS - PVAC approval	Programme team to submit paperwork to PVAC Teams site and PVAC consider paperwork	Middle of January - programme teams submit paperwork to PVAC Middle of February - PVAC decision (is advertised subject to validation)			BOS																						
	Validation	Programme team to submit paperwork - middle of March AQS complete all validation processes	April - May approx										Validated															
	Marketing	Marketing of PG	February (last day of the month) One and a half years prior to the introduction of the programme																									
		Marketing (subject to validation)								Marketing subject to validation																		
		Printed International guide	End of July																									
	Library	Teaching materials (reading list) decision deadlines needed by the library	Three months prior to teaching of new module(s)																									
		Requests for new subscription materials	At least one year before starting teaching																									

Key	
	Time prior to deadline
	Deadline passed
	Programme commences

Appendix 3: Module/Programme CMA Change Table

Level (Programme / Module)	Change type	Impact on programme (Major/Minor - defined in PLC CoP)	CMA definition material vs non material change	Prospective Students (application stage / offer stage / enrolment stage)	How prospective students are informed	Current Students	How current students are informed
Module	Assessment Pattern	Minor	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Module	Hours	Minor	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Module	Add a Pre/co-requisite	Minor	Non - Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Student Representative
Module	Module name	Minor	Non-Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Student Representative
Module	Assessment strategy	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Module	Methods of learning and teaching	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Module	Remove a pre/co-requisite	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Module	School	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Module	Aim/Learning outcomes	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Module	Alternative assessment	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative

Module	Content	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Module	Overview	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Module	Other Information	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Programme	Programme title	Major	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Mode of Study (Add/Remove)	Major	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Programme award	Major	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Removal or change to an exit award and title	Major	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Add / remove module (Core / Compulsory)	Minor	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Module classification (e.g., Core/Compulsory to Optional vice-verses)	Minor	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Course length	Minor	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Accredditation (add / remove)	Minor	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Programme suspension or withdrawal	N/A	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Addition of an exit award and title	Major	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Removal of optional modules	Minor	Material	Yes	QCM-Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Location change of PTY/Placement opportunities when previously stipulated	Minor	Material	Yes	Head of Careers and Employability/ Head of	Yes	Programme Lead

					Partnerships and Mobility - Admissions		
Programme	Removal of placement / PTY opportunities altogehter	Minor	Material	Yes	Head of Careers and Employability/ Head of Partnerships and Mobility - Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Introduction of out-of-semester programme delivery	Minor	Material	Yes	Programme team - Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme	Adding optional module(s)	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Programme	School	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Programme	Aim/Learning outcomes	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Programme	Change of occurance e.g., semester 1/semester 2/year-long/across academic year	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Programme	Other internal and/or external reference points	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Programme	Other Information	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative
Programme	Addition information (additional wording relating to these areas); Associate Tutors/Guest Speakers/Visting	Minor	Non - Material	No	N/A	Yes	Student Representative

	Academics, clinical placement, Dual Degree, Exchanges, Placements, Professional Training Year (PTY), Programme Adjustments						
Programme / Module	Location of study	Minor	Material	Yes	Programme team - Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
Programme / Module	Change to status of Programme/module leader e.g., professor to PGR student	Minor	Material	Yes	Programme team/ CSO - Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead
University	Regulator information	N/A	Material	Yes	Head of Academic Policy and Governance - Admissions	Yes	Head of Academic Policy and Governance - Admissions
University	Regulation change	N/A	Material	Yes	Head of Academic Policy and Governance - Admissions	Yes	Head of Academic Policy and Governance - Admissions
Programme	Entry Requirements	N/A	Material	Yes	Admissions	No	N/A
Programme	Additional costs programme/module	Minor	Material	Yes	QCM - Admissions	Yes	Programme Lead

Key	
	Material change (notification to prospective students and current students)
	Non-material change (notification to prospective and current students)
	Non-material changes to current students only