

What to Expect from the Validation Event

This two-page document is designed to help answer the main questions relating to the validation process and what steps you should take to ensure that you are as well prepared as possible for the validation event.

1. What is validation and what is it for?

Validation is the formal process a university uses to gain reassurance that a new programme of study is fit for purpose. It considers the strategic fit of the programme and the management support provided to support the programme. The curriculum is considered along with examples of the innovative use of assessment as well as research informed teaching. The validation process will seek reassurance that the school has the appropriate resources (staff, space, and equipment) in place to deliver the proposed programme to a high standard and have also evidenced that consultation with stakeholders and students has taken place. External advice will also be drawn upon when considering programmes.

2. What is the process at Bangor University?

Programme validation will take a risk-based approach. All programme proposals will need to go through a specified approval process; the Executive Approval Process, the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group, or a Validation Approval Panel. The approval process selected is calculated using a set criteria which considers elements such as the amount of work or changes required, resourcing, external input and factors and other risk factors. The Quality Enhancement Unit will decide on which approach is taken when considering programme proposals based on this criteria.

3. How do I ensure stakeholder and student involvement?

It is good practice to have student representation on the validating panel. Student assessors will be trained and arranged via the Quality Enhancement Unit. Student assessors will also need to be involved in the design of the programme and will have input in developing the programme specification and aligned modules. It is required for the member of staff leading on the programme development to attend and it is also good practice to have several members of the programme team present at the validation event so that questions can be handled by different team members according to their area of expertise.

4. Addressing the University's teaching and learning strategy

The University's teaching and learning strategy can be found on Bangor University's website. It is important that you are familiar with the University's teaching and learning strategy as the validating panel will seek evidence that the key elements of the strategy are explicitly integrated into your proposal. Examples may include e-assessment and the innovative use of assessment in optimising learning and achieving learning outcomes. It will also be helpful for the validation team to be familiar with the Code of Practice for Programme Approval, Monitoring and Review which can be found at

<https://www.bangor.ac.uk/regulations/codes/documents/BUCode08-2021v1.1.pdf>

5. Resources

The panel will look for evidence that there are appropriate resources to run the proposed new programme. This will include a suitable number of teaching staff having appropriate qualifications and experience. The panel will also ask about teaching facilities, resource requirements from other areas of the university and elsewhere, as well as any special equipment that may be needed. Are these in place and are they appropriately supported?

6. Professional body requirements

It is always good practice to gain professional body accreditation where appropriate for a new programme. It provides would-be students with assurance that the programme meets national standards in the subject area. An accredited programme of study will often allow students to gain chartered status following the successful completion of an accredited programme of study and gaining a defined amount of work experience. The information provided in the following link for engineers is a typical example (<https://www.engc.org.uk/ceng>).

When considering programmes with external accreditation, such as Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), evidence of consultation with these will need to be documented as part of the proposal.

7. Employability (and placements)

As a part of the University's KPI to improve student employability the validating panel will want to see in the validation process what support is provided to students to maximise their chances of gaining a graduate level job. How is employability integrated into the curriculum? What opportunities are there for students who enrol on the programme to gain a placement? Is reference made to the University's placement programme and how will placement opportunities be highlighted to the students? Are there appropriate systems in place to support students on placement and to ensure any placement requirements are satisfied?

<https://www.bangor.ac.uk/student-life/work-experience>

8. The outcome – approval, commendations, recommendations, and conditions

At the end of the validation event, the Chair of the panel will report back to the team the decision of the panel. In most cases the programme should be approved and will often be accompanied by three sets of outcomes. These are commendations, recommendations, and conditions. Commendations are those elements of the validation process and documentation which the panel thought were particularly good. Commendations are often subsequently used as examples of good practice. Recommendations are in effect suggestions made by the panel which they feel are things which will improve the programme and/or its delivery. It is a good idea to introduce all recommendations before the commencement of the programme. Conditions must be met and will always have a time limit. Evidence that conditions have been met by the programme team must be signed off by both the panel Chair and the External Subject Specialist. Failure to meet the conditions of the validation

event will usually result in the programme not being allowed to proceed to recruit students. On occasion, the panel may refer the proposal back to the School, or approve the proposal with minor modifications which can be approved by the Chair of the Approval Panel once completed.