Code of Practice for Programme Approval, Monitoring and Review

Code 08: 2023 Version 1

Effective from: 1 October 2023

PRIFYSGOL BANGOR UNIVERSITY

Date	Supersedes	Description of Change
24th September 2023	2021 Version 01.1	Updated to reflect implementation of Worktribe and revised committee structures.
1 February 2021	2021 Version 01	Improving clarity of wording in sections 58 and 98, and updating job titles.
1 February 2021	2020 Version 01	Updates to add provision for the Welsh Language.
1 September 2020	2018 Version 01	Major changes to programme proposal, marketing, and validation procedures, timelines, and reviews, as well as to streamline available programmes are introduced in order to respond to changing guidelines and strategic needs.

Document Owner	Approved By	Date Approved	Review Frequency
Head of Quality Enhancement.	Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee.	February 2021	Every three years.

Note: In exceptional circumstances, and subject to approval by the Chair of the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee, responsibilities assigned to Schools, Heads, of School, School Officers or School Committees in these Regulations may be assumed by the College, Head of College, College Officers or College Committees respectively, as appropriate.

Code of Practice for Programme Approval, Monitoring and Review	

This Code describes the approved procedures to design, review and monitor all taught programmes leading to a University award wherever they are taught. Any deviations, for example in the case of collaborative provision, will be minor and agreed as part of the formal approval of those programmes as described in the Code of Practice for Collaborative Provision (Code 12).

Processes outlined in this code enable the University to meet the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and relevant expectations, the baseline standards, of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education together with core and common practices, which are examples of effective working.

Contents

1.   Purpose and Key Principles

Processes described in this document enable the University to ensure that the academic standards of its courses meet the requirements of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales and The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications for UK degree awarding bodies. This is a baseline requirement for any HE institution in Wales and is essential to draw down public funding.

These processes also enable the University to address the requirements of the UK Quality Code in terms of: effectively using external expertise, engaging students in assessing the quality of their teaching and together with the planning round and providing assurance that sufficient resources and facilities are in place to support our programmes. The processes described here will be reviewed on a regular basis.

All programmes should also take into consideration the Code of Practice for Careers Education, Information and Guidance which support several strategic objectives in the University's Strategic Plan and Teaching & Learning Strategy.

1.1 Key principles of curriculum design

1. Any programme offered by the University needs to align with the University's Strategic Plan and its sub-strategies particularly those relating to Teaching and Learning.

2. Resources required to support the delivery of programmes should be agreed through the School's approved planning process.

3. Programme validation takes a risk-based approach based on agreed indicators.

4. External advice is used in the case of all programme validations and revalidations.

5. Student participation is required at all stages of programme design and in all validations and revalidations.

6. Stakeholder engagement is expected at all stages of programme design and review.

7. Worktribe is the University's definitive record of programme and module content. It includes information on programme and module learning outcomes and teaching and assessment strategies, for staff, students and external bodies.

8. Schools are responsible for reviewing and updating their programme and module records annually to ensure the continuing accuracy of information e.g. the Gazette, marketing webpages.

9. Programmes will be reviewed annually against academic and strategic criteria.

10. New programmes must demonstrate market demand and reflect the School's research strengths and employ good pedagogical practice.

11. All programmes must have learning outcomes which reflect QAA Subject Benchmark Statements and, where relevant, to professional outcomes (e.g. in Nursing, Social Work and Teacher Training). Further guidance on developing appropriate learning outcomes is available on the Quality Enhancement Unit web pages.

12. All modules must have learning outcomes appropriate to the level of teaching according to the Credit Qualification Framework for Wales and the descriptors of the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

13. All modules should address at least one of the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (UN SDGs). Only the most relevant should be selected, up to a maximum of six.

14. Module credits should normally be split equally across semesters and the balance should never be more than 70/50 across two semesters.

15. Joint teaching across levels is not normally permitted. However, it may be permitted across adjacent levels (e.g. across Levels 5 and 6 or across Levels 6 and 7) and where modules are designed in accordance with the following guidelines:

    - Modules at each Level must have clearly distinguishable learning outcomes and assessment methods.
    - If modules are taught in alternate years, the Level 5 and Level 6 versions of a module must be designed so that each cohort group is able to fulfil all the learning outcomes.
    - Joint teaching activities across modules will typically involve didactic rather than discursive teaching (for example lectures rather than seminars or tutorials).
    - If students are expected to engage in discussion, analysis or interpretation, separate activities and assessment should be arranged for each level. Such activities will typically include tutorials, seminars, group work and presentations.
    - Modules across levels 5 and 6 must have distinct assessments which must test distinct learning outcomes. There should be no identical assessments for modules that employ joint teaching across levels 6 and 7.
    - When Schools wish to validate or revalidate modules that are taught across levels, both versions should be submitted for approval.

16. Joint teaching across levels (e.g. across Levels 5 and 6 or across Levels 6 and 7) should not be used:

- Where Level 5 students will not have acquired the necessary skills, knowledge or understanding of context at Level 4 to allow an appropriate version of a Level 5 module to be designed for a particular subject/topic.
- Where Level 6 students will not have acquired the necessary skills, knowledge or understanding of context at Level 4 or 5 to allow an appropriate version of a Level 6 module to be designed for a particular subject/topic.
- Where joint teaching across levels would compromise the standards expected in a professionally accredited course.
- Where it is expected that students who have completed Level 6 modules as part of their undergraduate degree will pursue their studies by enrolling on a Master's course at Bangor in the same discipline.

17. Where a spiral curriculum is used, the gradient of learning must be clearly demonstrated by appropriate learning outcomes, assessments and student-facing documentation.

18. To promote consistent depth and spread of learning in modules, one learning outcome per 5 credits is advised.

2. New Programme Approval Process

Programme approval for new programmes is now completed in its entirety through the Worktribe workflow.
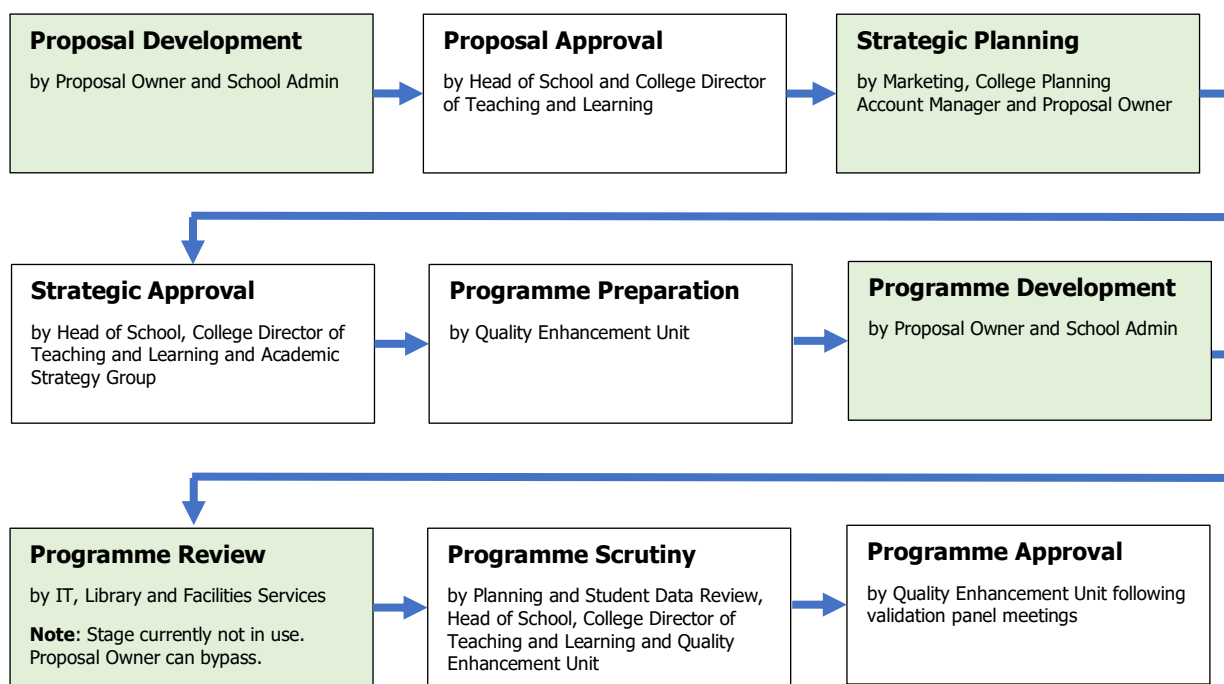
The Programme Proposal stage of the workflow for Strategic Approval must be completed by the end of August two years prior to the anticipated start date of the programme. Programme proposals must be considered by the Curriculum Planning Approval and Monitoring Delivery Group at the end of September twenty-four months before the programme delivery is due to commence.

2.1 Strategic Approval

The School appoints a Lead Programme Developer (LPD) who will usually be at least Senior Lecturer level. For proposed joint programmes, an LPD must be appointed from both Schools. A professional services team to support the LPD will be convened initially by the College Planning Officer and include individuals from the Marketing, Communications, Recruitment, Admissions and Quality Enhancement teams. The LPD must work with the professional services team, a Student Advisor and relevant stakeholders to prepare a Programme Proposal.

A new programme is created in Worktribe and an outline of the programme is developed into a programme proposal. Please follow the guidance provided to make sure the necessary fields are completed and correct (Proposal Development).

The proposal is then submitted for approval by the Head of School and the College Director of Teaching and Learning (Proposal Approval).

With Marketing colleagues taking a lead, the professional services team will consider market intelligence and the business case and create a narrative for the Market Analysis and Financial Analysis sections of the Planning Record (in the Strategic Approval stage in Worktribe). The Planning Record will then be available for the LPD to complete the Risk Analysis, in conjunction with the professional services team. Guidance on the information required for the Planning Record is provided.

At this point, the programme requires approval by the Head of School (or nominee) and the College Director of Teaching and Learning before being submitted to the Curriculum Planning Approval and Monitoring Delivery Group for Strategic Approval.

2.1.1 Preparing for Academic Approval

Once Strategic Approval has been granted, the Quality Enhancement Unit will add a programme code and a UCAS code and move the programme on to the Programme Development stage.

The programme record will be completed by the LPD, paying close attention to the Worktribe guidance, to ensure that all the required information is provided in the correct places. The LPD is encouraged to contact CELT at an early point for advice on teaching and assessment strategies.

Schools should consider how the proposal will contribute to bilingual and Welsh medium education. They should also consider how it may promote diversity and the inclusion and academic success of under-represented groups. For more information on inclusive practice please see the Code of Practice on Inclusive Provision for Disabled Students.

Any new modules to be validated with the programme will also need to be created and developed for approval, using the guidance provided. Please bear in mind that each programme must differ from all other programmes by at least 20% of the core or compulsory credits that contribute to the award.

The programme must be submitted for Programme Scrutiny and approved by the nominated individual, the Head of School (or nominee) and the College Director of Teaching & Learning no later than the Monday of the week of 1st December for undergraduate programmes starting 21 months hence. Specific submission dates for each year will be available here. The proposal also needs to be verified by the Planning Office for the purpose of the HESA return, so that data on Welsh language provision or subject codes are correct and can be used effectively to inform the NSS, to feed into league tables and to understand graduate outcomes. New modules associated with the programme must also be submitted for approval by this deadline.

In some cases, for example where places are funded or where a PSRB or Government demands changes and where support is given by the Curriculum Planning Approval and Monitoring Delivery Group, this process may be compressed or fast-tracked. However, as Worktribe drives data in a range of downstream applications such as the Gazette and Banner, when presenting new programmes for validation, Schools must allow sufficient time for post-validation revisions to be

made and then checked and approved by the Quality Enhancement Unit prior to registration for new students.

2.2 Academic Approval of Programmes and Modules

The Programme approval route is determined by the perceived level of risk. Taking into account the range of factors outlined in Table 1 below and based on the full programme specification and aligned modules, the Quality Enhancement Unit will select the appropriate route.

Fast-track applications may take low, medium or high-risk routes.

Please note that once validation is approved, a new programme will no longer be 'subject to validation' and may begin to recruit. However, delivery may commence only when revisions required as part of validation have been made and approved in Worktribe. It is essential to complete changes required as part of validation (conditions) by the agreed deadline. Proposers are required to consider enhancements (recommendations) made as part of validation. This applies to all validation routes – including where a fast-track timeline has been approved.

The criteria used to determine approval routes are set out below, together with examples. Details of each process are below.

Route	Risk	Criteria	Examples
Programme Modification	Minor	Modifications to no core or compulsory elements.	Renaming a programme. Addition or removal of optional modules from the programme.
Executive Approval Process	Low	Some modifications to core or compulsory elements. No external body recognition. No additional risk factors.	The replacement of core and compulsory modules accounting for between 20% and 40% of the programme credit load. A programme reconfigured entirely from existing provision. A new programme where core and compulsory modules differ by between 20% and 40% from existing provision but share a substantial number of core and compulsory modules usually within the same school. The addition of cross institutional elements such as a Placement Year (in the first instances then becoming a minor change).
Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group	Medium	Substantial changes to core or compulsory elements in existing provision that does not have external accreditation. New provision proposed with the introduction of a substantial proportion	Any changes to programme learning outcomes. The introduction of a substantial proportion of new core and compulsory modules to an existing programme. The replacement of core and compulsory modules accounting for more than 40% of the programme credit load.

			of new core and compulsory modules. Other risk factors.	A new programme which has more than 40% new core and compulsory modules in an area that is already taught, where no risk factors (usually External Examiner or PSRB concerns) apply. A new subject area is being proposed (this may also apply in high-risk validations). The revalidation of any programme delivered as part of an external partnership. Some structural changes such as changes in the home school of a programme.
Validation Panel	High		New areas, new levels, partners and/or external accreditation. Other risk factors.	Changes to programme learning outcomes. A new Partnership is being set up to deliver a Programme. A new subject area is being proposed (see above). Other risk factors are relevant. School or partnership with poor quality metrics (usually External Examiner or PSRB concerns). Some structural changes such as changes in the home school of a programme.
Validation Panel	PSRB requirement		PSRB accreditation stipulates that a joint panel or an institutional panel must be convened.	Any changes.

2.2.1   Executive Approval of New Programmes

Once a Lead Programme Developer (LPD) has been informed that a programme has been selected for the executive approval route, the School must appoint at least one External Assessor. In these cases, a critical friend approach may be used and existing External Examiners with particular knowledge of the field may be consulted in this role (see Appendix 2).

Schools will design the programme and aligned modules and provide evidence of student assessor involvement in the programme design which is made available to External Assessors. Schools will also send on the External Assessors' statements and their response to any modifications suggested to the Quality Enhancement Unit.

A supporting statement must be provided from at least one External Assessor and should comment on:

- The aims of the programme.
- The learning outcomes.

- The curriculum and the degree to which it reflects the programme aims and learning outcomes and relevant subject benchmark statements and professional standards where relevant.
- The relevance of the programme, particularly in relation to developments in the subject area and employment opportunities.

While the criteria used to assess programme proposals will vary according to context, academic validation will focus on ensuring that programmes meet the principles set out in Section 1.1 above. Modules submitted as part of a new programme, at revalidation or as standalone additions will be considered according to the following criteria:

- The module learning outcomes, including their clarity and suitability for the specified level of learning.
- The relationship of the module learning outcomes to the programme learning outcomes if the module is proposed to be core or compulsory to any programme.
- The extent to which the teaching and learning strategy, structure and assessment strategy will provide learning opportunities needed to enable students fulfil the learning outcomes.
- Its impact on Welsh-medium or bilingual teaching.
- Inclusive teaching and assessment.
- How does the module address the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals
- The appropriateness of the credit weighting.
- The fit of the assessment to the Bangor Assessment Framework.
- The relationship of the assessment strategy to the programme-level assessment strategy if the module is proposed to be core or compulsory to any programme.
- The opportunities students may have to develop and demonstrate transferable skills.
- Where the module involves teaching and/or assessment by staff who are not members of the University, the nature of supervision provided.
- Whether staff involved in the delivery of the module or students undertaking the module must undergo Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

Decisions on programmes considered through the Executive Approval Route will be ratified by the PVC (Education and Student Experience) and reported to the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group.

2.2.2 Approval of New Programmes by the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group

Where programmes are to be considered by the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group, Schools will liaise with the External Assessor and the Quality Enhancement Unit will liaise with the Internal Assessor and the Student Reviewers. In the case of proposals for programmes to be delivered through collaborative provision, the Quality Enhancement Unit will appoint an External Assessor.

All three reviewers will independently produce a report that reflects the principles outlined above in Section 1.1. The LPD will need to make any recommended amendments to the programme or associated new modules and resubmit the programme for programme scrutiny no later 28 days before the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group meeting in order to ensure that members of the group receive the documentation 14 days ahead of the meeting.

The Quality Enhancement Unit will collate full programme specifications, aligned module descriptions (exported from Worktribe), External Assessor Statements and evidence of engagement with External Assessor revisions. These will be forwarded to members of the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group together with evidence of student and stakeholder involvement (see Appendix 2).

Members of the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group will consider the full range of programme level issues (reflecting the principles set out in 1.1) together with the reviewers' reports and the LPDs' response.

LPDs are expected to attend the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group meeting to present their case and answer queries.

Where further revisions are required, the programme and aligned module records will be amended on Worktribe by the School and submitted for approval by the deadline determined by the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group.

2.2.3 Approval of New Programmes by a Validation Panel

Validation panels will receive the full programme specifications, aligned module descriptions (exported from Worktribe) and evidence of student and stakeholder input into programme design.

Where programmes are to be considered by a validation panel, the Quality Enhancement Unit may in some case, provide initial feedback to the School so that the programme is ready to go forward for validation. In these cases, the LPD will need to amend the programme and resubmit it, no later than six weeks before the validation meeting.

A validation panel will normally comprise of:

- Head of the Quality Enhancement Unit (or nominee chosen from the Validation Pool)
- External Subject Specialist.
- A representative from the Validation Pool (who must not be from the presenting School)
- Student representative
- A QA officer who will act as panel secretary.

A professional or employer representative may be sought where appropriate.

Staff from the presenting School(s), including the LPD, must attend the validation panel to summarise the aims of the programme and to answer the Panel members' questions.

If a programme is submitted outside the usual timeframes (non-UCAS or fast-tracked) the full Programme Specification and aligned module descriptors must be made available to the Quality Enhancement Unit at least 28 days before the meeting. This is so the finalised documentation can be sent to Panel members at least 14 calendar days before the meeting.
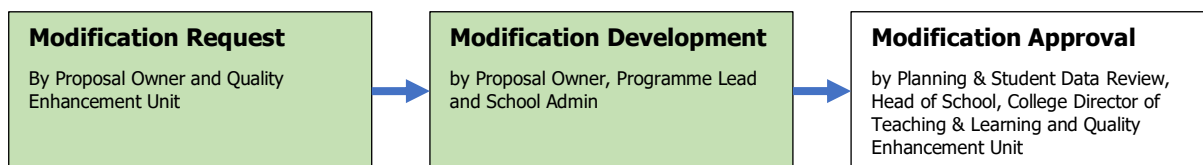
The Panel Secretary will produce a report summarising the Panel's decision. Where revisions are required, the programme and aligned module records will be amended on Worktribe by the School and submitted for approval by the deadline determined by the validation panel. Panel Validation Reports will be sent to the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group for report.

3. Programme Modification, Withdrawal, Suspension and Renaming

3.1 Programme Modification

To support module choice, facilitate timetabling and comply with Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) requirements, changes should be made to programmes by 31st January for programmes starting in September. For programmes starting in January that reflect the module content of programmes starting in October, changes will also need to be made by the same date (around 12 months before commencement of teaching the modified programme).

To make minor changes to a programme, for example the addition or removal of optional modules, Schools should request programme modification on the programme record in Worktribe. Once the changes have been made to the programme, it can be submitted for approval and will move through the Workflow. The criteria used to make these judgements are set out in the guidance.

Modification Request		Modification Development		Modification Approval
By Proposal Owner and Quality Enhancement Unit	→	by Proposal Owner, Programme Lead and School Admin	→	by Planning & Student Data Review, Head of School, College Director of Teaching & Learning and Quality Enhancement Unit

Changes of programme title must be approved by the PVC (Education and Student Experience). Due to the integration with, and limitations of, Banner, it is not possible to use the 'Change Title' function in Worktribe. Please see Section 3.4 below for the process for renaming a programme.

3.2 Withdrawing a Programme

Please note that programmes that have been withdrawn cannot be reinstated.

Requests for programme withdrawal should normally be made at least 18 months prior to the start of the relevant academic year of entry. This is to ensure that other than in exceptional cases (such as deferment), students will not have applied for that programme. The Programme Lead should request withdrawal of the programme for the first academic year in which the programme will no longer be offered to new students, and for all future years (instances in Worktribe).

Programmes must be in the Validated status in Worktribe to request withdrawal.

The request for withdrawal should be approved by the Head of School and the College Director of Teaching & Learning in Worktribe. The Programme Lead should work with Marketing, Communications and Recruitment teams to complete the agreement in principle, which is part one of the withdrawal request form. This form is outside the Worktribe system. On receipt of the form, the Quality Enhancement Unit seeks approval in principle from PVC (Education and Student Experience).

In the event that the request in made outside the 18-month timeline or that deferred students have applied for the programme, the Programme Lead will work with the Marketing, Communications and Recruitment teams to offer all applicants alternative provision. They will then confirm that all applicants have been offered alternative programmes and moved to them where they choose to do so (part two of the withdrawal request form).

The Quality Enhancement Unit will upload the final withdrawal request form to the relevant programme record and will notify the PVC (Education & Student Experience) who will approve the withdrawal request, for all future instances.

3.3 Suspending a Programme

Requests for suspension of a programme should normally be made at least 18 months prior to the start of the academic year of entry, to ensure that other than in exceptional circumstances (deferment), students will not have applied for that programme.

As is the case above, programmes must be in the Validated status in Worktribe to request suspension. The Programme Lead should request suspension of the programme for each academic year for which the programme will be suspended. Programme suspension will only apply to the academic years (instances in Worktribe) that are requested. Future instances of the programme will remain live.

The request should be approved in Worktribe by the Head of School (or nominee) and the College Director of Teaching & Learning. The Programme Lead should work with Marketing, Communications and Recruitment teams to complete the agreement in principle, which is part one of the suspension request form. This form is outside the Worktribe system. On receipt of the form, the Quality Enhancement Unit seeks approval in principle from PVC (Education and Student Experience).

In the event that the request in made outside the 18-month timeline or that deferred students have applied for the programme, the Programme Lead will work with the Marketing, Communications and Recruitment teams to offer all applicants alternative provision. They will then confirm that all applicants have been offered alternative programme and moved to them where they choose to do so (part two of the withdrawal request form). When approved by PVC (Education & Student Experience), the Quality Enhancement Unit approved the suspension request in Worktribe.

3.4   Renaming a Programme

Requests for renaming a programme should normally be made at least 18 months prior to the start of the academic year of entry, before the recruitment cycle commences.

Much of the process must be managed outside the Worktribe workflow. Please do not change a programme title as part of programme modification or use the 'rename a programme' function in Worktribe because that will change the title for all students who have graduated on that programme, leading to difficulties in evidencing former students' study.

The Programme Lead will work with Marketing, Communications and Recruitment teams to complete part one of the "rename a programme request form" for agreement in principle. The Quality Enhancement Unit will seek approval in principle from PVC (Education & Student Experience).

In the event that the request in made outside the 18-month timeline or that deferred students have applied for the programme, the Programme Lead will work with the Marketing, Communications and Recruitment teams to offer all applicants alternative provision. The Programme Lead will then complete part two of the rename a programme request form. The Quality Enhancement Unit will send the rename a programme request form to PVC (Education & Student Experience) for approval. Once approved the Quality Enhancement Unit will upload the signed form to all relevant instances of programme.

The Quality Enhancement Unit will duplicate the programme so that it does not need to be recreated and prepare it for review by the Programme Lead. The Programme Lead will ensure that the text for the renamed programme does not reference the old programme title and resubmit the new programme record. The Quality Enhancement Unit will withdraw all future instances of the old programme title.

4.   Annual Review of Programmes and Modules

4.1   Annual Programme Review

Schools must review all programmes every year. An action plan is required for each programme or group of cognate programmes and for each module. The University expects that the enhancements described are evidence-based and are planned to better equip students to success and as such should be measurable, evaluated and results reported.

The Annual Programme Review Form (QA1) must be used for programme reviews. The QA1 must include responses to student feedback, items discussed at the Staff Student Liaison Committee, comments of External Examiners (initially as provided at the Board of Examiners meeting), ARQUE output, the results of module reviews, and the previous year's development plan.

Annual Programme Review forms (QA1s) must be sent to the relevant College Director of Teaching and Learning by a date to be published by the Quality Enhancement Unit for summer boards or within a month of the Examination Board at other times. The College Director of Teaching and Learning will consider the quality of the action plans described and may return those programme reviews that do not adequately engage with the evidence or describe credible plans for action. College Directors of Teaching and Learning will pass the approved forms on to the Quality Enhancement Unit, which will collate them and check them for completeness.

The Curriculum Quality Assurance Delivery Group will consider the clarity and measurability of the Action Plans outlined and the progress against the previous year's Action Plan. The Group will focus its attention particularly on programmes where particular risks and opportunities have previously been identified by the Education and Student Experience Committee or by External Examiners. Examples where enhancements would be expected are where student survey scores have been problematic, ARQUE data suggests unusual spikes in student performance or failure in particular modules, inconsistent marking or moderation or major innovations in teaching. The Group will also consider trends across Schools in terms of problems and enhancement solutions and identify opportunities such as inviting Schools to collaborate on piloting solutions in order to create a better evidence base. As the group includes College Directors of Teaching and Learning, it provides opportunities for intra-college learning and training.

A report detailing enhancement issues, trends and opportunities will be discussed at the next Education and Student Experience Committee. Annual review plans that have been identified as being of particular concern may be discussed at the Education and Student Experience Committee and revisions or further information requested from the School.

Should External Examiner reports differ from the oral comments used to inform the annual review, the review may need to be amended, subject to discussion with the Quality Enhancement Unit.

4.2   Annual Module Review

Each module must have a Module Organiser. Where modules are offered across Schools, they must have a single module organiser. The Module Organiser must review modules annually using the QA2 form. Similar versions of modules (e.g. a module taught at Level 5 and Level 6) can be reviewed together if clear distinctions between the data used are made.

The QA2 form can be found in My Bangor. It must include responses to student evaluations or other student feedback for example from Staff Student Liaison Committee minutes, ARQUE output if available for the module, and any comments from External Examiners. The QA2 form must also include a development plan for quality enhancement. The review of modules must inform the annual review of programmes.

Annual Module Review forms (QA2) are the basis for reflection and action on individual modules but are normally retained within the school.

5.   Approval of New Modules as part of Existing Programmes

New modules may be proposed outside programme validation and revalidation where they are required by professional bodies; to create new pathways linked to funding, for resource reasons or to meet strategic needs as outlined by the Curriculum Planning Approval and Monitoring Delivery Group. Modules may also be approved outside programme validation and revalidation where an outline has been approved by the Curriculum Quality Assurance Delivery Group through the annual review process. Where new modules are approved as a result of annual review, evidence of market demand will be required at validation.

New modules that are not proposed as part of new programmes must be submitted through Worktribe. They are approved by the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group using the same criteria as those used to appraise modules offered as part of new programmes (2.2).

Existing modules are submitted to the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group for re-approval if:

- Changes are made to the module learning outcomes.
- Changes are made to assessments accounting for more than 50% of the module mark.
- Changes in module credit weighting or level.
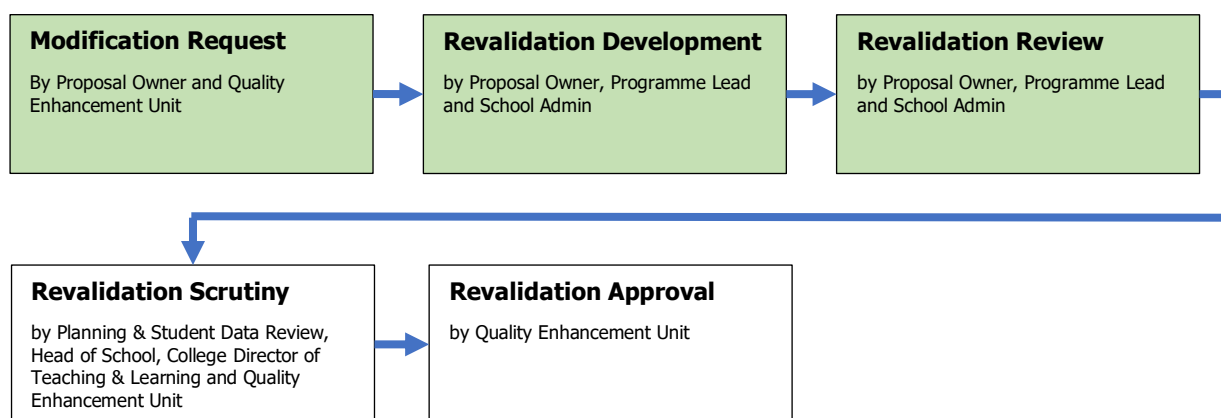
6.   Revalidation of Programmes

Programmes must be revalidated if substantive changes to programme learning outcomes or core or compulsory elements are proposed outside the usual validation cycle for the school. This may be necessary where there are changes to Benchmark Statements or staff resources. In these cases, Schools are responsible for consultation with students in compliance with the University's Guidance on Consumer Protection Law.

A programme must be revalidated if:

- Changes are made to the mode of delivery of the programme (for example from full time to part time or from on-site provision to distance learning)
- Changes are made to more than 20% of the programme learning outcomes and/or
- New core or compulsory modules are worth more than 20% of the total number of credits in the programme.

All taught programmes and modules are revalidated on a regular basis normally as part of a school-wide or subject-wide revalidation of programmes. Where programmes approved by a PSRB, the revalidation cycle will reflect the PSRB's requirements.

If programmes are revalidated outside the usual cycle any approval route set out above may be chosen (see Section 2.2). School-wide or subject-wide revalidations will be conducted by a validation panel.

Schools, in co-operation with the Quality Enhancement Unit, must make sure that the list of programmes to be revalidated is accurate. The list should include suspended programmes and courses that are to be discontinued or suspended. In these cases, Schools should follow the procedure outlined in 3.2 and 3.3. Any programmes not brought forward for revalidation during a School's normal revalidation cycle will be automatically discontinued. If programmes are to be renamed as part of the revalidation process, the process for renaming a programme must also be followed from the outset (see Section 3.4).

The programme records for the academic year after next will be reopened in Worktribe for revision ahead of revalidation. That is, for a revalidation event held in 2023-24, the programme records for 2025-26 will be opened. This will allow sufficient time for any modifications requested as part of the revalidation to be made so that students are able to see the updated programme to inform their module choices at pre-registration.

In order to prepare for a School-wide or subject-wide revalidation, Schools should submit the following:

1. A self-evaluation document for the School (usually from the recent internal quality audit).

2. A brief introduction to the School outlining the recent development of the curriculum or portfolio.

3. A full and updated programme specification for each programme, exported from Worktribe.

4. Copies of QA1 forms for the last 3 years.

5. Copies of External Examiners reports for the last 3 years.

6. Copy of the most recent Internal Quality Audits applicable to the programmes.

7. Copies of all module outlines associated with the programmes to be revalidated.

8. An outline of professional competencies (if applicable).

9. PRSB reports (if applicable).

10. Staff CVs (for programmes delivered through external collaborations)

If a programme has been reviewed for accreditation by an external body within 12 months of the intended revalidation date, the Chair of Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group can allow the report of the external review to be submitted to Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group instead of the documentation described above.

School-wide revalidation events will normally be arranged to align to relevant subject areas within the School. Programme specific revalidations may be arranged if required by a PRSB.

The membership of the validation panel is defined in Section 2.20. Staff from the presenting School must attend the validation panel to summarise the aims of the programme and to answer the panel members' questions. The School must also note the panel's recommendations and minor changes.

If any of the programmes proposed for revalidation follow the usual UCAS recruitment cycle, the full Programme Specification and aligned module descriptors must be made available to the Quality Enhancement Unit by the December deadline (see Worktribe timelines) but may be considered in advance of this deadline. The panel will consider the principles for programme and module design set out above in Section 1.1.

Reports summarising the panel's decision will be produced by the Panel Secretary. If validation of the current programme is withdrawn, students who have already started that programme can complete their studies.

Where revisions are required, the programme and aligned module records will be amended on Worktribe by the School and submitted for approval by the deadline determined by the validation panel. Revalidation reports are sent to Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group for report and discussion in terms of trends, enhancement themes and training needs.

7. Internal Quality Audits

During 2023/24, the IQA cycle will be suspended as the University reviews the method with the intention of integrating it further in the oversight framework and introducing risk-based elements.

7.1 Purpose of Internal Quality Audits

The University uses Internal Quality Audits as part of the process to monitor and enhance the quality and standards of academic programmes and students' experience of teaching and learning. The purpose of an audit visit is to verify that a School has processes and mechanisms to maintain quality and standards, and that they are operating effectively and efficiently. Links to relevant College level committees are explored. The audit must also include all collaborative provision. The audit report will recommend enhancements to teaching and learning.

Student representatives from the School are expected to participate fully in the School's preparations for the audit and in completing the self-evaluation document. Students should submit a separate 'Student Submission'. This will be facilitated by Undeb-Bangor.

7.2 The Audit Process

The Internal Quality Audit schedule follows a 6-year cycle:

Cycle	Year	Activity
A	1	Member of the Quality Enhancement Unit or Curriculum Quality Assurance Delivery Group attends Board of Examiners as an observer
A	2	Internal Quality Audit
A	3	Revalidation of taught programmes
A	4	
A	5	
A	6	
B	1	Member of the Quality Enhancement Unit or Curriculum Quality Assurance Delivery Group attends Board of Examiners as an observer
B	2	Internal Quality Audit

Where PSRBs require revalidation to be in a cycle of fixed length other than 6 years, the audit cycle will be amended accordingly. Changes to the audit cycle for a School can be approved by the Chair of the Curriculum Quality Assurance Delivery Group.

An audit visit will typically last one full day and involves:

- Inspection of a self-evaluation document, relevant committee minutes and other documentation concerned with teaching and learning.
- Meeting(s) with the Head of School and staff with responsibility for different aspects of teaching and learning (e.g. examinations, pastoral care, admissions).
- Meeting(s) with student representatives, undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research.
- Meeting(s) with other staff involved in quality assurance and/or teaching and learning (e.g. new staff members/administrators).
- Meetings, where appropriate, with College level staff e.g. College Directors of Teaching and Learning, Research, Director of Graduate School.

The audit team must normally include the Head of Quality Enhancement (or nominee), a senior academic from another School and the President of the Students' Union (or nominee), an External Assessor, and the Quality Assurance Manager. Other members can be co-opted onto the team at the discretion of the Chair.

Schools must nominate **three** External Assessors. An External Assessor should not be a current or recent External Examiner for the School and should preferably have knowledge of quality assurance processes and procedures. The Chair and Secretary of the audit panel will choose the External Assessor. Schools will be informed of the panel membership at least four weeks in advance of the audit.

7.2.1 Focus of Audit Visits

Audit visits will consider teaching at all levels from undergraduate to taught Master's and research, including collaborative provision. The Audit team's consideration will include the items in paragraphs below.

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught provision:

- The academic standards of programmes.
- Assessment and feedback.
- Student progression and achievement.

- Student support and guidance.
- Student representation.
- Teaching and learning resources.
- Key student-facing information equivalent to student handbooks or safety handbooks.
- Teaching and learning methods and innovations e.g. the use of VLE.
- Distance Learning programmes.
- Welsh Medium teaching (if applicable).
- Arrangements for work or professional placements (if applicable).
- Support, training, supervision and monitoring of research students, including those involved in teaching.

Feedback Systems

- External Examiners' Reports.
- Staff-Student Committee minutes.
- Feedback from Professional/Statutory Bodies (if applicable).
- Student Module and Programme Evaluations.
- QA2 forms or their equivalent.
- Annual Review and Development Plans (QA1's).
- National Student Survey, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey results.

The audit panel will appraise the School's compliance with the University's Regulations and Codes of Practice and with the University's Scheme for Published Information.

Staff Development and Training

- University and School induction, training and development for staff.
- Peer Observation of teaching.

7.2.2   Documents from the School

The School must complete a Self-Evaluation document which will be used for discussion during the audit.

In the Evaluation section, the School must assess its performance against a set of statements. These cover the following areas: academic programmes, teaching and learning, assessment and feedback, student participation and experience, academic staff development, and collaborative provision. A *pro forma* is available on the Quality Enhancement Unit website.

It is suggested that a team of staff, perhaps the School Teaching and Learning Committee or a smaller group, agrees the scores the School assigns itself against each statement. Scores should be from 1 to 4, as follows:

4 = the School meets the statement in full

3 = the School largely meets the statement

2 = the School partially meets the statement

1 = the School does not meet the statement

The Comments section should be used for:

1. Supporting evidence.

   This can include references to whole documents or sections of specific documents, reports, Minutes of committees or other information as appropriate. The documents must be available to the audit panel.

2. Action points for quality enhancement.

> This section should indicate how the School intends to enhance quality and/or improve performance.

In the Commentary section, the School is asked to write a commentary (no more than 2 sides of A4) reflecting on the major strengths and challenges it has identified.

The following Supporting Documentation should be supplied:

1. Details of the composition and responsibilities of School and where relevant College level Committees involved in teaching and research.

2. A chart or narrative identifying the reporting lines of these groups within the School and College.

3. School student handbooks for the current academic year.

4. Minutes of the School's Teaching or Quality Committee, Board of Studies and Staff-Student Committee for the previous 3 years.

5. The results of student evaluation of modules in the previous and current (where applicable) academic year.

6. The most recent report of a professional body or external organisations (where relevant) on programmes offered by the School.

7. A copy of the School's Welcome Week programme.

8. Minutes of specific committees dealing with franchised courses, other collaborative provision or distributed learning.

The documents should be made available to the Quality Enhancement Unit three weeks before the audit visit. Additional supporting evidence should be made available on the day of the audit.

7.2.3   Documents from the Quality Enhancement Unit

The Quality Enhancement Unit will provide the audit team with the following documents:

1. External Examiners Reports for the previous three academic years.

2. Annual Review and Development Plans (QA1 forms) for all programmes included in the review for the previous three academic years.

3. The previous Internal Quality Audit Report and Progress Report.

4. Relevant statistical data.

7.3   Outcomes of the visit

The report of the Internal Quality Audit will highlight the strengths of an academic School. It will also list action points for consideration by the School in relation to academic standards, the quality of the learning opportunities and maintenance of quality and standards. Issues for the University to consider will also be included in the report and Schools will be invited to comment on any factual inaccuracies.

Both the School and the University will have 1 year to respond to the action points. However, if an issue raises a specific cause for concern, the School may be required to respond within a shorter period. Responses from Schools will be considered by the Education and Student Experience Committee. If the Group is not satisfied with a School's response it can request:

1. A visit to the School by the Chair and Secretary of the audit panel to discuss the action points in more detail.

2. A follow up internal quality audit within 1-3 years.

Appendix 1: Responsibilities of University Bodies and Services

The Curriculum Planning Approval and Monitoring Delivery Group will oversee the strategic approval of programme proposals.

The Planning and Student Data Office is responsible for coordinating the Strategic Approval of new Programmes and provide training and guidance in liaison with CELT and key professional services.

Strategic approval of programmes must be followed by the confirmation of appropriate resources through the annual Planning Round. Confirmation of these resources will be sought during Academic Approval.

The Education and Student Experience Committee is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the University's procedures for the academic approval and amendment of programmes and can create sub-groups responsible for overseeing specific aspects of those procedures.

Following guidance supporting the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, the University takes a risk-based approach to the validation and revalidation of programmes. Programmes may be approved through validation panels, through an internal process led by the Quality Enhancement Unit or through the Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group.

The Curriculum Programme Approval Delivery Group reports to the Education and Student Experience Committee.

All new and revalidated programmes will be reported annually to the University Senate.

The Quality Enhancement Unit will maintain a list (Validation Pool) of staff members who can chair validation panels or serve as Internal Assessors. The Quality Enhancement Unit will coordinate training for this group in liaison with CELT.

The Quality Enhancement Unit will provide training for Student Assessors and maintain a list of those who have received training and can serve on validation panels.

School Boards of Studies are responsible for programmes that lead to a University award. Schools must ensure that programmes are designed and monitored in accordance with this Code of Practice.

Free-standing modules such as those studies for Continual Professional Development (CPD) will be overseen by the relevant School Board of studies. For further information see the Code of Practice on Non-Award-Bearing Provision (Code 14).

Where a proposed new programme uses modules from other Schools, the proposing School must discuss the proposal with the host School. Likewise, any plans to withdraw or make substantial revisions to modules must be discussed with all Schools whose programmes offer that module (including where 'borrowed' modules are optional rather than core or compulsory).

Where programme changes are planned, the School Staff-Student Liaison Committees must nominate one or two Student Advisors at the beginning of the academic year in order to provide student input into programme design.

The Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee will approve:

- New award titles.
- Exceptions to the University Regulations including exceptions required by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.

Appendix 2: Roles Relating to Programme Approval and Re-approval

Each College has been allocated a member of the planning team to act as their Planning Account Manager. The relevant Planning Account Manager will be responsible for a given College and will play a key role in supporting the development of programmes to submission for Strategic Approval.

External Assessors can be existing External Examiners in a relevant field and provide written reports on new programme proposals in the low or medium risk categories.

External Subject Experts must be independent experts in a relevant field with no previous or existing relationship with the School. They will sit on programme validation panels.

The Lead Programme Developer (LPD) will oversee programme design and ensure collaborative working with students and stakeholders.

Student Advisors provide a student's perspective during the design of programmes and will play a central role in developing programme specifications and aligned modules. A brief account of the student's engagement in the process is required.

Student Assessors sit on validation panels and appraise the quality of proposals using the same criteria as other panels members.