REGENT'S
UNIVERSITY LONDON

Academic Regulations - Course Development and Oversight

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Policy version tracking

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Quality Assurance and Enhancement Processes

1. Principles and Definitions

1.1 The Office for Students (OfS), set up by the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, is our regulator and works with higher education providers to make sure that students succeed in higher education.

1.2 The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) is an independent body entrusted with monitoring and advising on standards and quality in UK higher education and set the quality code, frameworks, and subject benchmark statements. The University is subject to institutional reviews by the QAA.

1.3 Please note the definition of the below terms, which are referred to in the approval, review, and modification of the course(s):

'Accreditation' means a process of verifying and approving a higher education institution (HEI) or higher education course by an authorised external institution/body.

'Validation' means the process whereby the University or an external accreditation authority deem a course of study offered by the University to be academically viable and of an appropriate standard to be offered to prospective students.

'Revalidation' means the process of reviewing an already validated course to confirm that it remains to be academically viable and of an appropriate standard to continue to be offered to prospective students.

1.4 Some courses have professional accreditation, the process for accreditation should be initiated at the Content Area level and presented to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team (VCET) or its nominated body to ensure it is consistent with the institutional strategy. Usually, accreditors will wish to visit the University to undertake a review before accrediting the University and they will undertake periodic reviews.

2. Validation of New Degrees

2.1 The University reviews its course portfolio annually, which includes the development of new provision. Proposals for new course provision are subject to business case approval by the VCET as part of the University's annual portfolio development and review processes.

2.2 Once a course proposal and business case has been approved, the Director of Learning & Teaching and Head of Registry implement internal processes and procedures for the validation process. The procedure is to:

    a.   Identify a viable Course Development Lead;
    b.   Identify external panel members to assist with the Validation Panel;
    c.   Establish a Course Development Team;
    d.   Prepare documentation for the Validation event;
    e.   Present the course to the validation panel members.

2.3 The Course Development Lead will be provided with the guidelines and information on the process by the Quality team. All relevant documentation is reviewed before and after the Validation Event by the Course Development Lead and Director of Learning & Teaching, who will work closely with the relevant Director (Content) or equivalent.

3. Summary of the Validation and Revalidation of Courses by Regent's University London

3.1 To allow adequate time for the development, validation and marketing of a new course, a new course must be approved (as per 2.1), with an appropriate lead in time before it is implemented. The Head of Registry and representatives from the Brand and Customer Experience and Recruitment teams should be consulted to determine the lead in time in line with the University's portfolio development processes.

3.2 To allow adequate time to prepare for the revalidation of a course, the development must begin before the end of the currently validated period. The content of the revalidation is informed by the Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) from the previous years.

3.3 The validation and revalidation scheduled is organised by the Head of Registry and Quality team in consultation with the Quality Committee. The validation and revalidation schedule is submitted to the Quality Committee in the preceding year.

3.4 The Quality Team, Associate Provost, Director of Learning & Teaching, Director (Content) and Head of Registry work closely during all (re)validation events. The Associate Provost and Director (Content) assures the academic content of all courses proceeding to the (Re)Validation Event. The Quality team and Head of Registry ensure adherence to the procedures and adheres to the relevant external statutory bodies.

Roles of Key Participants

3.5 The Course Development Leader will lead a new course or a current course through the revalidation process in consultation with the Associate Provost. The Associate Provost will select the Course team and the Course Development Lead will lead the Course team on the intended content and delivery of the proposed course.

3.6 The Course team is responsible for designing and developing the course in its content, delivery and assessment and it completes the documentation in preparation for the (Re)Validation Event. The team consists of the following people:

    a. Course Development Leader (who may be the Director (Content));
    b. Associate Provost or their equivalent;
    c. Appointed External Panel members;
    d. Academic members of staff who will teach on the course;
    e. Other internal or external colleagues who have contributed to the development of the course.

3.7 Further members of staff and individuals may be consulted and invited to meetings, where necessary.

3.8 The Course team will conduct a series of minuted meetings in the development and these will be included in the course documentation.

4. Constitution of the (Re)Validation Panel

The (Re)Validation Panel will consist of the following individuals:
    a. Chair (independent of the course, normally a Director (Content) or Director (People));
    b. A minimum of two external panel members, who have been involved in the course development;
    c. Two internal academic panel members (not subject specialists);
    d. A student representative, not associated with the course.

4.2 A member of the Quality team will be present to provide advice on the procedures and will also

act as Secretary.

4.3   The members of the (Re)Validation Panel are approved and confirmed by the Quality team.

4.4   An observer may attend the Panel.

External Panel Members

4.5   The External Panel members are proposed by the Course team and nominations are sent to the Quality team who will select and approve the panel members.

4.6   The External Panel members will collectively have:

   a.   Experience covering the subject area(s) of the course being (Re)Validated; and
   b.   Experience of being a member of a course approval and/or review panel.

4.7   The External Panel members must not be associated with the course being (re)validated or have been associated with the course in the past.

4.8   The External Panel member nominations should be sent to the Quality team as soon as the course proposal has been approved by VCET, or its nominated body.

Student Representative on the Panel

4.9   The student representative for a (Re)Validation Panel will be selected by the Quality team from suitable nominations proposed by the Student Engagement Manager who will confirm nominations from the Student Representatives. They must be a current Regent's University London student and from the same level of study, Undergraduate or Postgraduate.

4.10 The student representative must be independent of the course being (Re)Validated and will be provided with a training session before participating on the Panel.

4.11 The student representative's remit is to consider and evaluate the course documentation on issues relating to student experience, for example such as learning resources, teaching support, assessment.

4.12 The student representative is a full member of the (Re)Validation Panel; however, the panel can proceed in the absence of the student representative.

5.   Documentation for (Re)Validation Event

5.1   The Course team prepares the course documentation for the (Re)Validation event, which includes:

   a.   The course specification, including a curriculum map, an assessment map and the module descriptors.
   b.   The module specification document
   c.   A Course Development Document, which includes a completed planning template and a summary of its development, and CVs of the academics in the Course team. For the revalidation this will also include a critical appraisal.
   d.   The University's Academic Regulations (including policies and procedures of the University).
   e.   A transitional arrangements document outlining teach-out arrangements (where there is an existing course being revalidated).

5.2   The documents include information on:

   a. Rationale and Regent's Learning Outcomes
   b. Admissions criteria as held by the Admissions Panel
   c. Course Modules, including Module Learning Outcomes
   d. Assessment
   e. Teaching and Learning
   f. Management of Course
   g. Resources
   h. Employability and Alumni
   i. Internationalism or Partnership (if Study Abroad is applicable)

5.3 Once the Course Team has signed off the documentation, in conjunction with the Associate Provost, Director of Learning & Teaching, and the Director (Content) the documentation will be sent to the Quality team and shared with the (Re)Validation Panel at least 4 weeks in advance of the event.

5.4 The Course team will be provided with an initial panel response via the Secretary from the (Re)Validation Panel prior to the event, identifying the issues to be addressed on the day.

6. (Re)Validation Event

6.1 The (Re)Validation event will examine the proposed course in detail and a learning resource audit. It will meet with various stakeholders, including the Course team, and examine the rationale and positioning of the course within the University's portfolio and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and the support and quality systems available to the course, together with details of module content, delivery and assessment.

6.2 The event will be attended by both members of the Course team and the University leadership team.

6.3 The (Re)Validation Event enables the Panel, with the attendees, to resolve any outstanding matters with regard to the rigour of the proposal and the ability of the institution to support it and deliver a good experience to students; and with the Course team to resolve any outstanding matters from course development which have not been satisfactorily addressed in the documentation submitted. These will be a meaningful dialogue on:

   a. Teaching and learning
   b. The achievement of learning outcomes
   c. Curriculum content

6.4 Following detailed examination of the course and exploration of the relevant support and quality systems, the Panel will decide to either recommend approval or rejection of the proposed course to the Quality Committee. The Panel may set conditions and/or recommendations for the course to meet.

6.5 The (Re)Validation event may be held digitally and where the scope is not extensive it may be held by correspondence.

6.6 The standard agenda for a (Re)Validation Event will be as follows:

   a. Private Panel Meeting
   b. Meeting with the University leadership team
   c. Meeting with the Course team
   d. Meeting with service delivery teams, e.g., Library, IT, Careers and Student Support & Welfare
   e. Meeting with students

f.   Private Panel Meeting

g.   Final meeting with the Course team and University leadership team

7.   Outcomes of the (Re)Validation Event

7.1 The following outcomes are available to the panel at the end of the (Re)Validation event:

a.   Full Term Approval: recommend for approval for a maximum of 5 years.

b.   Approval, with a shorter period: This may arise because the course is a new field of study, the field of study is new to the University or changes to the course are possible as a consequence of demands of a statutory or professional body.

c.   Conditions of Approval: Conditions should be used for requirements which must be fulfilled in order to ensure the course meets the University's regulations and the standards of the University's awards. Also, when changes are desirable in order to enhance the quality of the course of study, but which do not affect the threshold standard, they should be brought to the attention of the University as recommendation(s). Conditions should be precise and specify a realistic date for achievement.

d.   Recommendations: The Panel may make recommendations for the Course team/Institute to follow up and a response will be required through the Annual Monitoring Report for the course.

e.   Non-Approval: The Panel may decide to recommend to the Quality Committee that the course should not be approved if it has major reservations about the proposals. In this case, it will offer advice about the aspects of the proposals which require further considerations and, if appropriate, give guidance about the timing of a resubmission.

The final outcome of the (Re)Validation Panel is presented to the Quality Committee for final approval of the (Re)Validation panel's decision.

7.2   If a course fails to recruit students for 3 consecutive academic years after validation, then the course will be required to undergo a new validation. The course will be unable to admit any applicants until successfully revalidated.

8.   Definitive Documents

8.1   Following the approval and/or completion of conditions the Course Development Lead will provide the Quality and Registry teams with the final documentation which includes:

a.   Course Development Document;

b.   Course Specifications;

c.   Module Specifications;

d.   Transitional arrangements (if necessary).

9.   Appeals

9.1   The University will not consider appeals against panel judgements but may consider appeals about the relevant process and conduct leading to a judgement. If a deficiency in procedure or conduct is substantiated, it does not necessarily call into question the judgement, as the impact of the deficiency would have to be considered.

9.2 An appeal against a decision made by a (Re)Validation Panel should be made in writing by the Director (Content)/Course Development Lead and in agreement with the Associate Provost to the Head of Registry, detailing the basis of the appeal and supporting evidence.

9.3 The Head of Registry will present the appeal to the Quality Committee, who will make a final decision. The following decisions are available:

      a. Amend a condition set by the (Re)Validation Panel
      b. Annul the decision made by the (Re)Validation Panel and order a new (Re)Validation of the courses with a new Panel and/or replace individual Panel members
      c. Reject the appeal

The decision made by the Quality Committee will be the final stage in the appeal process and the Associate Provost will notify the Director (Content)/Course Development Leader of the outcome.

10. Modification to Courses

10.1 Changes to either a module or course is subject to an approval process before it's implemented. The purpose is to ensure that any changes will maintain and, where possible, improve the standard of education and/or student experience. The procedures for course or module changes are set out in the Course and Module Amendment, Suspension, and Closure Policy.

11. Course Suspension or Closure

11.1 We keep our academic provision under ongoing review. Where we propose suspending delivery of a course or closing a course, we follow the procedures set out in the Course and Module Amendment, Suspension, and Closure Policy.

12. Externally Validated Courses

12.1 In addition to offering its own degrees, Regent's University London offers a selection of courses validated by external accreditation agencies. For these external courses, the University operates robust systems of preliminary review for the institution or a course prior to any final accreditation or validation event. The preliminary review outcomes are reported to the external validating authority before proceeding to final accreditation or validation, whichever is applicable.

12.2 Courses which are externally validated must follow the processes laid out by the validating body.

13. Collaborative Provision

13.1 The University has a Collaborative Provision Policy which details the collaborative arrangements.

13.2 The University's regulations in conjunction with any specific course regulations must be followed for all collaborative arrangements with the possible exception of joint awards where a common set of regulations may be agreed between the two collaborative partners.

13.3 Students studying at Regent's University London are bound by the policies of the University irrespective of the type of arrangement that the University may have with another partner.

14.   Schedule A

The applicability of these Regulations under the University's Collaborative Provision arrangements is detailed below.

Where the Regent's University London Regulations apply, collaborative partners may use different terminology, e.g. 'programmes' and 'units' instead of 'courses' and 'modules'.

Domus
14.1 The Regent's University London regulations apply.

Istituto Marangoni London
14.2 The Regent's University London regulations apply.

Istituto Marangoni Paris
14.3 The Regent's University London regulations apply.

Liverpool Media Academy (LMA)
14.4 The Regent's University London regulations apply.

Macromedia
14.5 The Regent's University London regulations apply.