Chapter 3: Validation
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1. Overview

A key aspect of the College's internal quality assurance and enhancement framework is the programme and course unit approval process. The College must ensure effective processes for the design, development and validation of programmes and course units in line with its responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards. These responsibilities include ensuring ‘...that appropriate academic standards are set and maintained and the programmes offered to students make available learning opportunities which enable the intended learning outcomes to be achieved’ (Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), UK Quality Code Part B1, Programme Design, Development and Approval).

The College operates different processes and deadlines for the submission of proposals for the introduction of new programmes and for amendments to existing programmes and course units as shown below.

2. Programme Validation - New Programmes and Major Revalidations

2.1 Stage 1: Initial Screening of Proposals

The aim of this stage in the process is to ensure that all proposals approved for further development are viable and consistent with the strategic aims of the College.

New programmes or those undergoing a major revalidation may not be advertised prior to the Academic Planning Committee (APC) approving the proposal in principle, which is, approving that the programme may proceed (re-) validation. Following approval in principle the programme may be advertised ‘subject to validation’.

2.1.1 Department/Faculty level

Proposals for a new taught programme or a major restructuring of an existing programme should have been identified and agreed with the relevant Faculty Dean(s) as part of the planning cycle discussions but may also arise at other times during the academic year as opportunities are identified. In this case they should also be discussed and agreed with the relevant Faculty Dean(s). Once proposals for new programmes have been agreed in principle, departments should convene programme teams to complete the Initial Programme Proposal Form, the Draft Programme Outline Form and the Course finder entry form (UG) or Course finder entry form (PG). For major revalidations departments should fill in a Programme Revalidation Proposal Form. Members of the programme team (and representatives of any external partners) should be available to participate fully in all stages of the validation process. It would be helpful if Deans alert the relevant Assistant Registrars to any proposals at this point. If proposals for a new programme involves a collaborative arrangement with a partner external to the College the programme team should consult the Guidelines for collaborative arrangements in the first instance. Please note that for such proposals there is a more detailed Initial Programme Proposal form for collaborative partnerships, which is considered by the Collaborative Provisions Committee rather than the Academic Planning Committee in the first instance. The Draft Programme Outline Form should also be filled where relevant.

2.1.2 College Level

2.1.2.1 New programmes:

The Programme Team needs to fill in an Initial Programme Proposal Form (IPP) and pass this onto Strategic Planning and Change for marketing analysis, in consultation with other services where necessary. Once
this has been completed the Initial Programme Proposal Form and market research should be sent to the Faculty Accountant for the financial analysis (see Initial Programme Proposal Form for details of relevant contacts). They will need at least one month in which to conduct the analyses required by the Academic Planning Committee. The Programme team should also complete the Draft Programme Outline Form and the Course Finder Entry Form (UG) or (Course Finder Entry Form (PG)).

Once all the required information has been gathered, the programme team submits the Initial Programme Proposal Form with supporting documentation (market research, financial analysis, Draft Programme Outline Form and Course Finder Entry Form UG or PG) to the Academic Planning Committee and Academic Quality and Policy Office (AQPO) for initial screening in relation to the Faculty Plan (see Initial Programme Proposal Form for details of relevant contacts). Academic Planning Committee will discuss the proposal and prioritise its validation.

2.1.2.2 Major revalidations:

The Programme Team needs to fill in a Programme Revalidation Proposal Form. The proposed revalidation needs to be discussed and endorsed by the Faculty Dean before being submitted to Academic Planning Committee for consideration.

Academic Planning Committee will reach one of the following decisions on the proposal to introduce a new programme or to revalidate an existing programme, to be communicated to the programme team via the Academic Quality and Policy Office or the Faculty Dean:

- approve the proposal in principle, subject to validation; or
- reject the proposal; or
- refer the proposal back to the programme team for revision.

Proposals which are approved in principle (that is, to be taken forward for validation) will be listed ‘under development’ in appropriate College prospectuses and external directories, such as the UCAS handbook as well as in any only publicity material. Any decisions to withdraw, postpone or substantially amend the proposal after this point must be approved by the Faculty Dean in consultation with the Chair of the Academic Planning Committee.

When a proposal is approved the Head of the Academic Quality and Policy Office will inform the programme team, the Academic Quality and Policy Office team, Admissions, Strategic Planning and Change and the Communications team so that the programme can be set up for Admissions, work can start on the Course Finder entry and a KIS data set can be compiled (for UG programmes only).

If a proposal is rejected or referred back, the Faculty Dean will normally contact the Department to discuss concerns raised by the Committee.

2.2 Stage 2: Validation Planning Stage

The aims of this stage in the process are:

- To establish effective links between the programme team and relevant parts of the College administration, in order to enhance and promote the smooth running of the process;
- To provide at an early stage an appropriate level of support to the programme team by members of the Academic Quality and Policy Office team for the validation of the programme, e.g. ensuring that
programme teams are aware of relevant policies, guidelines and external reference points and the Education Development team for curriculum design, where necessary;

- To identify at an early stage issues which will need to be resolved during the development of this programme;
- To plan the validation timeline

The Faculty Assistant Registrar responsible for providing support for the validation meetings with the Programme Direction and/or programme team to discuss the validation process and any support necessary for the development of relevant paperwork, for the validation. The Assistant Registrar will also agree a tentative validation date and associated timeline for submission of paperwork for the educational appraisal, revisions and submissions to the Programme Validation Panel.

The Initial Programme Proposal Form and associated documents provided to Academic Planning Committee and any relevant feedback from this Committee are made available to staff from the Academic Quality and Policy Office team, the Educational Development team, Library Services, Information Services, Careers Services, Data Management and Student Administration. Members of staff from these teams are therefore alerted at an early stage to the validation and can raise any issues of concern at the earliest opportunity. Exceptionally they may refer issues of significant concern to Academic Planning Committee, which has authority to curtail the validation process at any stage.

2.3 Stage 3: Educational Appraisal

The aims of this and the final stage in the process are to ensure that programmes validated by the College:

- are robust, well-designed and intellectually challenging to students;
- are fully consistent with College and national guidelines, frameworks and standards;
- are delivered in ways which are of the greatest possibly educational benefits to students;
- in the case of a collaborative arrangement that the College and others involved in educational provision are fully aware of their respective responsibilities.

Guidance on curriculum development and writing course/programme documentation is available from the Educational Development team.

The programme documentation is prepared and compiled by the programme team and consists of:

- the draft handbook, including full details of the programme;
- the programme specification;
- Course Unit Proposal Forms and Course Specifications (plus any further attachments) for all new and amended courses which form part of the proposal;
- any other documents normally issued to students, if requested by the Programme Validation Panel;
- in the case of a collaborative arrangement an Operations Manual will also be required
- for programmes involving more than one department, a note from the Heads of Departments affected by the programme to confirm that they are satisfied with the arrangements.

Save for the note from the Head of Department, all documents prepared for the validation process are only those which would also be required for students (with the exception of the Operations Manual for collaborative programmes), unless the Programme Validation Panel specifically requests otherwise.
The Educational Appraisal will focus on ensuring that:

• learning, teaching and assessment methods at course level are appropriate to support and measure student’s achievement of the learning outcomes;
• appropriate marking criteria have been set;
• the learning resources demonstrate good practice and support independent study;
• appropriate quality maintenance and enhancement systems are in place at programme level;
• the programme as it is designed can be administered, through form recruitment and admission of students to assessment, graduation and the production of statutory returns.

A written record of the Educational Appraisal is given to the programme team who are normally asked (if time allows) to respond to issues raised and make relevant revisions to the paperwork prior to the submission of programme documentation to the Programme Validation Panel.

2.4 Stage 4: Programme Validation

Programme Validation Panels scrutinise programme proposals (using the programme documentation and written records of the Educational appraisal and responses from the programme team) on behalf of the Faculty Boards, but do not have delegated powers to give final approval for programmes in their own right.

Their terms of reference are:

• to consider proposals in respect of the rationale, structure, balance, level and content of programmes in consultation with programme teams and others involved in the programme validation process;
• to explore the validity of the stated aims and learning outcomes of programmes and to determine whether programmes are designed, with the resources known to be available to them, can achieve those aims and learning outcomes;
• to assess the appropriateness of the proposed teaching and assessment methods in light of the intended learning outcomes;
• to ensure that proposals accord with College policies and regulations, including those which relate to the health and safety of students;
• to ensure that proposals accord with any national or professional requirements and guidelines, such as subject benchmark statements and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/quality-code/Pages/UK-Quality-Code-Part-A.aspx)
• to make recommendations on the approval or re-consideration of proposals to the Faculty Boards;
• in the case of programmes to be delivered as part of a collaborative partnership to ensure that appropriate measures are in place for the management of such arrangements (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B10.aspx).

The membership of the Panel is determined by the Chair in reference to the following template, while aiming to achieve a balance of specialist backgrounds and of different levels of experience in the programme validation process:
The external subject specialist (or external advisor) is a full and equal member of the Panel and will be asked to advise on the currency and academic level of the programme content in relation to subject benchmark statements in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/quality-code/Pages/UK-Quality-Code-Part-A.aspx), and whether the aims and learning outcomes of the programme can be achieved.

In nominating an external subject specialist, the College will seek to ensure that they:

- are able to provide appropriate subject or industry expertise with sufficient authority to command respect in the discipline and/or profession;
- are familiar with current, national standards and procedures in Higher Education and/or professional training;
- have an impartial view and have had no involvement in the development of the proposal or other close relationship with the department.
- have prior experience in validation or review activities, where possible.

External advisers are selected by the chair of the validation or review panel, normally from a list of nominees provided by the department, although the Chair may also seek advice and nominations from other authorities, such as the HEA Subject Network or professional body, or a senior discipline specialist at another University of London college. They are advisers to the College and cannot overturn any decisions already taken in principle, but their advice would always be seriously considered.

For the validation of programmes involving a collaborated arrangement attention will also be given to the management of the education provision by the partner as detailed in the Operations Manual.

Programme documentation is circulated to members of the Panel in advance of the meeting, to encourage constructive and informed debate and to identify an agenda outlining relevant issues. Meetings normally include private discussions among Panel members, discussion between the Panel and the programme team, and feedback to the programme team. In case where the proposal consists of the re-packaging or restructuring of an existing programme, the Chair may decide that the Panel will conduct its business by correspondence.

2.4.1 Outcome and follow-up

The Programme Validation Panel will determine one of the following recommendations to the Faculty Board:

- the programme may be offered unconditionally;
- the programme may be offered, subject to specific conditions being met within 30 days (or longer, if the Chair agrees);
- the programme may not be offered, and must be referred back to the department/school.

In the case of the first two outcomes the Programme Validation Panel may also make some recommendations for consideration by the programme team.
Once the conditions have been met, the Faculty Board formally approves the validation. In some cases the Faculty Board may be asked to play a role in ensuring that all outstanding conditions are met before the proposal is formally approved.

3. Course unit and minor programme amendment validation process

Queries on the validation process and documentation required should be directed to the Faculty Assistant Registrar in the first instance. Please note that all paperwork should be sent to academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk and NOT directly to the Faculty Assistant Registrar, which will cause delays in the approval process. Requests cannot be processed without the following, which departments are asked to ensure are provided:

- The Head of Department’s signature; and
- The External Examiner’s statement where this is required (see below)

In each academic year, the first deadline for the submission of changes to course units and minor programme amendments, normally at the end of the Autumn Term, will be dedicated to ‘significant changes’. In line with Regulation 6 of the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations (2008), the College defines a significant change in the context of ‘material information’ on a programme or course unit. For examples of significant and non-significant changes, please refer to Appendix C.

3.1 Validation Process

Once they have been formally endorsed by the appropriate Departmental Board(s), all proposals are subject to approval by the Programme Amendments Panel (PAP), normally comprised of;

**Chair:** Dean and/or Associate Dean (Education) of the Faculty  
**Secretary:** Faculty Assistant Registrar

A larger Programme Amendment Panel may be convened if the Faculty Assistant Registrar considers this would enhance and/or facilitate the deliberative process, or if the department has requested a fuller discussion. Complex proposals or proposals sponsored by the Chair’s own academic department, and where the opinion of another senior Faculty officer is not available, may also be considered by a larger Programme Amendment Panel, which will include two academic staff members from the Faculty validation pool.

The Programme Amendments Panel may require conditions to be met by the member(s) of staff who submitted the proposal before the proposal is approved.

3.2 Minor Programme Amendment

A streamlined process exists for the validation of minor amendments comprising up to one quarter of an existing programme. A minor programme amendment is one which involves one or more of the following changes:

- Introduction of new mandatory course units (significant change);*  
- Withdrawal of existing mandatory course units (significant change);*  
- Title changes to mandatory course units;  
- Change in status of course units (e.g. mandatory condonable courses becoming mandatory non-condonable or vice versa) (significant change);
*Please note that applicants for 2018/19 will be informed of such changes if they are made after students have received offer letters.

The Faculty Assistant Registrar can advise on the precise requirements for individual proposals and can also advise whether the proposed changes might constitute a major revalidation of the programme. It is ultimately for the Associate Dean (Education) in consultation with the Faculty Dean and the Head of Academic Quality and Policy to decide whether or not proposals can be considered as a minor or major revalidation (see *programme validations*).

- Programme Amendment Form
- Course Unit Proposal and Specification Form
- Course Unit Withdrawal Form
- External Examiner Statement
- A revised CMA template (please refer to the [Degree Programme Library (DPL)](http://rhul.ac.uk) for the current version)

The Programme Specification will be revised in consultation with the Faculty Assistant Registrar once the minor programme amendment has been approved.

### 3.3 Introduction of New Programme Title/Award

The following paperwork is required when a department wishes to introduce a new named pathway, a year in business/industry, e.g. BSc Management with a year in business or an international year of study, e.g. BA History with an international year:

- *Programme Amendment Form*

This should be submitted to academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk and will need to be considered and approved by Academic Planning Committee. Where the name change is for a joint or combined (honours) programme, the approval of both Heads of Department is needed for the Academic Planning Committee to consider the request. The departments concerned are also strongly advised to seek advice from Strategic Planning, where appropriate, on the proposed new programme title/award.

### 3.4 Programme Title Change

The following paperwork is required:

- *Programme Amendment Form*

This should be submitted to academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk and will need to be considered and approved by the Academic Planning Committee. Where the name change is for a joint or combined (honours) programme, the approval of both Heads of Department is needed for the Academic Planning Committee to consider the request. The departments concerned are also strongly advised to seek advice from Strategic Planning, where appropriate, on the proposed programme title change.
3.5 Programme Suspension (Temporary Suspension of Recruitment)

A Programme Suspension Form should be submitted to academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk and will need to be considered and approved by the Academic Planning Committee. In the case of the withdrawal of a joint or combined (honours) programme, the approval of both Heads of Department is needed for the Academic Planning Committee APC to consider the request.

Departments wishing to temporarily suspend recruitment to a programme should read the Policy for programme closure and suspension before completing the Programme Suspension form, which is included in Appendix D.

3.6 Programme Closure

A Programme Closure Form should be submitted to academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk and will need to be considered and approved by the Academic Planning Committee. In the case of the withdrawal of a joint or combined (honours) programme, the approval of both Heads of Department is needed for the Academic Planning Committee to consider the request. For further information, please refer to Appendix D.

3.7 New Course Units and Amendments to Existing Course Units (Where Not Part of a Programme Amendment)

Where validating a new mandatory course unit, a Programme Amendment Form is required, alongside the Course Unit Proposal Form and Course Unit Specification Form. Each new course unit must be reviewed by an External Examiner prior to submission to the Academic Quality and Policy Office. Therefore, departments are asked to ensure that the documentation is accompanied by an External Examiner’s Statement. As a new mandatory course will result in a change to the programme’s CMA template, departments are also asked to submit a revised CMA template. For further information on completing the Guidance Notes - Minor Programme Amendments, New Course Units, Amendments to Existing Course Units and Course Unit Withdrawals in Appendix B.

3.8 Validation Support

3.8.1 Careers Support

Careers & Employability can provide the following to support academic departments in setting up short and long term (year in industry) placement schemes.

- Expertise in placement scheme design, drawing on graduate destination-data and student focus-groups to identify the employer and student marketing rationale.
- Design and delivery of a transparent and fair selection process, based on employer criteria.
- Chasing up warm leads to secure vacancies.
- Organisation of call centres to source new leads for vacancies.
- Delivering embedded employability education to all students expressing an interest in the placement scheme, thus increasing the overall employability of the activity.
- Advice on practicalities such as health and safety and legal requirements.
3.8.2 Year in industry - New programmes including the option of a year in industry

Where a department wishes to offer a new programme of UG or PGT study which includes a year in industry, the normal procedures for approval of new programmes apply, that is, when the Initial Programme Proposal (IPP) form is submitted to Academic Planning Committee (APC), this should include details of this UG / PGT programme with a year in industry as a separate programme needs to be set up on Banner. The year in industry option and the associated handbook will be approved as part of the validation of the programme.

3.8.3 Year in industry - Existing programme to which a year in industry is being added

Where a department wishes to add a year in industry / placement year to an existing UG or PGT programme, a Programme Amendment form must be completed for consideration by APC. As part of the validation, the department will be expected to produce a placement handbook so that the College can ensure that the necessary support is in place for the students. Normally a module will need to be set up against which the mark for the year in industry is recorded.

3.8.4 Placements at module level as (part of) a module or as part of a programme of study

There are currently two ways in which placements can be offered – see (a) and (b) below. It is proposed that a third option be added – see (c) below – to offer an easier and more streamlined process:

a) A focused placement module, e.g. PR3100 Politics in Action: The Politics and International Relations Experience Placement;
b) A placement which relates directly to a particular module;
c) A placement which does not relate to a particular module but is related to the programme of study (in terms of the subject or in terms of the development of transferable skills).

3.8.4.1 It is assumed that placements of the types referred to in (b) and (c) above take place in the summer vacation between the second and third years of study or during the third year of study but are completed together with the associated assessment, e.g. reflective blog, by the time of the June Sub-board meeting in the final year of study.

3.8.4.2 Some students may want to take up the opportunity of a placement in the summer vacation post-graduation when they are no longer registered with the College and their transcripts have been issued. In such cases the placement cannot be included on the transcript. More importantly there are issues relating to responsibility for the welfare of the students while on placement, (non-)payment for work undertaken and UKVI implications if the students are Tier 4 Visa holders.

3.8.4.3 The standard validation procedures apply for the validation of placements listed in (a) – (c) above (see Appendix A) after placement students are selected through a transparent, competitive process which is run by the department in collaboration with Careers & Employability. The HoD/Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee identifies which type of placement module it wishes to set up and completes the paperwork as listed in Appendix A. Should the department wish to set up a generic placement module for the department, this will be a one-off validation using the draft Module Proposal Form/Module Specification in Appendix B which can be adapted by departments.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Validation process</th>
<th>Paperwork required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A focused placement module, e.g. PR3100</td>
<td>• Standard validation process for the introduction of a new module. Module set up as normal on Banner.</td>
<td>• Module Unit Proposal/ Module Specification External Examiner’s statement required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A short placement which relates directly to a particular module</td>
<td>• Standard validation process for the introduction of a new module (but no EE Statement required) Set up a new version of an existing module with a P suffix, e.g. MA3000P Amendments to the Module Specification for the original module are required for at least the following sections: <em>Learning Outcomes, Summary and Summative Assessment</em>. For the Summative assessment a post-placement completion requirement must be specified (such as a 500 word blog post) and an indication given of its weighting (anything from 0 - 10%).</td>
<td>• Module Proposal Form/Module Specification No External Examiner’s statement required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A placement which does not relate to a particular module but is related to the programme of study as a whole (in terms of the subject or in terms of the development of transferable skills).</td>
<td>• Standard validation process for the introduction of a new module. Academic Quality &amp; Policy Office will set up a placement module for the final year of study for a department. Students who are on placement in the summer vacation preceding their final year of study and those on placement in the final year are put on this module.</td>
<td>• Module Proposal Form/Module Specification. • No External Examiner’s Statement Academic Quality &amp; Policy Office and Careers &amp; Employability have provided the attached template specification which departments can adapt as they see fit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Special Independent Study

This course is designed to reduce student disappointment. Sometimes very good students apply for a taught Master’s programme with the intention of pursuing a PhD on the topic of a particular existing course—that is, the course is seen as essential or specialist training for PhD research. If there are insufficient students subscribed for that course to run, there is a real danger of losing such students. This course thus may serve as an important tool of recruitment. In such cases, if both the student and instructor are in agreement, the course in question may be run as an Independent Study. This would be possible only with a pre-existing course (so the instructor is not obliged to create new material) and with no more than five students. The Independent Study course will only be offered in response to student demand; it will not be advertised in this form. The course will draw on existing materials and use the standard assessment for the full course. However, contact hours will be reduced. Note that mandatory courses cannot be offered as Independent Study courses.
Appendix B

Guidance Notes - Minor Programme Amendments, New Course Units, Amendments to Existing Course Units and Course Unit Withdrawals

The Table below sets out the various types of request, the type of change, the paperwork required and the deadline for submission. For a detailed rationale please see the text below the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of request</th>
<th>Significant/non-significant change</th>
<th>Paperwork required</th>
<th>Deadline for submission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Course Unit (mandatory)</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>• Programme Amendment Form&lt;br&gt;• Course Unit Proposal Form&lt;br&gt;• Course Specification&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement&lt;br&gt;• Revised CMA template/s for affected programmes (please speak with your Faculty Assistant Registrar)</td>
<td>End of Autumn term 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Course Unit (elective)</td>
<td>Non-significant</td>
<td>• Course Unit Proposal Form&lt;br&gt;• Course Specification&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement</td>
<td>End of Autumn term 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Unit Amendment – introduction or withdrawal of mode of assessment or field work on a mandatory course unit</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>• Course Unit Proposal Form&lt;br&gt;• Course Specification&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement&lt;br&gt;• A revised CMA template (please speak with your Faculty Assistant Registrar)</td>
<td>End of Autumn term 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Unit Amendment – other changes to summative assessment of mandatory or elective course unit</td>
<td>Non-Significant</td>
<td>• Course Unit Proposal Form&lt;br&gt;• Course Specification&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement</td>
<td>End of Spring term 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Unit Withdrawal (mandatory)</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>• Programme Amendment Form&lt;br&gt;• Course Unit Withdrawal Form&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement&lt;br&gt;Revised CMA template/s for affected programmes (please speak with your Faculty Assistant Registrar)</td>
<td>End of Autumn term 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Unit Withdrawal (elective)</td>
<td>Non-significant</td>
<td>• Course Unit Withdrawal Form</td>
<td>End of Autumn term 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course title change only</td>
<td>Non-significant</td>
<td>• Course Unit Specification so title change can be made on Banner (Please note, External)</td>
<td>End of Spring term 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of request</td>
<td>Significant/non-significant change</td>
<td>Paperwork required</td>
<td>Deadline for submission</td>
</tr>
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<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course title change with additional changes to assessment etc</td>
<td>Could be significant or non-significant depending on whether or not an assessment type is added or withdrawn</td>
<td>Examiner’s approval is not required nor is the Course Unit Proposal section of the form</td>
<td>Deadline will be dictated by the type of change made to the course content/assessment and the status of the course (mandatory/elective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses for Visiting students ('V' courses)</td>
<td>Non-significant</td>
<td>Course Specification form only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHANGES REQUIRING APPROVAL AND DEADLINES**

**Last day of the Autumn Term**

The College has identified certain changes to programmes and course units as constituting significant changes, of which applicants will need to be informed. The deadline for submission of these changes **is the last day of the Autumn Term** as indicated above so that the changes can be approved by the end of the Spring Term at the latest and applicants informed.

**Significant changes**

A significant change is defined as follows:

1. A major subject content change to a programme:
   - The introduction of a new mandatory course unit;
   - The withdrawal of a mandatory course unit;
   - Significant change to the fieldwork requirement on a mandatory course unit (e.g. removing or adding it).

2. The addition or removal of a mode of assessment not previously used, e.g. moving from exam based to coursework based or vice versa, adding in an assessment type not previously used.

**PLEASE NOTE:** if the balance of assessment changes radically across the programme, that is, changes to summative assessment across more than 25% of the programme leading to a major shift in the summative assessment (e.g., from all CW based to all exam based or vice versa) or more than 25% of the content of the programme changes, this will trigger a major revalidation. Revalidations have to be approved by the Academic Planning Committee in the first instance.
In addition the following changes also need to be submitted by the last day of the Autumn Term

- Introduction of new electives
- Withdrawal of electives
- Any programme amendments not covered by changes in 1 above

It is recognised that new members of staff appointed prior to the start of the academic year may want to validate a new elective and there may be occasions when, due to unforeseen circumstances such as staff illness, a new course unit needs to be introduced. Such requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Associate Deans (Education) of each faculty and where necessary with the approval of the Chair of the CMA Steering Group.

Last day of the Spring Term

There are a number of other changes which require approval but which can be submitted by the end of the Spring Term as applicants will not need to be informed.

- Changes to the summative assessment of mandatory or electives courses which do not involve the addition or withdrawal of an assessment type.
- Learning outcomes
- Delivery of the course (significant shift where there are implications for KIS categories, e.g. from largely lecture based over 10 weeks to block mode over a few days, from largely lecture based to seminar based)
- Course content, which leads to the learning outcomes having to be changed
- Level of the course (see below)
- Course title change where this includes any of the changes listed above

As was the case last year any requests to exceptionally amend courses following feedback from the External Examiners at examination boards will require permission from the Chair of the CMA Steering Group

Course units for Visiting Students

You will need to validate a V course (that is a course which is half the credit value of the existing course for Visiting students who are at the College for only one term and are therefore taking only half of an existing validated course OR where you need to set alternative assessment for a course which a visiting student is taking as they are attending in the Autumn term only). The deadline for requests is 31 August for Autumn Term V courses and 30 November for Spring Term V courses.

COURSE UNIT AMENDMENTS WHICH DO NOT REQUIRE APPROVAL

Changes to:

- The reading list associated with the course unit but in these cases you must ensure that the Library has received and agreed appropriate provision of any new reading lists.
- The format of the exam paper (as long as the length of the paper remains the same you do not need to put in a request for an amendment. You are, however, strongly encouraged to alert your students to any change in format of examination paper from one year to the next.)
- Departments should ensure that the course summary is written in a way that allows a certain amount of flexibility in content taught so that no amendments to this are required
- The teaching term, from spring to autumn or vice-versa.
- Course title change only (but see above as some paperwork needs to be submitted)
ACADEMIC LEVELS

In the past, undergraduate course units have been classified as Certificate, Intermediate and Honours level and postgraduate courses as Master’s level to indicate different levels of learning outcomes expected as students’ progress through their studies and at each qualification level. More recently the practice in the sector has been to number these levels to indicate the relative position of levels of achievement and/or qualifications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic level</th>
<th>Previous designation</th>
<th>New designation</th>
<th>Award (qualification descriptor)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-degree level</td>
<td>Sub-HE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG first year</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Certificate of Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG second year</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diploma of Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG final year</td>
<td>Honours</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Honours Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG and UG fourth year (MSci)</td>
<td>Masters level</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>PGCert, PGDip, Masters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further information on academic levels see the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (Qualifications Frameworks). This now forms part of the Quality Code - Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards.

Please note: Only one level may be assigned to a course unit. If you wish to teach groups of students at different levels together, e.g. Master’s students and finalists please contact the relevant Faculty Assistant Registrar for advice on what the validation implications are.

JACS CODES

These are codes assigned to courses and programmes to indicate the content of a course or programme. Decisions on which code to assign need to be made by the academic member of staff teaching the course. Multiple codes can be given. Please contact Strategic Planning and Change for advice. Subject codes are used by statutory and external bodies to aggregate and/or compare similar courses for funding, league table and survey (NSS, DLHE, etc.) purposes so it is important that the correct JACS codes are assigned to course units.

COURSE UNIT CREDIT VALUE

UG course units are either worth 15 credits (1/2 unit) or 30 credits (full unit)
PGT course units must be in multiples of 10 credits

For further information on the academic credit in Higher Education, please see the following document: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Credit-Leaflet-Nov-09.pdf

PRE-REQUISITES AND CO-REQUISITES

Pre-requisite – a course unit that must be successfully completed (passed) before another course unit may be taken
Co-requisite – a course unit that must be taken at the same time as another course unit
Banned combinations - any combinations of course units that cannot be taken on a programme of study
COURSE STATUS

Mandatory – course units which students must take at a specific stage of UG study or as part of a PGT programme. A fail in such course units may be condonable or non-condonable.

- Mandatory condonable – course units which students must take but do not have to pass to progress onto the next stage of their studies or to qualify for a specific field of study or award;
- Mandatory non-condonable – course units which students must pass, be allowed or from which they must be granted exemption in order to progress onto the next stage of their studies or to qualify for a specific field of study or award.

Optional – course units which students can choose depending on their interests. Restrictions may be placed on optional courses, e.g. there may be different baskets of options from which students may choose a set number. On combined honours programmes students may have to choose a certain number of options and pass these to qualify for a specific field of study or award.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes describe the knowledge and understanding and the skills they should have acquired on successful completion of the course unit. These should relate to the appropriate academic level as described in the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (Qualifications Frameworks), which now forms part of the Quality Code - Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

List only books and other reading list materials to be purchased by students (if applicable) and core/essential reading list items (print, electronic etc.) (6-10 titles) to be acquired by the Library.

Please do not include lengthy reading lists when you submit proposals for validation. However, please confirm on the Course Unit Proposal Form that you have shared and agreed details of core/essential reading list materials with the Library and that the Library has received full reading lists.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS AND ASSESSMENT

The Learning and Teaching Methods and Assessment sections have been revised to facilitate the collection and adaptation of Key Information Set (KIS) data. The following guidance notes provide an explanation of the various categories. If you have any questions about KIS categories, please contact Sara McDonnell in Strategic Planning and Change in the first instance. Although KIS information is only needed for UG programmes at present, there is a possibility that this will in due course be rolled out to PGT programmes as well.

KIS CATEGORIES

Teaching and Learning methods
In determining the proportion of time spent in each type of activity it is expected that institutions will use the convention that one credit point equates to 10 learning hours. Given that the time in scheduled learning and teaching activities and placements is likely to be most accurately measured, it is expected that the proportion in guided independent study will typically be derived as the number of hours remaining after taking into account hours spent in placements and scheduled learning and teaching activities. In all cases the three percentages must sum to 100. The QAA has compiled/developed an indicative list of learning and teaching methods, which is reproduced. July 2017
below. Before that, in the table is indicated how each of these methods should be categorised for the purpose of the KIS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>KIS Subcategory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminars</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorials</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project supervision</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical class and workshops</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervised time in studio / workshop</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldwork</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External visits</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-based learning</td>
<td>Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement</td>
<td>Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study abroad</td>
<td>Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided independent category</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The time spent on formative assessment should be included within the calculation of learning and teaching methods. The categories in which formative assessments are included within the learning and teaching activities will depend on their exact nature. For example, a class test may contribute to both scheduled learning and teaching activities (for the time spent taking the test) and guided independent study (for the time spent revising/preparing for the test).

*Lecture*

A presentation or talk on a particular topic.
The term ‘lecture’ covers everything from the traditional model, where a single member of the institution’s staff or an affiliate introduces ideas or delivers facts to a group of students, to approaches that might be much more interactive, involve a variety of contributors, make use of a range of media and technologies, and take place virtually as well as in person. Lectures are assumed, in general, to involve larger groups of students than do seminars and tutorials but size will vary depending upon the nature of what is being taught, the size of the overall student cohort, and practical concerns.

*Seminar*

A discussion or classroom session focusing on a particular topic or project.
Seminars are defined as sessions that provide the opportunity for students to engage in discussion of a particular topic and/or to explore it in more detail than might be covered in a lecture - the extent of interaction will depend on the delivery method. A typical model would involve a guided, tutor-led discussion in a small group. However, the term also encompasses student or peer-led classes with a staff member or affiliate present. As with lectures, use of technology means seminars may take place virtually. Seminars are assumed in general to involve smaller groups of students than lectures, but size will vary depending upon the nature of what is being taught, the size of the overall student cohort, and practical concerns.

*Tutorial*

A meeting involving one-to-one or small group supervision, feedback or detailed discussion on a particular topic or project.

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1 A lecturer, researcher, technician, member of support staff or Graduate Teaching
Tutorials may be distinguished from seminars for the stronger emphasis that they place on the role of the tutor in giving direction or feedback. Tutorials can happen virtually as well as face-to-face.

**Project supervision**

**A meeting with a supervisor to discuss a particular piece of work.**
The term 'project supervision' is used to refer to the meetings that a student or group of students would have with a supervisor, to plan, discuss, and monitor progress on a particular piece of work, such as a dissertation or extended project. Meetings can take place virtually or in person. The size of a project supervision meeting will depend upon the number of students involved in the work concerned, and the nature of that work but supervisions will frequently also take place on a one-to-one basis.

**Demonstration**

**A session involving the demonstration of a practical technique or skill.**
Examples might include the demonstration of laboratory skills, clinical skills, performance art or fieldwork techniques. Demonstrations can take place virtually or in person. The size of a demonstration is likely to depend upon the number of students involved in the work concerned, as well as the nature of that work, but could also take place on a one-to-one basis.

**Practical classes and workshops**

**A session involving the development and practical application of a particular skill or technique.**
Examples are wide ranging and could include a laboratory class, recital, artefact handling/identification, language conversation, sports match and so on. Practical classes and workshops might incorporate elements of teaching or guided learning, and they are at least likely to be supervised or observed. These sessions are more likely to take place in person but, depending on the nature of the subject, may also be conducted remotely. The size of a practical class or workshop will depend upon the nature of the activity. Workshops are likely to involve at least a small group of students but practical classes could take place on a one-to-one basis.

**Supervised time in studio/workshop**

**Time in which students work independently but under supervision, in a specialist facility such as a studio or workshop.**
Examples might include time spent in an art or design studio, or in a rehearsal space such as a workshop theatre. It could be timetabled or take place on an ad hoc basis. Peers as well as staff or affiliates may be involved. Due to the nature of the activity, it is unlikely to take place virtually. Supervised time in a studio/workshop might involve a group or individual.

**Fieldwork**

**Practical work conducted at an external site.**
Examples of fieldwork might include survey work and other forms of data collection, excavations and explorations. The work might be unsupervised or supervised, and supervision could be provided by staff or appointed representatives. Some fieldwork may be conducted virtually. Fieldwork might be conducted in groups of various sizes, or by individuals, depending on the nature of the work involved.

**External visits**

**A visit to a location outside of the usual learning spaces, to experience a particular environment, event, or exhibition relevant to the course of study.**
Examples are wide ranging and could include a visit to a business or industrial site, built environment site, museum or collection, to attendance at a performance or exhibition. These visits might be unsupervised or supervised, and supervisors could include staff or appointed representatives. Site visits may be carried out in groups of varying sizes, or by individuals, depending on the nature of the visit and the location.
**Guided independent study**

Higher education is distinguished from general and secondary education by its focus on independent learning. Scheduled learning and teaching activities typically feature alongside time in which students are expected to study independently, which may itself be 'guided'. Guided independent study might include preparation for scheduled sessions, follow-up work, wider reading or practice, completion of assessment tasks, revision, etc. The relative amounts of time that students are expected to spend engaged in scheduled activities and guided independent study varies between courses.

In all cases, students are expected to be responsible for their own learning, with appropriate support being provided by the institution. Such support can be via a variety of means, including, for example, through the provision of study skills training, feedback on assessed work, access to libraries and learning spaces, language skills training, etc. Distance learning will generally be guided independent study.

**Work-based learning**

**Structured learning that takes place in the workplace.**

The definition given below differs from that included in the QAA list. Work-based learning is a core feature of foundation degrees and may also occur in other programmes. Work-based learning is a structured academic programme, controlled by the higher or further education institution, and delivered in the workplace by academic staff of the institution, staff of the employer, or both.

Unlike work experience, which can be one element of a course such as a sandwich placement (whether for the whole or part of a year), work-based learning is at the heart of a student's learning programme and must be subject to the same level of academic supervision and rigour as any other form of assessed learning. It includes:

- the imparting of relevant knowledge and skills to students
- opportunities for students to discuss knowledge and skills with their tutors
- assessment of students' acquisition of knowledge and skills by the institution's academic staff, and perhaps jointly with an employer.

Work-based learning should be regarded as substituting for learning that under other circumstances would normally take place within the institution. The inclusion of an element of work-based learning should, therefore, not extend the normal duration of a course. Learning in the workplace or other placements that do not meet the definition of work-based learning given above should be treated as placements for the purposes of the KIS.

**Placements**

**Learning away from the institution that is neither a year abroad nor work based learning.**

The term covers any learning, other than years abroad and work-based learning that takes place through an organised work opportunity, rather than in a university or college setting, and includes managed placements. Some supervision or monitoring is likely be involved, and may be carried out either by a member of staff or a mentor within the host organisation. Due to the nature of the activity, placements are unlikely to take place virtually. Students might undertake placements individually or in groups, depending on the nature of the workplace and the learning involved. Teaching placements in medical and nursing courses should be treated as placements. Where the total number of hours on placement exceeds 10 hours per credit, the total number of hours should be capped at 10 hours per credit.

If a course requires students to undertake one of two placements the two placements should be treated as if they were a single module. It may be appropriate to adopt the same approach where other modules are offered in a way...
that means students must take one, and only one, module out of a choice of many. In these cases it will normally be appropriate to only include the most popular of these modules.

**Year abroad**

**Any study that occurs overseas.**
This should include any study that occurs overseas whether for all or part of a year. Where only part of the year is studied abroad it should be weighted accordingly in determining the learning and teaching methods for the year.

**Assessment methods**
In determining the percentage of assessment in each category only summative assessments should be included. The time spent on formative assessment should be included within the calculation of learning and teaching methods. Summative assessment is an assessment that leads to the award of credit or is required for progression even if does not ultimately affect the outcome of the award e.g. class of degree.

The QAA have compiled/developed an indicative list of assessment methods, which is reproduced below. In the table below is indicated how each of these methods should be categorised for the purpose of the KIS. Note that peer assessment is not categorised as a separate assessment method rather notional credit associated with peer assessment should be included within the assessment type that the peers are assessing. For example, if peer assessment is of a presentation then this should be treated as a practical exam as presentations are treated as practical exams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity type</th>
<th>KIS category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written exam</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written assignment, including essay</td>
<td>Coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>Coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>Coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project output (other than dissertation)</td>
<td>Coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral assessment and presentation</td>
<td>Practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical skills assessment</td>
<td>Practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set exercise</td>
<td>Varies - see notes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Written exam**

A question or set of questions relating to a particular area of study.
Written exams usually occur at the end of a period of learning and assess whether students have achieved the intended learning outcomes. They may be 'seen', where the student is aware in advance of the question(s) they are expected to answer, or 'unseen', where the questions are only revealed 'on the day'. In an 'open-book' exam, a student is allowed to use a selection of reference materials during the assessment. The questions asked as part of a written exam may be essay, short answer, problem or multiple-choice. Written exams usually (but not always) take place under timed conditions.

**Written assignment, including essay**

An exercise completed in writing.
Written exercises that typically have deadlines attached but which are not carried out under timed conditions. A well-known example is the essay, where students are required to write about a particular topic or answer a question in depth. Other examples include written briefings on particular topics.
Report
A description, summary or other account of an experience or activity.
There are many different kinds of report - often students are required to produce a report after participating in a practical activity such as fieldwork, laboratory work, work experience or placement. Reports typically have a prescribed format.

Dissertation
An extended piece of written work, often the write-up of a final-year project.
A dissertation is a substantial piece of writing deriving from research that a student has undertaken. Dissertations are the result of a student's independent work, carried out under the guidance of a supervisor. Different subject areas may follow different conventions in relation to the production of dissertations. (Note that other outputs from projects are listed separately).

Portfolio
A collection of work that relates to a given topic or theme, which has been produced over a period of time.
Typically, a portfolio contains a number of pieces of work, usually connected by a topic or theme. Students are usually required to organise the collection of examples and the portfolio often includes some reflective accounts (diaries/logs). Examples include, in education that students may collect in a portfolio essays around particular teaching methods, lesson plans, teaching materials that they have developed and a report about the teaching experience itself. For the purposes of the KIS, examples also include the creative arts portfolio which may contain a strong practical element.

Project output (other than dissertation)
Output from project work, often of a practical nature, other than a dissertation or written report.
Students are assessed on the output of a period of project work (other than in the form of a dissertation or written report). Examples are diverse and include the staging of a play or other performance, a piece of artwork, a new product or a poster.

Oral assessment and presentation
A conversation or oral presentation on a given topic, including an individual contribution to a seminar.
Examples of oral assessments and presentations might include conversations, discussions, debates, presentations and individual contributions to seminars. This category would also include the viva voce exam which is typically used by institutions in specific circumstances such as clarifying assessment decisions reached via other means.

Practical skills assessment
Assessment of a student's practical skills or competence.
Practical skills assessment focuses on whether, and/or how well, a student performs a specific practical skill or technique (or competency). Examples include clinical skills, laboratory techniques, identification of or commentary on artwork, surveying skills, language translation or listening comprehension, and so on.

Set exercises
Questions or tasks designed to assess the application of knowledge, analytical, problem-solving or evaluative skills.
Examples might include data interpretation, data analysis exercises and problem-based or problem-solving exercises. The categorisation of set exercises will depend on the nature of the exercise being set. Typically, set exercises will not be conducted under exam conditions and will therefore normally be coursework. Where the set exercise is performed under exam conditions and does not involve the use of practical skills it should be treated as a written exam. Otherwise it should be a practical exam.
Appendix C

Guide to Significant Changes

These guidance notes have been compiled to help departments understand what the College has defined as a significant change to programmes and course units and which student Recruitment and Partnerships (SR&P) will have to inform applicants about (Appendix A). The scenarios below are illustrated using an extract from a CMA template in the College's 2016 Degree programme library: https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/docs/dpl.aspx and seek to address queries departments may have (See Appendix B for a copy of the relevant extract for ease of reference). If you have queries about changes that are not covered below, please contact your Faculty Assistant Registrar in the first instance.

Section A: Assessment changes

(i) I want to change the assessment for the mandatory second year course unit Geography: Geographical Techniques I (Human) from 100% coursework to 50% coursework and 50% exam.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes, as you are adding an assessment type (exam)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by the December deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) I want to add a coursework assessment to Politics and International Relations: Introduction to Politics and reduce the coursework assessment to 20%, so that the summative assessment is now 50% exam, 20% presentation and 30% coursework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes as you are adding an assessment type (presentation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by December deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) I want to change the weighting of the assessment for the first year mandatory course Politics and International Relations: Introduction to International Relations from 50% coursework and 50% exam to 60% coursework and 40% exam.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>No, as you are not adding or withdrawing an assessment type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by the March deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(iv) I want to change the summative assessment on some of the options (electives) that are listed on the CMA template for my programme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>No as you’ve provided no information on the assessment of options on the template</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this through AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by March deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(v) We want to implement a new assessment strategy for all our undergraduate programmes, which will impact on assessment across 25% of more of the programme?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to inform AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – depending on how many course units are affected this is likely to be treated as a revalidation of the programme. Please speak with your Faculty Assistant Registrar for advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(vi) We want to implement changes to 25% or more of the content of mandatory and elective courses on the programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to inform AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – this will be treated as a revalidation of the programme. Please speak with your Faculty Assistant Registrar for advice as such a change will need to be submitted to Academic Planning Committee for approval by the relevant deadlines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section B: Introduction/ withdrawal of course units

(i) I want to do a minor programme amendment and replace the first year mandatory course Geography: Human Geography I with one called Geography in the 21st century.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes, as you are introducing a new mandatory course unit and withdrawing one. Students are expecting to study Geography: Human Geography I but will get Geography in the 21st century instead.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes (Minor programme amendment) – submit by December deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) I want to reduce the mandatory 30 credit first year course Politics and International Relations: Introduction to International Relations to 15 credits and introduce a new course called Politics and International Relations: Current issues worth 15 credits.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes as you are introducing a new mandatory course unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes (Minor programme amendment) – submit by December deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) I want to add a new option (elective) to the basket given on the CMA template for my programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>No adding an option is fine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this through AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by December deadline as this information is needed for timetabling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iv) I want to change the course content and therefore learning outcomes of these two courses. Titles will remain the same as will assessment types *Geography: Human Geography I* and *Geography: Human Geography II*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>No as you haven’t given students any information on the template about the course content of these two courses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by March deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Section C: Other Changes

(i) I want to add a fieldwork element to the mandatory course unit *Geography: Geographical Research and Field I (Human)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes as you are adding a fieldwork element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by December deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) A member of staff has left so we can’t offer one of the second year options (electives) given on the CMA template.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>No. There is a caveat to cover this. However, if you have listed 10 options and you now can’t offer 9 of them, this would be more problematic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this through AQPO?</td>
<td>You will need to withdraw the optional course assuming that it will not be delivered again as the relevant staff expertise has been lost and is unlikely to be replaced – submit by December deadline as this information is needed for Timetabling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(iii) Our programme has just gained/lost external accreditation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to inform AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – by the December deadline if possible or as soon as confirmation is received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iv) We have decided that students will need to purchase a new piece of equipment which costs £120 for their mandatory fieldwork trips.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes as its £100 or more in terms of extra costs for the programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to inform AQPO?</td>
<td>Yes – by the December deadline as a change will need to be made to all relevant CMA templates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will SR and P have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section D: Extract from the template for the BSc Geography, Politics and International Relations degree programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methods of teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course unit name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography: Human Geography I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography: Human Geography II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography: Geographical Techniques I (Human)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography: Geographical Research and Field I (Human)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics and International Relations: Introduction to Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics and International Relations: Introduction to International Relations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Policy for Programme Closure/Withdrawal and Suspension

General

1. This document outlines the College’s policy for the closure/withdrawal and the temporary suspension of recruitment to an undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme of study or a taught/professional doctoral programme. The proposed timelines for decisions to be made on closure/withdrawal and suspension align with those agreed previously for the validation of new programmes and amendments to existing programmes and course units and with key points in the recruitment and application cycle.

2. The fundamental principle which underpins this policy, particularly with respect to programme closure, is that the quality of experience of students on the programme during the withdrawal period should be assured and closely monitored and if required, that remedial action is taken by the department to mitigate any negative impact on the students’ experience.

Definitions

3. A **programme closure/withdrawal** occurs when a programme of study is permanently closed for recruitment. This includes those cases where a programme (pathway) in a particular discipline is closed and replaced with a new one/a differently named one with a revised curriculum. Where a programme (pathway) is only renamed but the curriculum remains unchanged, this will be treated as a programme title change not a programme closure/withdrawal. Normally programme closure/withdrawal will involve the immediate cessation of recruitment activity and a clear external message that the programme has been withdrawn, with a phased teaching out of the programme over a number of years to afford currently enrolled students the opportunity to complete their programme of study.

4. A **programme suspension** occurs when recruitment to a programme of study is suspended for a set period of time. However, the programme continues to be delivered to currently enrolled students until all have completed their programme of study. The programme would also need to be made available to students who returned from a period of interruption so that they can complete their programme of study.

Scope of policy

5. This policy applies to:

- Programmes validated, delivered and supported by staff of Royal Holloway and leading to an award of Royal Holloway, University of London.
- Programmes validated, delivered and supported by staff of Royal Holloway and leading to an award of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College;
- Programmes that are delivered under a collaborative provision arrangement, including but not restricted to, validated and franchised programmes and programmes taught by ‘flying’ faculty. Programme closure in this context would normally follow from a decision to terminate the collaborative provision arrangement.
Rationale for closure or suspension

6. The decision to close/withdraw a programme of study is normally made for one or more of the following reasons:

- A decline in student numbers which puts the continued financial viability of the programme at risk;
- The replacement of an existing programme (pathway) with a new one;
- A reduction in funding or (externally) funded student numbers;
- Changes in the strategic priorities of a department, faculty or the College;
- Documented concerns about the academic standards of the programme and/or the quality of the provision;
- Termination of a collaborative provision arrangement, which leads to the closure of a programme of study.

7. The decision to temporarily suspend a programme and therefore recruitment to this programme of study is normally made for one of the following reasons:

- Lack of availability of key academic staff, particularly in the case of postgraduate taught programmes or specialist pathways on such programmes;
- A decline in student numbers which puts the continued financial viability of the programme/pathway at risk.

Procedures for programme closure and suspension

8. There are normally three stages to be followed for both programme closure/withdrawal and programme suspension.

A. Stage one – departmental consultation

9. The first stage of the process to close/withdraw a programme of study involves discussion at departmental level at a meeting of the Teaching and Learning Committee and/or Department Board. Once a decision has been reached the Head of department/school should discuss the proposal with the relevant Faculty Dean/VP and obtain their support. In the case of joint or combined honours programmes or postgraduate taught programmes that are offered jointly by two or more departments, the heads of these departments/school as well as the relevant Faculty Dean(s)/VP(s) should be consulted and their support obtained.

10. Decisions to close programmes as part of a collaborative provision arrangement should also commence at departmental level. Departments may find it useful to contact the Academic Quality and Policy Office and the College Secretary’s Office to obtain (legal) advice on the implications for the contract. Support for the proposed closure needs to be obtained from the Faculty Dean(s)/VP(s). A brief report setting out the rationale for the proposed closure needs to be submitted to the Collaborative Provisions Committee where the final decision on whether to terminate the agreement or not, will be made.

11. The decision to suspend recruitment to a programme of study for one or more academic years will follow the same process of consultation at departmental level and with the relevant Faculty Dean(s)/VPs.

B. Stage two - student consultation

12. The second stage of the process for a programme closure/withdrawal involves consultation with students and key internal and external stakeholders, e.g. Student Recruitment and Partnerships, Strategic Planning and Change and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

13. The head(s) of department/school or designated nominee, e.g. Programme Director, should arrange to meet with students currently enrolled on the programme(s) and discuss the implications of the proposed closure with them. More specifically the department(s) concerned need to inform students of the proposed plans to teach out the programme, options for completing the programme, the possibility of transferring to other programmes of
study, possibilities of completing an exit award, etc. Additionally the way in which the standards and quality of the learning experience will be maintained for students during this period needs to be discussed. Appropriate representatives from the Students’ Union should also be invited to attend such meetings.

14. Departments should keep a record of the discussion at the meeting.

15. For **suspension** of recruitment to a programme departments will only need to consult with students if there is an impact on part-time students or previously interrupted students who wish to return to study during the period when the programme will not be offered. This consultation may need to take place by email rather than face-to-face.

16. If there are no currently enrolled students on a programme or pathway and/or no applicants, departments can skip this second stage.

C. **Stage three - Academic Planning Committee Approval**

17. For a **programme closure/ withdrawal** the department(s) need approval from Academic Planning Committee. In order for this to happen department(s) are required to submit the following to the Academic Quality and Policy Office:

   - a completed Programme closure/withdrawal form;
   - A document detailing:
     - Arrangements and options for students, including those currently enrolled on the programme, those with deferred entry, those who have currently interrupted their studies, part-time students, direct entry to complete their programme of study or leave with an interim (exit) award;
     - Arrangements to ensure the quality of the student learning experience during this period, e.g. will there be a reduction in the number of option course available to students?, will the department be able to offer all mandatory course units?;
     - Impact on any collaborative provision arrangements, e.g. articulation agreements, dual awards;
     - Implications on staffing resources in the department(s) concerned;
     - Implications for other schools/departments;
     - Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies that would need to be informed of the closure;
     - External Examiner arrangements, e.g. would contracts have to be terminated or extended beyond the four year period?;
     - Where a programme/ programme pathway has not recruited for several years and where there are no currently enrolled students or students intending to return from interruption, only a Programme closure/withdrawal form is required.
   - Record of the meeting held with students including the actions to be taken by the department to mitigate concerns raised by the students.

18. For a programme **suspension** the department(s) will need to submit a completed Programme Suspension form to the Academic Quality and Policy Office, who will submit this to the Academic Planning Committee for note and to other stakeholders as relevant.

Communication of decision to suspend or close/withdraw a programme

19. Following approval by the Academic Planning Committee, the Academic Quality and Policy Office will inform the following professional services in the College:

   - Student Recruitment and Partnerships
   - Head of Student Administration
• Head of Student Fees
• Head of Marketing Communications
• Head of the partner institution in the case of collaborative provisions arrangements
• The relevant PSRB (where relevant)
• Director of Careers and Employability
• Head of Support and Advisory Services

**Deadlines**

Decisions on programme closures and suspensions should ideally be made prior to the start of the recruitment cycle. For undergraduate programmes this is by 15 January each year in time for the Undergraduate Prospectus to go to print, 18 months prior to enrolment. For PGT programmes this is by June each year, 15 months prior to enrolment. However, if this proves to be impossible, the latest date by which decisions on closures and suspensions can be made is by the start of the contractual/offer making stage which starts on 1 October each year, one year in advance of enrolment. Only in exceptional cases will Academic Planning Committee approve the closure or suspension of a programme of study at a date later than that set out above and then normally no later than 20 March prior to the start of the academic year. This date would permit undergraduate students the opportunity to amend their final choices and would allow postgraduate students sufficient time to explore alternative study opportunities at the College or at other institutions.

**UCAS**

20. Student Recruitment and Partnerships will be responsible for ensuring that UCAS Course Collect is updated to reflect the decision to suspend or withdraw programme(s). They will also ensure that, if required, relevant communications are sent to applicants informing them of this change.

**Course Finder**

21. The Communications team will ensure that the relevant Course Finder entries are amended or deleted as appropriate and will also ensure that where possible the suspension/closure is communicated as appropriate in relevant College literature and owned media.