Academic Quality and Policy Manual

Chapter 3: Validation

Contents
1. Overview ........................................................................................................................................4
   Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance .................................................................4
2. Course Validation - New Courses and Major Revalidations .......................................................5
3.1 Validation Process ................................................. 10

3.2 Minor Course Amendment ....................................... 11

3.3 Introduction of New Course Award .......................... 11
  3.3.1 Year in industry - New courses including the option of a year in industry ........................................ 12
  3.3.2 Year in industry - Existing course to which a year in industry is being added ........................................ 12
  3.3.3 Year in Industry/Year in Business/Placement Handbooks .......................................................... 12
  3.3.4 Careers Support .................................................. 12
  3.3.5 Departmental Webpages and Moodle ........................ 13

3.4 Placements at module level as (part of) a module or as part of a course of study ..................................... 13

3.5 Course Title Change ............................................... 13

3.6 Course Suspension (Temporary Suspension of Recruitment) ......................................................... 14

3.7 Course Closure .................................................. 14

3.8 New Modules and Amendments to Existing Modules .............................................................. 15

3.9 Modules for Visiting Students ................................... 15

Appendix A - Placement Guidance .................................. 17
  Year in Industry/Year in Business/Placement Handbook Suggested Table of Contents .................................... 17

Appendix B Guidance Notes - Minor Course Amendments, New Modules, Amendments to Existing Modules and Module Withdrawals .......................................................... 20

CHANGES REQUIRING APPROVAL AND DEADLINES ................................................................. 21

Significant changes ........................................................ 22

Non-Significant changes .................................................. 22

Module Amendments Which Do Not Require Approval .......................................................... 23

ACADEMIC LEVELS .................................................. 23

HECOS CODES .................................................................. 24

MODULE INFORMATION .............................................. 24

Credit Value ................................................................. 24

Pre-Requisites and Co-Requisites ...................................... 24

Module Status ............................................................... 24

LEARNING OUTCOMES .................................................. 25
1. Overview

A key aspect of the University’s internal quality assurance and enhancement framework is the course and module approval process. The University must ensure effective processes for the design, development and validation of courses and modules in line with its responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards as set out in the Expectations for Standards within the Quality Assurance (QAA) UK Quality Code.

These responsibilities include meeting the Expectations for Quality by ensuring that ‘Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student’s achievement to be reliably assessed’... (Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), UK Quality Code Course Design and Development Theme).

Failure to meet these standards will put the University’s registration with the Office for Students (OfS) at risk, and could result in a fine or deregistration, which would mean the University is unable to operate.

The University operates different processes for the submission of proposals for the introduction of new courses and for amendments to existing courses and modules as shown below. Each School will set an internal deadline for the submission of this paperwork to ensure that it is approved by the School Education Committee prior to being sent to the Academic Quality and Policy Office (AQPO) by the deadline date as advertised at the beginning of each academic year.

**Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance**

In March 2015, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) provided guidance to Higher Education institutions offering undergraduate courses about their obligations to students in terms of consumer protection law.

In order to comply with the law we must:

- Provide prospective students with clear and accurate information before they make a decision about what and where to study so that they can make an informed decision (known as ‘material’ information);
- Ensure our terms and conditions are fair, so, for example, we cannot make surprising changes to course content, or costs without informing students;
- Ensure that our complaints handling processes are transparent, easily accessible, clear and fair.

**Royal Holloway’s approach**

Since 2015, we have adopted a reasoned approach to meeting our obligations. Its key principles are: a commitment to providing prospective students with the information they need, ensuring that information is accurate, and that it is provided to them at the right times.

Factors such as the legitimate need to innovate within our academic courses, and the need to remain competitive in our external presentation, have been carefully considered and balanced against the risk to reputation and recruitment of not meeting our obligations. To achieve this balance, a timeline for academic planning and approval that aligns with the undergraduate recruitment cycle has been agreed to help us achieve our aims as effectively as possible.

Although postgraduate taught courses are not formally covered by the CMA’s guidelines, it has been agreed that Royal Holloway will employ the same principles in order to provide a good experience for prospective and current students.
Responsibility for ensuring that we follow the CMA’s guidance so that we are compliant with UK consumer protection law is shared between academic and professional services to ensure that our institutional obligations are met. Further guidance on CMA can be found [here](#).

2. Course Validation - New Courses 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 Schools and University.

Note:

- **New courses** may not be advertised prior to the Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) approving the proposal in principle, which is, approving that the course may proceed to validation.
- Courses undergoing **major revalidation** may not be advertised prior to the School Education Committee approving the proposal, which is, approving that the course may proceed to revalidation.
- Following approval in principle the course may be advertised ‘under development’.

### 2.1.1 New courses

Proposals for a new taught course should have been identified and agreed with the relevant Executive Dean of School as part of the planning cycle discussions but may also arise at other times during the academic year as opportunities are identified.

- For proposals for new courses outside of the planning cycle an informal proposal should be discussed and agreed by the School Board/Exec.

- Once proposals for new courses have been agreed in principle by the School Board/Exec, the Course Team should complete:
  - Expression of Interest Form
  - Obtain the relevant market research from Strategic Planning and Change and submit this back to the School Board/Exec for more detailed consideration.

- Once approved by the School Board/Exec the Course Team should complete:
  - New Course Proposal Form (NCP)
    - As part of the New Course Proposal Form, Schools should confirm that the proposal will be delivered within the School's budget. It is assumed that the School Executive will have held discussions with the School's financial accountant to identify costs and contribution of this new initiative and to ensure that it can be delivered in budget. The same applies where the new course is to be delivered by departments across two or more Schools.
    - Draft Course Outline Form and
    - Course finder entry form (UG) or Course finder entry form (PG)
  - and submit these documents, with market research, financial analysis to the Curriculum Development Committee

- If proposals for a new course involves a collaborative arrangement with a partner external to the University the Course Team should consult Chapter 7 Academic Partnership Framework of the Academic and Policy Manual in the first instance, and complete:
• New Course Proposal Form Collaborative Partnerships ready for submission to Partnerships Committee.

- The Secretary to the School Board/Exec should alert the relevant Senior Academic Quality Manager to any proposals at this point.

- Once approved in principle by CDC, the Course Team should complete a detailed proposal together with any supporting documentation in order for the Senior Academic Quality Manager to proceed with the validation process. This should include the Curriculum Audit Tool found here.

- Members of the Course Team (and representatives of any external partners) should be available to participate fully in all stages of the validation process.

2.1.2 Revalidations

University will be moving to a 5/6 yearly revalidation cycle. **Note: a revalidation is where more than 25% of the course structure is changing.** In circumstances where a course needs to be revalidated outside of this timescale the Course Team should complete:

- Course Revalidation Proposal Form
- obtain the relevant market research from Strategic Planning and Change and submit this to the School Education Committee for consideration.

The School Education Committee will:

- approve the proposal in principle, subject to revalidation; or
- reject the proposal; or
- refer the proposal back to the Course Team for revision.

- Once approved in principle by the School Education Committee, the Course Team should complete a detailed proposal together with any supporting documentation in order for the Senior Academic Quality Manager to proceed with the revalidation process. This should include the Curriculum Audit Tool found here. Curriculum development resources can also be found via the same web page.

- Proposals which are approved in principle (that is, to be taken forward for revalidation) will be listed 'under development' in appropriate University prospectuses, web pages and external directories, such as UCAS and any publicity material. Any decisions to withdraw, postpone or substantially amend the proposal after this point must be approved by the School Education Committee.

- Once a proposal has been approved in principle the Academic Quality and Policy Office will inform various stakeholders including, Marketing and Communications (which includes Admissions so that the course can be set up for recruitment), Strategic Planning and Change, and the Digital Team so that work can start on the Course Finder entry.

2.2 Stage 2: Validation Planning Stage

The aims of this stage in the process are:

- To establish effective links between the Course Team and relevant parts of the University 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 course team by members of the Academic Quality and Policy Office team for the (re)validation of the course, e.g. ensuring that course 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 course;

• To plan the (re)validation timeline

The Senior Academic Quality Manager responsible for providing support for the (re)validation meetings with the Course Director and/or Course Team will discuss the (re)validation process and any support necessary for the development of relevant paperwork, for the (re)validation. The Senior Academic Quality Manager will also agree a tentative (re)validation date and associated timeline for submission of paperwork for the educational appraisal, revisions and submissions to the Course Validation Panel.

The New Course Proposal Form and associated documents provided to the Curriculum Development 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, IT Services, Careers, Strategic Planning and Change and Student Administration. Members of staff from these teams are therefore alerted at an early stage to the (re)validation and can raise any issues of concern at the earliest opportunity. Exceptionally they may refer issues of significant concern to Curriculum Development Committee, which has authority to curtail the (re)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 courses validated by the University:

• are robust, well-designed and intellectually challenging to students;
• are fully consistent with University 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 University and others involved in educational provision are fully aware of their respective responsibilities.

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

The course documentation is prepared and compiled by the Course Team and consists of:

• draft handbook, including full details of the course;
• course specification;
• Module Proposal Forms and Module Specifications (plus any further attachments) for all new and amended modules which form part of the proposal;
• Curriculum Audit Tool
• Assessment Mapping Tool
• any other documents normally issued to students, if requested by the Course Validation Panel;
• in the case of a collaborative arrangement an Operations Manual will also be required
• for courses involving more than one department, a note from the Heads of Departments affected by the course to confirm that they are satisfied with the arrangements.
Curriculum development resources can be accessed from the AQPO validation page.

Save for the note from the Head of Department, all documents prepared for the (re)validation process are only those which would also be required for students (with the exception of the Curriculum Audit Tool, Assessment Mapping Tool and Operations Manual for collaborative courses), unless the Course Validation Panel specifically requests otherwise.

The Educational Appraisal will focus on ensuring that:

- learning, teaching and assessment methods at module 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 course level;
- the course as it is designed can be administered, from 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 Course 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 course documentation to the Course Validation Panel.

2.4 Stage 4: Course Validation

Course Validation Panels scrutinise course proposals (using the course documentation and written records of the Educational Appraisal and responses from the Course Team) on behalf of the School Education Committee, but do not have delegated powers to give final approval for courses in their own right.

Their terms of reference are:

- to consider proposals in respect of the rationale, structure, balance, level and content of courses in consultation with course teams and others involved in the course validation process;
- to explore the validity of the stated aims and learning outcomes of courses and to determine whether courses are designed, with the resources known to be available to them, to 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 University 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 UK Quality Code for Higher Education https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code to make recommendations on the approval or re-consideration of proposals to the School Education Committees;
- in the case of courses to be delivered as part of a collaborative partnership to ensure that appropriate measures are in place for the management of such arrangements
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 course validation process:

**Chair:** Chair/Deputy Chair of School Education Committee usually from the School leading the proposal

**Members:** usually two academic staff from the School, or one from another School depending on area of expertise needed; one or more external subject specialists, one student representative

**Secretary:** Senior Academic Quality Manager

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 course content in relation to subject benchmark statements in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, and whether the aims and learning outcomes of the course can be achieved.

In nominating an external subject specialist, the University 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 University and cannot overturn any decisions already taken in principle, but their advice would always be seriously considered.

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

Course 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 Course Team, and feedback to the Course Team. In cases where the proposal consists of the creation of a new course from existing modules, the Chair may decide that the Panel will conduct its business by correspondence.

### 2.5 Outcome and follow-up

The Course Validation Panel will determine one of the following recommendations to the School Education Committee:
• the course may be offered unconditionally;
• the course may be offered, subject to specific conditions being met within 30 days (or longer, if the Chair agrees);
• the course may not be offered, and must be referred back to the department/school.

In the case of the first two outcomes the Course Validation Panel may also make some recommendations for consideration by the Course Team. A written Validation Report will be provided which sets out any the determination of the Course Validation Panel together with any conditions or recommendations.

Once the conditions have been met, the School Education Committee formally approves the validation. In some cases, the School Education Committee may be asked to play a role in ensuring that all outstanding conditions are met before the proposal is formally approved.

3. Module and Minor Course Amendment Validation Process

Queries on the validation process and documentation required should be directed to the Student Programme Administration Manager in the first instance. Advice can also be sought from the Senior Academic Quality Manager. Please note that all paperwork should be sent to the Secretary of the School Education Committee and NOT directly to the Senior Academic Quality Manager, which will cause delays in the approval process. School Education Committees will not consider requests 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 deadline for the submission of changes to modules and minor course amendments, will be set internally by the School. The School Education Committee must ensure that all approved requests are passed to the Academic Quality and Policy Office by the deadline date as advertised at the beginning of each academic year. This includes ‘significant changes’. In line with Regulation 6 of the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations (2008), the University defines a significant change in the context of ‘material information’ on a course or module. 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 relevant Department, all proposals are subject to approval by the Chair of the School Education Committee with the support of the Senior Academic Quality Manager. The Chair may nominate a sub-committee specifically to deal with validation matters, and in this regards the sub-committee will report back approvals to the next meeting of the School Education Committee.

Proposals sponsored by the Chair’s own academic department will be subject to approval by the Deputy Chair of the School Education Committee.

The School Education Committee may require conditions to be met by the member(s) of staff who submitted the proposal before the proposal is approved.
3.2 Minor Course Amendment

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

- Introduction of new mandatory modules (significant change); *
- Withdrawal of existing mandatory modules (significant change); *
- Title changes to mandatory modules; *
- Change in status of modules (e.g. mandatory condonable modules becoming mandatory non-condonable or vice versa) (significant change); *
- Change to the fieldwork requirement on a mandatory module (e.g. removing it or adding it) (significant change); *
- Changes to the assessment of a mandatory module e.g. adding or removal of a mode of assessment (e.g. moving from exam based to coursework based) (significant change); *
- Change to a course title (significant change); *
- Change in accreditation status of a course (significant change); *
- Changes to location of delivery (e.g. Egham or Central London) (significant change); *
- Changes to mode of delivery (e.g. block mode, only evening, weekend) (significant change); *
- Changes to the extra costs associated with the course (e.g. adding £100 where none have been specified, or adding items which total £100 or more to existing costs stated) (significant change); *

*Please note that applicants for forthcoming academic years will be informed of such changes if they are made after students have received offer letters (UG recruitment cycle starts in September/October each year, so for example, the recruitment cycle for 2024 starts in September 2023).

The Senior Academic Quality Manager can advise on the precise requirements for individual proposals and can also advise whether the proposed changes might constitute a major revalidation of the course. It is ultimately for the Chair of the School Education Committee, the Senior Academic Quality Manager and the Head of Academic Quality and Policy to decide whether or not proposals can be considered as a minor or major revalidation.

The Course Team, depending on the nature of the proposal, will need to provide:

- Course Amendment Form
- Module Proposal and Specification Form (for any new modules)
- Module Amendment Form together with a tracked changes Module specification form (for any changes to existing modules)
- Module Withdrawal Form (for any modules being withdrawn)
- External Examiner Statement
- A tracked changes Course Specification

3.3 Introduction of New Course Award

A department may wish 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 to an existing course, or may wish to propose a new course with a year in business/industry.
Where the proposal is for a joint or combined (honours) course, the approval of both Heads of Department is needed for the proposal to be considered.

3.3.1  **Year in industry - New courses including the option of a year in industry**

Where a department wishes to offer a new course of UG or PGT study which includes a year in industry, the normal procedures for approval of new courses apply (see 2.1.1 above), that is, when the New Course Proposal Form is submitted to the School Education Committee, this should include details of this UG / PGT course with a year in industry as a separate course, as this course needs to be set up separately on Banner. The year in industry option and the associated handbook will be approved as part of the validation of the course. Notification should also be sent to the Academic Quality and Policy Office academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk who will give advance notice of the proposal to key stakeholders.

3.3.2  **Year in industry - Existing course 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 course, a Course Amendment Form must be completed for consideration by the School Education Committee (see 2.1.2 above). As part of the validation, the department will be expected to produce a placement handbook so that the University 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. Notification should also be sent to the Academic Quality and Policy Office academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk who will give advance notice of the proposal to key stakeholders.

3.3.3  **Year in Industry/ Year in Business/Placement Handbooks**

As part of the validation process the department must provide a handbook. This handbook should provide students with information upon preparing for and undertaking a year in industry/ a year in business or a placement (as appropriate). The handbook should also clearly set out the department’s expectations of students on a year in industry/ a year in business or a placement (as appropriate). See Appendix A for an example of the subject matter that may be appropriate for inclusion in the departmental handbook. Departments may wish to provide handbook information to students in two stages. The first part of the handbook to cover how to identify, find and secure a suitable year in industry/ year in business / placement (as appropriate). The second part of the handbook may wish to focus on information that will be important to students once they have secured a suitable year in industry/ year in business / placement (as appropriate).

3.3.4  **Careers Support**

Careers 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.

3.3.5 Departmental Webpages and Moodle

The department should consider how best to provide information to students on a year in industry/a year in business or a placement (as appropriate) through the departmental webpages. Departments may also wish to use Moodle as a means of providing information to students.

3.4 Placements at module level as (part of) a module or as part of a course of study

a) There are three ways in which placements can be offered: 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 course of study (in terms of the subject or in terms of the development of transferable skills).

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 Department Assessment Board meeting (in the case of UG) in the final year of study.

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 University 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 on a Student Visa Route.

The standard validation procedures apply for the validation of placements listed in (a) – (c) above (see Appendix A). Placement students are selected through a transparent, competitive process which is run by the department in collaboration with Careers. The HoD/Department UG/PGT Education Lead identifies which type of placement module they wish to set up and complete 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.

3.5 Course Title Change

The departments concerned are strongly advised to seek advice from Strategic Planning, where appropriate, on the proposed course title change.

For a Course Title change the following paperwork is required:
• Course Amendment Form
• Evidence of market research for planned new title

This should be submitted to the Secretary of the School Education Committee. Notification should also be sent to the Academic Quality and Policy Office academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk who will give advance notice of the proposal to key stakeholders. Where the name change is for a joint or combined (honours) course, the approval of both Heads of Department is needed for the School Education Committee to consider the request.

3.6 Course Suspension (Temporary Suspension of Recruitment)

Departments wishing to temporarily suspend recruitment to a course should read the Policy for Course Closure and Suspension before completing the Course Suspension Form.

A Course Suspension Form should be submitted to the Secretary of the School Education Committee. Notification should also be sent to the Academic Quality and Policy Office academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk who will give advance warning of the suspension to key stakeholders. In the case of the suspension of a joint or combined (honours) course, the approval of both Heads of Department is needed for the School Education Committee to consider the request.

Where students may be affected by the suspension of the course, the Department must take steps to consult/inform those affected which may include part-time students, deferred entry students, repeat students and interrupted students. Evidence of this consultation must be provided with the Suspension Form in order for the School Education Committee to consider the request.

Once the suspension has been approved in principle, the Secretary to the School Education Committee will inform the Academic Quality and Policy Office who will submit the paperwork to CDC for formal approval. Once formal approval has been confirmed AQPO will advise stakeholders as necessary.

Note: a course will remain suspended until such time that the Department notifies the Academic Quality and Policy Office that the course can be reinstated for recruitment.

3.7 Course Closure

Departments wishing to permanently close (withdraw) a course should read the Policy for Course Closure and Suspension before completing the Course Closure Form.

A Course Closure Form should be submitted to the Secretary of the School Education Committee. Notification should also be sent to the Academic Quality and Policy Office academic-quality-and-policy@rhul.ac.uk who will give advance warning of the closure to key stakeholders. In the case of the closure of a joint or combined (honours) course, the approval of both Heads of Department is needed for the School Education Committee to consider the request.

Where students may be affected by the closure of the course, the Department must take steps to consult/inform those affected which may include part-time students, deferred entry students, repeat students and interrupted students. Evidence of this consultation must be provided with the Course Closure Form in order for the School Education Committee to consider the request.
Once the closure has been approved in principle, the Secretary to the School Education Committee will inform the Academic Quality and Policy Office who will submit the paperwork to CDC for formal approval. Once formal approval has been confirmed AQPO will advise stakeholders as necessary.

3.8 New Modules and Amendments to Existing Modules

Each new module must be reviewed by an External Examiner prior to the paperwork being submitted to the Secretary of the School Education Committee.

Where validating a **new mandatory module** the following paperwork is required:
- a *Course Amendment Form*
- *Module Proposal and Module Specification Form.*
- *External Examiner’s Statement*
- *Tracked changes Course Specification* (latest version can be obtained from your Senior Academic Quality Manager)

Where validating an **amendment to an existing mandatory module** the following paperwork is required:
- *Module Amendment Form*
- *Tracked changes Module Specification Form* (to show changes required to existing module)
- *External Examiner’s Statement*
- *Tracked changes Course Specification* (latest version can be obtained from your Senior Academic Quality Manager)

Where validating a **new optional module** the following paperwork is required:
- *Module Proposal and Module Specification Form.*
- *External Examiner’s Statement*

Where validating an **amendment to an existing optional module** the following paperwork is required:
- *Module Amendment Form*
- *Tracked changes Module Specification Form* (to show changes required to existing module)
- *External Examiner’s Statement*

For further information see the *Guidance Notes - Minor Course Amendments, New Modules, Amendments to Existing Modules and Module Withdrawals* in Appendix B.

3.9 Modules for Visiting Students

You will need to validate a V module (that is a module specifically for visiting students), which is usually either:
- half the credit value of the existing module where Visiting students are at the University for only one term and are therefore taking only half of an existing validated module which runs over two terms OR
- where you need to set alternative assessment for a module which a visiting student is taking as they are attending in the Autumn term only and consequently will not be here for the final assessment.
The deadline for requests is 31 August for Autumn Term V modules and 30 November for Spring Term V modules. For further guidance on the assessment of visiting students, see Section 5.4 of Chapter 7 of the Quality Manual.
## Appendix A - Placement Guidance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Validation process</th>
<th>Paperwork required</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| A focused placement module, e.g. PR3100 | • Standard validation process for the introduction of a new module.  
• Module set up as normal on Banner. | • Module Proposal/ Module Specification Form  
• External Examiner’s statement |
| A short placement which relates directly to a particular module | • 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 | • Module Proposal Form/ Module Specification Form  
• No External Examiner’s statement required |
| A placement which does not relate to a particular module but is related to the course of study as a whole (in terms of the subject or in terms of the development of transferable skills). | • Standard validation process for the introduction of a new module.  
• Academic Quality & 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 course.  
• Amendments to the Module Specification for the original module are required for at least the following sections: Learning Outcomes, Summary and Summative Assessment.  
• 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%). | • Module Proposal Form/Module Specification Form.  
• No External Examiner’s Statement  
• Academic Quality & Policy Office and Careers have provided a template specification which departments can adapt as they see fit. |

### Year in Industry/ Year in Business/ Placement Handbook Suggested Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part 1- Headings</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>List aims and learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Aims and Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>Consider including case studies from students who have successfully completed a YII/YIB/Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Benefits to be gained from YII/YIB/Placement</td>
<td>List any requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4. Any eligibility requirements | Any progression requirements  
Degree title |
| 5. How YII/YIB/Placement works with the rest of the degree course | Placement lists  
Social Media sites |
<p>| 6. Identifying and finding suitable opportunities | List requirements |
| 7. What constitutes a suitable YII/YIB/Placement | online applications |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Self-Sourcing</th>
<th>Approval process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10. Overseas placements | Working conditions  
Costs  
Visas  
Agencies  
Safety abroad  
Useful websites to use |
| 11. International students | Visa matters |
| 12. Advice for students with a disability or medical condition | Contact details of Support and Advisory Services  
Contact details of careers advisor |
| 13. What you must consider in your first and second years at Royal Holloway | CV  
Referees  
Building up experience  
Developing relevant skills  
Attending careers events  
Gaining holiday work experience  
Careers appointments |
| 14. Support available within the University | Careers service  
Departmental Placement Officer (if appropriate)  
Academic Director |
| 15. Application process | Timescale  
Deadlines for applications |
| 16. Fees | Details of how fees are calculated |
| 17. Complaints procedure | University Complaints Policy and Procedures |
| 18. Useful contacts | Useful University and external agencies contact details |

**Part 2 Headings**

1. Introduction

2. Preparation before going on YII/YIB/Placement  
   - Enrolment  
   - Finance  
   - Fees  
   - Student Loans  
   - Tax and National Insurance  
   - Council Tax Exemption/letter of exemption

3. International students  
   - Visa checks  
   - National Insurance number

4. Overseas placements  
   - Important document checks  
   - Safety abroad  
   - Suitable accommodation  
   - Mobile phone and roaming charges
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Rights and Responsibilities on YII/YIB/Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What is expected of the employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What is expected of the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Health and safety</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Working hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Insurance</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Workplace equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Details of how the YII/YIB/Placement will be assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Deadlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Support available within the University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Call back afternoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Visits</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Financial Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>What to do if issues arise whilst on YII/YIB/Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Troubleshooting suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who to contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>What to do if YII/YIB/Placement breaks down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Academic implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Visa implications</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>After the YII/YIB/Placement ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Returning to Royal Holloway</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Updating CV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Complaints procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• University Complaints Policy and Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Useful contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Useful University and external agencies contact details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Glossary of terms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix B  Guidance Notes - Minor Course Amendments, New Modules, Amendments to Existing Modules and Module 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 Module (mandatory)</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>• Course Amendment Form&lt;br&gt;• Module Proposal/Specification Form&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement&lt;br&gt;• Revised Course Specification for affected courses (please obtain from your Senior Academic Quality Manager)</td>
<td>Internal deadline set by each School Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Module (elective)</td>
<td>Non-significant</td>
<td>• Module Proposal/Specification Form&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement</td>
<td>Internal deadline set by each School Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module Amendment (mandatory) – introduction or withdrawal of mode of assessment or field work</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>• Module Amendment Form&lt;br&gt;• Tracked Changes Module Specification&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement&lt;br&gt;• Revised Course Specification for affected courses (please obtain from your Senior Academic Quality Manager)</td>
<td>Internal deadline set by each School Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module Amendment (mandatory/elective) – other changes to summative assessment</td>
<td>Non-Significant</td>
<td>• Module Amendment Form&lt;br&gt;• Tracked Changes Module Specification&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement&lt;br&gt;• Revised Course Specification for affected courses (please obtain from your Senior Academic Quality Manager) where necessary</td>
<td>Internal deadline set by each School Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module Withdrawal (mandatory)</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>• Course Amendment Form&lt;br&gt;• Module Withdrawal Form&lt;br&gt;• External Examiner’s statement&lt;br&gt;• Revised Course Specification for affected courses (please obtain from your Senior Academic Quality Manager)</td>
<td>Internal deadline set by each School Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of request</td>
<td>Significant/non-significant change</td>
<td>Paperwork required</td>
<td>Deadline for submission</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module Withdrawal (elective)</td>
<td>Non-significant</td>
<td>•  <em>Module Withdrawal Form</em></td>
<td>Internal deadline set by each School Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module title change <strong>only</strong> (elective)</td>
<td>Non-significant</td>
<td>•  <em>Module Amendment form</em> &lt;br&gt;• Tracked changes <em>Module Specification</em> so title change can be made on Banner (Please note, External Examiner’s approval is not required)</td>
<td>Internal deadline set by each School Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module title change <strong>only</strong> (mandatory)</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>•  <em>Module Amendment form</em> &lt;br&gt;• Tracked changes <em>Module Specification</em> so title change can be made on Banner (Please note, External Examiner’s approval is not required)</td>
<td>Internal deadline set by each School Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 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>•  <em>Module Amendment Form</em> &lt;br&gt;• Tracked Changes <em>Module Specification</em> &lt;br&gt;• Revised <em>Course Specification</em> for affected courses (please obtain from your Senior Academic Quality Manager) where necessary &lt;br&gt;• <em>External Examiner's statement</em></td>
<td>Internal deadline set by each School Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modules for Visiting students ('V' courses)</td>
<td>Non-significant</td>
<td>•  <em>Module Specification</em> part of form only &lt;br&gt;• See Chapter 7 of the Quality Manual, paragraph 5.4 for further guidance</td>
<td>31 August for Autumn Term V modules and 30 November for Spring Term V modules</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHANGES REQUIRING APPROVAL AND DEADLINES**

The deadline for submission of all changes will be set by each School Education Committee so that these can be approved and sent to the Academic Quality and Policy Office by the deadline date as advertised at the beginning of each academic year. This will enable AQPO to work with Marketing and Communications to ensure that applicants are informed as necessary.
**Significant changes**
The University has identified certain changes to courses and modules as constituting significant changes, of which applicants will need to be informed. See Appendix C for examples of significant changes.

A significant change is defined as follows:

- Introduction of new mandatory modules
- Withdrawal of existing mandatory modules
- Title changes to mandatory modules
- Change in status of modules (e.g. mandatory condonable modules becoming mandatory non-condonable or vice versa)
- Change to the fieldwork requirement on a mandatory module (e.g. removing it or adding it)
- Changes to the assessment of a mandatory module e.g. adding or removal of a mode of assessment (e.g. moving from exam based to coursework based)
- Change to a course title
- Change in accreditation status of a course
- Changes to location of delivery (e.g. Egham or Central London)
- Changes to mode of delivery (e.g. block mode, only evening, weekend)
- Changes to the extra costs associated with the course (e.g. adding £100 where none have been specified, or adding items which total £100 or more to existing costs stated)

**Non-Significant changes**

There are a number of other changes which require approval where applicants will not need to be informed:

- Changes to the summative assessment of mandatory or elective modules which do not involve the addition or withdrawal of an assessment type.
- Learning outcomes
- Delivery of the module (significant shift where there are implications for KIS categories, e.g. from largely lecture based to seminar based)
- Module content, which leads to the learning outcomes having to be changed
- Level of the module (see below)
- Module title change where this includes any of the changes listed above
- Introduction of new electives
- Withdrawal of electives
- Any course amendments not covered by changes listed under Significant Changes above.

**PLEASE NOTE**: if the balance of assessment changes radically across the course, that is, changes to summative assessment across more than 25% of the course 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 course changes, this will trigger a major revalidation. Revalidations have to be approved by the School Education Committee in the first instance, and once revalidated, noted by CDC.

It is recognised that new members of staff appointed prior to the start of the academic year may want to validate a new optional module and there may be occasions when, due to unforeseen circumstances such as staff illness, a
new module needs to be introduced. Such requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Chair of the School Education Committee.

As was the case in previous years any requests to exceptionally amend courses following feedback from the External Examiners at examination boards will require permission. Advice on this should be sought from AQPO.

**Module Amendments Which Do Not Require Approval**

Changes to:

- The reading list associated with the module 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. Please note that changing the format of an assessment from an Open Book Exam to an online exam or to an in person exam does require approval.
- Departments should ensure that the module 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.
- Module title change only (but see above as some paperwork needs to be submitted)

**ACADEMIC LEVELS**

In the past, undergraduate modules have been classified as Certificate, Intermediate and Honours level and postgraduate modules 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, e.g. Foundation Year</td>
<td>Sub-HE</td>
<td>Year 0</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. 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 module.** If you wish to teach groups of students at different levels together, e.g. Master's students and finalists please contact the relevant Senior Academic Quality Manager for advice on what the validation implications are.
HECOS CODES

A new subject coding system – the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS) system has replaced the JACS subject coding system. The JACs, and now the new HECoS, subject coding systems are required to be used by higher education institutions (HEIs) to ensure that courses and modules are subject categorised on a consistent basis across higher education.

New HECoS codes will need to be provided on an ongoing basis for any new courses and modules. You will be required to specify one to three new HECoS codes for every new course and module due to be validated.

Further information can be obtained from [this link](#).

MODULE INFORMATION

Credit Value

UG and PGT modules must be in multiples of 15 credits.

During 2022/23 and 2023/24, a PGT realignment exercise is taking place to move all existing modules from the multiples of 10 model to the multiples of 15 model. Any new module validated for PGT during this time must be on the 15 credit model.

For further information on the academic credit in Higher Education, please refer to the [SEEC Level Descriptors](#).

Pre-Requisites and Co-Requisites

**Pre-requisite** – a module that must be successfully completed (passed) before another module may be taken.

**Co-requisite** – a module that must be taken at the same time as another module.

**Banned combinations** - any combinations of modules that cannot be taken on a course of study.

Module Status

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

- **Mandatory condonable** – modules 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** – modules 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** – modules which students can choose depending on their interests. Restrictions may be placed on optional modules, e.g. there may be different baskets of options from which students may choose a set number. On
combined honours courses 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 module. These should relate to the appropriate academic level as described in the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (Qualifications Frameworks).

**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 (a couple of titles will suffice). However, please confirm on the Module 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 Strategic Planning in the first instance. Although KIS information is only needed for UG courses at present, there is a possibility that this will in due course be rolled out to PGT courses 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 teaching and learning 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 teaching and learning activities. **In all cases the three percentages must sum to 100.**

The QAA has compiled/developed an indicative list of teaching and learning methods, which is reproduced Below, which includes 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>
</tbody>
</table>
The time spent on formative assessment should be included within the calculation of teaching and learning methods. The categories in which formative assessments are included within the teaching and learning 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\(^1\) 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.

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

\(^1\) A lecturer, researcher, technician, member of support staff or Graduate Teaching
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 modules.
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 courses. Work-based learning is a structured academic course, 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 module 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 course 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 module. 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 University 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 module 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 it 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><em>Varies - see notes</em></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 a portfolio of 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.
Setting up/Amending Components in SHAGCOM

It is essential that when assessments are amended via validation, students are informed and assessed in line with the newly validated module specification. Any changes to assessment need to be reflected in Banner on the SHAGCOM screen so that marks can be entered against the correct components.

For clarity in reporting, dashboard use and to improve student and staff experience the names allowed to name components in SHAGCOM have been refined. The allowed naming is listed in the table below with details of what this component name should be used for. If you need to identify the component further you can use the description box to include further detail. For example if there are two coursework components these would be named CW1 and CW2, more detail can then be listed in the description box, so if the first is an Essay and the second is a commentary this is written in the description box.

One of the key reasons for this is to ensure all exams that are taken in the Central exams period use the component name EX, using a number directly after this if there are multiple exams. Any tests taken at any other times within the term should use TEST.

To make changes to the components please refer to the Creating and Amending Components Banner Tutorial, the key point being if the name is being edited you need to completely remove the component and re-enter the information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component Names</th>
<th>When this component should be used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CW1, CW2, CW3... etc</td>
<td>Coursework completed during the academic year (e.g. Essays, Assessments, Assignments, Commentary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISS</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EX1, EX2, EX3... etc</td>
<td>Exams taken in the Central Exam period only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FW1, FW2</td>
<td>Fieldwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP</td>
<td>Group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>Intercollegiate Course – For use for Intercollegiate courses only. To be used when a component breakdown is not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAB1, LAB2, LAB3... etc</td>
<td>Lab reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORAL</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLACEMENT</td>
<td>Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PORTFOLIO</td>
<td>Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESENT</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT</td>
<td>Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEST1, TEST2, TEST3... etc</td>
<td>In Class tests or weekly tests (under no circumstances should EX be used for these)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERFORM</td>
<td>Performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C GUIDE TO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

These guidance notes have been compiled to help departments understand what the University has defined as a significant change to courses and modules and which Marketing and Communications (MarComms) will have to inform applicants about. The scenarios below are illustrated using an extract from a course specification in the University’s Degree Course Library and seek to address queries departments may have (See below 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 Senior Academic Quality Manager in the first instance.

Section A: Assessment changes

(i) I want to change the assessment for the mandatory second year module 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 the School Education Committee?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by the School internal deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will MarComms 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 the School Education Committee?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by the School internal deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will MarComms 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 module 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 the School Education Committee?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by the School internal deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will MarComms 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 course specification for my course.

<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 specification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through the School Education Committee?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by the School internal deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will MarComms have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We want to implement a new assessment strategy for all our undergraduate courses, which will impact on assessment across 25% or more of the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this a significant change?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through the School Education Committee?</td>
<td>Yes – depending on how many modules are affected this is likely to be treated as a revalidation of the course. Please speak with your Senior Academic Quality Manager for advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will MarComms have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We want to implement changes to 25% or more of the content of mandatory and elective modules on the course

| Is this a significant change? | Yes – this will be treated as a revalidation of the course. Please speak with your Senior Academic Quality Manager for advice as such a change will need to be submitted to both the School Education Committee and Academic Portfolio and Partnerships Committee for approval by the relevant deadlines. |
| Do I have to validate this change through the School Education Committee? | Yes |
| Will MarComms have to inform applicants? | Yes |

Section B: Introduction/ withdrawal of modules

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

| Is this a significant change? | Yes, as you are introducing a new mandatory module and withdrawing one. Students are expecting to study Geography: Human Geography I but will get Geography in the 21st century instead. |
| Do I have to validate this change through the School Education Committee? | Yes – submit by School internal deadline |
| Will MarComms have to inform applicants? | Yes |

(ii) I want to reduce the mandatory 30 credit first year module Politics and International Relations: Introduction to International Relations to 15 credits and introduce a new module called Politics and International Relations: Current issues worth 15 credits.

| Is this a significant change? | Yes as you are introducing a new mandatory module |
| Do I have to validate this change through the School Education Committee? | Yes (Minor course amendment) – submit by School internal deadline |
| Will MarComms have to inform applicants? | Yes |

(iii) I want to add a new option (elective) to the basket given on the course specification for my course
(iv) I want to change the module content and therefore learning outcomes of these two modules. 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 course specification about the module content of these two modules.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have to validate this change through the School Education Committee?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by the School internal deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will MarComms 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 module *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 the School Education Committee?</td>
<td>Yes – submit by the School internal deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will MarComms 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 course specification.

<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 change through the School Education Committee?</td>
<td>You will need to withdraw the optional module assuming that it will not be delivered again as the relevant staff expertise has been lost and is unlikely to be replaced – submit by the School internal deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will MarComms have to inform applicants?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) Our course 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 validate this change through the School Education Committee?</td>
<td>Yes – by the School internal deadline if possible or as soon as confirmation is received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will MarComms 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.
Is this a significant change? | Yes as its £100 or more in terms of extra costs for the course
---|---
Do I have to inform the School Education Committee? | Yes – by the School internal deadline as a change will need to be made to all relevant course specifications
Will MarComms have to inform applicants? | Yes

### Extract from the course specification for the BSc Geography, Politics and International Relations degree course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module name</th>
<th>Written exam</th>
<th>Practical</th>
<th>Course-work</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geography: Human Geography I</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography: Human Geography II</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography: Geographical Techniques I (Human)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography: Geographical Research and Field I (Human)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics and International Relations: Introduction to Politics</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics and International Relations: Introduction to International Relations</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>