

10 CHANGES TO ACADEMIC PROVISION

10A PROGRAMME MODIFICATION

SCOPE

- 10a.1 These procedures cover modifications to existing degree programmes, ie those which have already been approved and are being delivered. They do not apply to the normal and expected ongoing changes in programme content and delivery which are monitored through the annual monitoring process.
- 10a.2 The type of modifications covered by these procedures include:
- change in overall programme aims and objectives
 - change in mode / location of delivery
 - change in module / programme title
 - a significant addition to the resources required for the programme
 - approval of joint awards (internal), using existing provision
 - approval of joint awards (with other HEIs), or other form of collaborative agreement, using existing provision
 - approval of stand-alone modules
 - approval / addition / deletion of modules within a programme (new or existing)
 - change in module assessment arrangements
 - change in regulations for the admission of students
 - change in regulations for the assessment of students.

PROPOSALS FOR MODIFICATION OF A DEGREE PROGRAMME

- 10a.3 Initial consideration of formal proposals for modification will be at faculty level, with Faculty Executive making a decision on the appropriate subsequent process, based on the level of risk within the proposal.
- 10a.4 A modification proposal must be supported by the following information:
- a. a brief description outlining the proposed changes
 - b. the rationale for the proposed changes
 - c. evidence of market or student demand, if appropriate
 - d. evidence of student feedback / student demand leading to the change if appropriate
 - e. implications for enhancement of the student learning experience
 - f. implications for human / physical resources
 - g. evidence of internal / external support for the modification
 - h. specific comment from relevant external examiner.
- 10a.5 A modification proposal must be endorsed in writing by relevant lead staff and quality managers at programme / subject network / academic partner levels as appropriate.
- 10a.6 The Faculty Executive will assess the risk level of the proposed modification into one of the following categories with the associated course of action:
- a. **low risk** – Faculty Executive approves or rejects the modification

- b. **medium risk** – Faculty Executive determines the nature and scope of modification approval ‘event’
- c. **high risk** - Faculty Executive refers decision to Academic Council (or a body to which it delegates this authority), with recommendation for further action, ensuring that the university retains strategic oversight of its academic portfolio
- d. **unacceptable risk** - Faculty Executive rejects the modification.

10a.7 The proposer(s) will be given feedback on Faculty Executive decisions and recommendations, normally within one working week of the Faculty Executive meeting. Where the Faculty Executive does not accept a proposal, proposers will be given the option of addressing the issues identified, and re-presenting the proposal at a later stage.

10a.8 All decisions made by the Faculty Executive will be reported to Academic Council, via faculty reports. Where Faculty Executive has approved a low / medium risk modification, Academic Council will be asked to homologate the decision.

RISK FACTORS

- 10a.9 Faculty Executives will take into consideration the following risk factors when assessing a proposed modification:
- risk to academic standards of any award
 - risk to quality of student learning experience
 - risk to financial viability of any programme or subject area
 - risk to reputation / student / stakeholder perception
 - risk to sustainability of programme delivery (or elements thereof)
 - any other risk not covered by the above.

MODIFICATION APPROVAL EVENTS

- 10a.10 Modification approval events provide an opportunity for full discussion of the proposal and its implications, and will be formally minuted. They are unlikely to be as extensive as full approval events for new provision. They **may** involve any or all of the following:
- a further meeting of the Faculty Executive
 - attendance of programme team members and / or academic partners’ senior managers at a Faculty Executive meeting
 - production of additional documentation as required, including informed internal / external comment
 - convening a panel, with or without internal / external members.

OUTCOME OF MODIFICATION APPROVAL EVENTS

- 10a.11 The outcome of a modification approval event will be a recommendation to Faculty Board that the proposed modification is:
- a. approved unconditionally
 - b. approved with conditions to be met prior to implementation
 - c. not approved.

10a.12 The outcome will also be sent to relevant academic partners. Outcomes will be homologated

by Academic Council, via faculty reports.

10a.13 Within one month of approval of a modification, an electronic version of the updated definitive programme document must be lodged with Academic Directorate.