Guidance 3xii   Programme Leader

1. Early Start

A Programme proposed to start in September or January should normally be validated no later than the preceding May or October respectively. This should be noted to allow enough time to progress from initial group discussion, market research and the drafting of paperwork.

2. Preparation for Academic Planning

The market research, academic planning and costing for a programme are all interdependent. Section 2 sets out the procedures leading to approval to proceed to validation or review.

The programme team must submit a Curriculum Business Case and Market Insight Report to Faculty Leadership Team (FLT) for consideration (via the University Link Tutor for collaborative programmes). If approved, the Curriculum Business Case and Market Insight Report will be submitted to Portfolio Development Committee (PDC) for University level approval.

Once the proposal has been approved at PDC, the programme team must complete the Academic Provision Proposal Form (APPF) (Appendix 2a) for submission to the Faculty Academic Planning and Quality Committee (APQC). After approval, a programme may be advertised as *Subject to Validation*.

3. Team Preparation and Consultation

The Programme Leader/ Director of Programmes sets up a Team to develop the:
- Programme structure and individual modules
- Supporting administration
- Validation / Review documents

In the case of a collaborative event, the partner Programme Leader and Institutional Link tutor will liaise with the University Link tutor to develop the necessary documentation.

4. Checklist of Areas for Consideration in Preparing the Programme

Consider the following when designing a new or revised programme:
- Programmes Specification Guidelines – Guidance 3xiii
- Module Narrative Guidelines – Guidance 3xviii
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity in the Curriculum – Guidance 3vii
- Ethics in the undergraduate curriculum – Guidance 3xvi or Research Ethics – Guidance 3xvii
- Distance Education Guidelines (if applicable) – Guidance 3iv and Guidance 3xxi
- QAA Benchmark Statement(s)
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- QAA Masters Degree characteristics (if applicable)
- QAA Doctoral Degree characteristics (if applicable)
- QAA Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark (if applicable)

- QAA Apprenticeship characteristics (if applicable)
- Curriculum Design policy (APS 18)
- Graduate Competencies
- Apprenticeship Standard (if applicable)

Consideration should also be given to:
- The relationship between the intended outcomes of the programme and the expectations set out in the qualification descriptors
- Whether there is a sufficient volume of assessed study that will demonstrate that the learning outcomes have been achieved
- Whether the design of the curriculum and assessments is such that all students following the programme have the opportunity to achieve and demonstrate the intended outcomes[1]

Professional Statutory and/or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) (if applicable)
Are aims, learning outcomes, and the learning, teaching and assessment strategy consistent with the PRSB?

Title
- Is the title of the programme/module appropriate?

Entry and Exit awards
- Are intermediate entry awards to be advertised? If so, separate programme specifications/programme diagrams must be provided for each entry award.
- Are named exit awards being offered? Have these been approved as part of the APPF?
- Are named exit awards clearly specified on the programme specification?
- Have Foundation Years been considered as appropriate for the programme?

Aims
- Are the programme/module aims understandable?
- Do the aims indicate the nature and coverage of the programme/module?

Learning Outcomes
- Do the learning outcomes reflect the level descriptors in the FHEQ? https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/qualifications-frameworks
- Are all the learning outcomes achievable and measurable?
- Are programme learning outcomes expressed at the highest level which it is intended they will be achieved?
- Are learning outcomes expressed at threshold level?
- Do learning outcomes reflect the level of study? (http://www.seec.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/SEEC-descriptors-2016.pdf)
- Have the University Graduate Competencies been incorporated appropriately into the programme?
- Has the programme been informed by the views of employers and former (and current) students (for reviews)?

Syllabus
- Are the topics
  - Relevant to the aims and learning outcomes?

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[1] QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

- o Consistent with equal opportunities requirements and legislation in relation to diversity?
- o Culturally inclusive?
- How effectively do research, consultancy and scholarship impact on curriculum content and development?
- Do the reading lists suggest thorough and up-to-date coverage of the study area? Are they supportive of Inclusive principles? Are reading lists focused e.g. specify specific chapters and readings rather than a whole book? Are Kortexts identified for Middlesex in-house, franchise and joint programmes?

Learning and Teaching
- Are the activities appropriate to development of the learning outcomes?
- Do the activities take account of the prior experience and understanding of students?
- Do the activities encourage a deep approach to learning?
- Do the activities take account of the different culture, background and ability of students?
- Are the activities consistent with equality opportunities requirements and legislation in relation to diversity and inclusivity?
- Do the activities include e-learning and development of digital literacy skills where appropriate (in line with the TEL thresholds)?
- How effectively do research, consultancy and scholarship impact on curriculum content and development?
- Do all module learning outcomes contribute to the programmes learning outcomes?
- Has Academic Advising guidance been considered and incorporated? Guidance 3xxii
- What training and support will be given for student dissertations (including ethics)?
- How will student skills needs be identified and supported? How will awareness of the University Policy and Procedures for Academic Integrity and Misconduct (contact CAPE@mdx.ac.uk) be embedded across the programme Our policies | Middlesex University London (mdx.ac.uk)
- How effectively is good practice identified and shared?
- How far is the provision responsive to teaching and learning developments?
- How will e-learning be embedded into the students' learning experience?

Assessment
- Are all the learning outcomes summatively assessed and aligned to programme learning outcomes?
- Are all the modules which may not be compensated clearly specified in the programme specification?
- Does the assessment description clearly indicate the assessment process, criteria and feedback methods?
- Is it clear how marks are allocated (share with students example marking criteria showing mark allocation/grading form for online marking)?
- Is the assessment appropriately diverse and in line with equality opportunities requirements?
- Is the assessment load too heavy? Are assessments spread across modules to avoid bunching?
- Is the assessment load appropriately scheduled through the programme?

- Do all modules offer formative assessment opportunities and are feedback opportunities aligned to the summative assessments ensuring feedback can feedforward?
- Have the University Grade Criteria been used/enhanced http://www.mdx.ac.uk/aboutus/Strategy/regulations/gradecriteriaguide.aspx

Programmes including a period of placement and/or overseas study
- How is the placement period/period overseas assessed?
- What monitoring arrangements are made for the placement supervisor or (for overseas placements) the Link Tutor?
- How are students being prepared for their period in placement and/or overseas?
- How are students supported through placement? Has any online provision been provided?
- How have Employability been involved (for placements)?
- Will students / placement providers need a separate Placement Handbook (possibly aligned to PSRB requirements)?
- How have the language training arrangements been judged to be adequate?
- How are students supported on their return, and how are they enabled to integrate their experience into their University work?
- How is feedback on the placement experience obtained and how is this used to prepare the next cohort of students to go on placement and/or overseas?

The student experience
- Have the views of current and former students informed programme development?
- What arrangements have been made for:
    - induction of all students
    - induction of overseas students
    - support for mature students
    - support for students with specific needs
    - support for students on distance-learning mode, and communications with tutor/fellow students.
- How has consideration been given to the needs of disabled students?
- How will the experience prepare students for employment?
- Are there any additional costs for students after enrolment?
- Are the student support systems, both academic and personal, effective in assisting student learning, monitoring progress and identifying and dealing with problems?
- How is student feedback obtained? Is it comprehensive? How is it analysed? How effective is it in informing programme/module development? Are students partners in the process? How will the feedback loop be closed?
- Do the diagrams give a clear and complete picture of progression and all possible routes through the programme?

Staff skills, relevance of training and staff development (for support contact CAPE@mdx.ac.uk)
- What recent and planned staff training is there in: updating of Subject specialisms; teaching of study skills; identification and encouragement of core skills; peer group assessment; Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL); transferable skills; research methods; teaching in higher education; distance education; specialised market awareness; and production of distance education materials?

- Do academic staff observe and comment on each other's teaching? How effective is the process in the enhancement of teaching and learning?
- How effective are staff development activities? How is this evaluated? How are the outcomes of such activities disseminated? What is their impact on teaching and learning?
- How will PT/HPL teaching staff be integrated within the Team, and supported/monitored?
- What induction arrangements are made for new/temporary/PT/HPL staff?
- Have staff CVs been reviewed and are staff appropriately qualified?
- Are staff proficient in English?

Resourcing
- Are the library learning materials appropriate and adequate?
- Are the IT facilities appropriate and adequate?
- Are the specialist resources appropriate and adequate?
- Are the teaching facilities appropriate and adequate?

Links with Other Faculties/Cross-Curricular Programmes
- Are the weighting and assessment of cross-taught modules consistent with the rest of the programme?
- Is the relevance of subject matter of cross-taught modules evident?
- Are staff of cross-taught modules integrated into the planning process?

Dual/Joint Awards?
- Have the University requirements been met? (See also Section 5)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (see also Section 14)
- What guidance is being given on the preparation of portfolios?
- What are the accreditation arrangements, when is it formalised, and how does it fit with the programme timetable?
- Would accreditation benefit or disrupt the planned curriculum?

Articulation Agreements
- Are there any articulation agreements associated with the programmes? Have these been approved or reviewed in the light of any changes to the programme?

Consideration of data (usually for reviews only)
This data is for student entry profiles, progression, achievement and, if available, first destination. How effective is the use of data and information provided?

Quality assurance and enhancement
- Are there appropriate quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms? Are they effective?
- What impact have they had on the quality of programmes/modules? Examples?
- How effective is the involvement of external examiners, students and other parties in the QA/QE processes?
- How well academically and administratively is the partnership operating in the case of a collaborative programme?
- **For validated programmes** – what arrangements are in place for gathering of students' feedback at module level e.g. student feedback forms?

Additional considerations for collaborative links
- Staff understanding of aims and objectives of Higher Education in the UK and the academic infrastructure including FHEQ, SBS, Programme Specifications, QAA Characteristic Statements and Apprenticeship Standards where appropriate
- Are the admissions criteria appropriate including English Language requirements?
- Are the attendance requirements appropriate?
- Consistency of approach with other programmes (i.e. if the Institution already runs other programmes with the University);
- What student support is available in literacy/numeracy, counselling, health, etc; library, computing and other resource provision;
- Has consideration been given to direct entry of students into 2nd and 3rd year of programme? Are appropriate arrangements in place?
- What arrangements have been put in place for programme management?
- For validated or franchised programmes have the guidelines for placement and assessment been taken into account? Guidance 3xxiv and Guidance 3xxiii

MISIS: Module Data
For in-house, joint and franchised programmes, the programme team ensures that the structure of the proposed programme is compatible with the University Academic Regulations, and is clearly set out in the Programme Specification, with diagram.

The following identify problems sometimes encountered by the Academic Registry and should be carefully considered:
- Are prerequisites compatible with the proposed programme?
- Is the credit total correct for the qualification level (to accommodate Professional, Statutory and/or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements, placement, etc.?
- Does the group of identified modules generate the correct qualification title?
- Is the qualification's credit structure correct?
- Is information on exit/transfer routes clear and accurate (e.g. from PG Diploma to Masters; from HND to BA/BSc)?
- Have all sections of the New Module Form (Appendix 3l) been completed?

5. Documentation

A list of the documentation that should be provided by the Programme Leader to the event Officer is listed within Guidance 3iii – Documentation for a validation or review event. Please discuss exact documentation requirements with your Officer.

All documentation must include information on overseas campuses and/or franchises of the programme where appropriate.

The programme leader will provide the documentation set out in Guidance 3iii and ensure that it is sent to the Officer in good time for distribution to the panel.

6. Report and Fulfilment of Conditions

The Programme Leader ensures that programme team members see the Un/Confirmed Report. The Leader discusses any conditions and deadlines set by the Panel with the Team and ensures that they are acted upon. S/he provides for the officer, by the given deadline, a response via the Confirmed report that **point by point**, describes the action taken if appropriate.

Recommendations made by the Panel should also be responded to, with a comment on what is likely to be done, or a reason for a no-action decision. The officer then notifies the Chair and, subject to the Chair's approval of the responses/actions, part A of the Appendix 3e is signed.

For the most up to date guidance, please refer to the [CAPE intranet pages](#) (or contact CAPE@mdx.ac.uk)